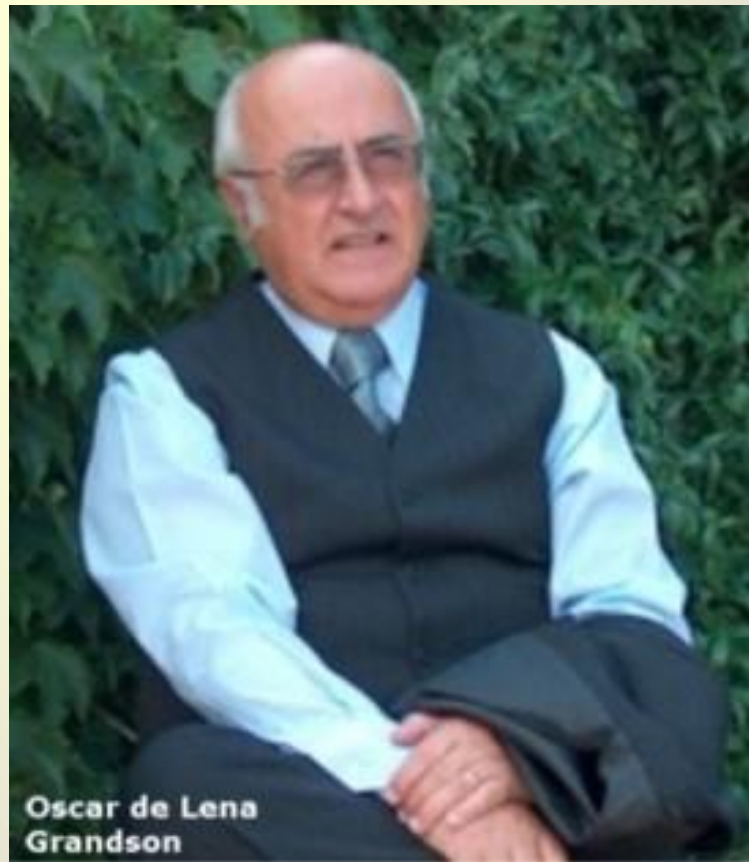


*Italian emigration to America
and other countries.*

*In particularly the emigration of Giacomesse people from
San Giacomo degli Schiavoni, Campobasso, Italy.*



*Research by
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ABSTRACT AND INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that between 1876 and 1976, a range of 25 to 45 million Italians have emigrated to North America, South America, Australia, Canada and to other countries in Europe^(1,2,4). Other figures indicate that between 1850 and 1913 there were a massive number of Italian immigrants of more than 36 million Italians immigrating to the countries above. Those countries were often seen as a new world of opportunities, where there were promises of plenty of work to everybody, food, security, and high wages⁽¹⁶⁾.

A large proportion of Italians have emigrated to the United States of America. For example between 1820-1879 more than 9 million Italians have immigrated to the USA. The emigration to countries in South America, such as Brazil and Argentina was also a large movement. For example more than 1.5 million Italians emigrated to Brazil between 1856 and 1933. Today 25 million Brazilians are descendents of Italian immigrants with various Italian surnames who are concentrated mainly in southern part of Brasil with half of this number living in São Paulo which represents around 32,5% of the population of the São Paulo state. In Argentina it is estimated that approximately 1,020,000 Italians arrived in Buenos Aires between 1882 and 1920^(16,20).

Many Giacomesi, the country men from the commune of San Giacomo degli Schiavoni, of the Campobasso province, Molise region in Italy took with courage and determination this new opportunity of living in a new land with promises of economic stability and security. For example, from 1892 to 1924, a period of 32 years, approximately 269 Giacomesi departed to America⁽³⁾. However, records indicate that the Giacomesi also have immigrated to other countries around the world. For example 93.020 people emigrated to Brazil in South America who are from Molise and Abruzzo⁽²²⁾.

This article will explore very briefly the phenomenon of the Italian emigration around the world. More specifically, it will explore on the 32 years of emigration history of the humble country men of San Giacomo degli Schiavoni, from the Campobasso province, Molise region in Italy, that occurred from 1892 to 1924. It will also discuss and provide examples of the immigrants' personal experiences.

THE PHENOMENOM OF THE ITALIAN EMIGRATION AROUND THE WORLD

The Italian emigration phenomenon started quietly from approximately the year of 1820. For example, in 1830, there were a little more than 400 Italians living and working in America ⁽⁴⁾. However, the hundreds of years of battles and wars that Italy has been involved intentionally or not, together with hundreds of years of political and financial instability and chaos that the government was not being able to or not willing to solve effectively, created and enormous disappointments among its ordinary citizens⁽⁵⁾.

In the first decades of 1800, the Italian emigration toward other countries was very contained because Italy in that period was still divided in a series of small states. Up to 1880 the Italian emigration represented a small percentage in comparison to the emigration of people from other European countries. However, between 1876 and 1976, approximately 25 to 45 million Italians have emigrated to various countries^(1,2). Between the two World Wars, a period that has endured restrictive world war politics and immigration/emigration policies, the Italian emigration recorded 4.3 million⁽⁴⁾. After the Second World War until 1971, a period of just 25 years, nearly 6 million Italians emigrated from Italy⁽⁴⁾.

The flow of the Italian emigrations to North, South America and Australia between 1850 and 1913 was truly significant⁽¹⁷⁾. Refer to table below:

Italian emigration per 1,000 population ⁽¹⁷⁾	
1870-1879	4.29
1880-1889	6.09
1890-1899	8.65
1900-1913	17.97

Please, refer to table "Immigrants by Country: 1820-1879 in United States in the next page.

Immigrants by Country: 1820-1879 in United States

Year	Italy (Number of people)	Europe (Number of people)	% of Italians	All Countries (Number of people)	% of Italians
1820	30	7.691	0,39%	8.385	0,36%
1821	63	5.936	1,06%	9.127	0,69%
1822	35	4.418	0,79%	6.911	0,51%
1823	33	4.016	0,82%	6.354	0,52%
1824	45	4.965	0,91%	7.912	0,57%
1825	75	8.543	0,88%	10.199	0,74%
1826	57	9.751	0,58%	10.837	0,53%
1827	35	16.719	0,21%	18.875	0,19%
1828	34	24.729	0,14%	27.382	0,12%
1829	23	12.523	0,18%	22.520	0,10%
1830	9	7.217	0,12%	23.322	0,04%
1831	28	13.039	0,21%	22.633	0,12%
1832	3	34.193	0,01%	60.482	0,00%
1833	1.699	29.111	5,84%	58.640	2,90%
1834	105	57.510	0,18%	65.365	0,16%
1835	60	41.987	0,14%	45.374	0,13%
1836	115	70.465	0,16%	76.242	0,15%
1837	36	71.039	0,05%	79.340	0,05%
1838	86	34.070	0,25%	38.914	0,22%
1839	84	64.148	0,13%	68.069	0,12%
1840	37	80.126	0,05%	84.066	0,04%
1841	179	76.216	0,23%	80.289	0,22%
1842	100	99.945	0,10%	104.565	0,10%
1843	117	49.013	0,24%	52.496	0,22%
1844	141	74.745	0,19%	78.615	0,18%
1845	137	109.301	0,13%	114.371	0,12%
1846	151	146.315	0,10%	154.416	0,10%
1847	164	229.117	0,07%	234.968	0,07%
1848	241	218.025	0,11%	226.527	0,11%
1849	209	286.501	0,07%	297.024	0,07%
1850	431	308.323	0,14%	369.980	0,12%
1851	447	369.510	0,12%	379.466	0,12%
1852	351	362.484	0,10%	371.603	0,09%
1853	555	361.576	0,15%	368.645	0,15%
1854	1.263	405.542	0,31%	427.833	0,30%
1855	1.052	187.729	0,56%	200.877	0,52%
1856	1.365	186.083	0,73%	200.436	0,68%
1857	1.007	216.224	0,47%	251.306	0,40%
1858	1.240	111.354	1,11%	123.126	1,01%
1859	932	110.949	0,84%	121.282	0,77%
1860	1.019	141.209	0,72%	153.640	0,66%
1861	811	81.200	1,00%	91.918	0,88%
1862	566	83.710	0,68%	91.985	0,62%
1863	547	163.733	0,33%	176.282	0,31%
1864	600	185.233	0,32%	193.418	0,31%
1865	924	214.048	0,43%	248.120	0,37%
1866	1.382	278.916	0,50%	318.568	0,43%
1867	1.624	283.751	0,57%	315.722	0,51%
1868	891	130.090	0,68%	138.840	0,64%
1869	1.489	315.963	0,47%	352.768	0,42%
1870	2.891	328.626	0,88%	387.203	0,75%
1871	2.816	265.145	1,06%	321.350	0,88%
1872	4.190	352.155	1,19%	404.806	1,04%
1873	8.757	397.541	2,20%	459.803	1,90%
1874	7.666	262.783	2,92%	313.339	2,45%
1875	3.631	182.961	1,98%	227.498	1,60%
1876	3.015	120.920	2,49%	169.986	1,77%
1877	3.195	106.195	3,01%	141.857	2,25%
1878	4.344	101.612	4,28%	138.469	3,14%
1879	5.791	134.259	4,31%	177.826	3,26%
TOTAL	9546.436				

Source: Data elaborated by Guido Tintori for Altretalia from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States. Colonial Times to 1970. Part I, Washington D.C., 1975, pp. 105-06. Source: <http://www.altretalia.it> (12).

It was only from 1880 that the emigration to America started to increase, when the United States of America opened its doors to the immigration, because the beginning of its capitalistic development interests. The ships that arrived from the United States to Europe brought a variety of commodities and in turn, when the ships departed from Europe they carried the emigrants. Please refer to the table below showing the number of Italians who immigrated to United States of America from 1881 to 1940.

ITALIAN IMMIGRATION TO UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	
Period	Number of immigrants
1881-1890	251.000
1891-1900	520.000
1901-1910	2.394.000
1911-1920	1.650.000
1921-1930	450.000
1931-1940	170.000
Source ⁽¹³⁾ : http://www.cronologia.it/emidove.htm	

Italians have been protagonists of the greatest migratory exodus of the modern history. It was an exodus that touched all the Italian regions, with a priority of the northern exodus among 1876 and 1900, with three regions that furnished alone the 47% of the migratory contingent: Veneto (17,9%), the Friuli Venice Giulia (16,1%) and the Piemonte (12,5%). The situation overturned in the two following decades, when the migratory supremacy passed to the southern regions, with Sicily with its the greatest contribution of 12,8% (1.126.513 emigrants), followed by Campania with 955.1889 (10,9%).

The rate of young age male emigrants was very high with approximately 80% in the initial period. The majority were between 15 and 40 years old. It was an exodus of agrarian population, primarily illiterate. In 1871 the rate of national illiteracy in Italy was of 67,5% and in the southern regions it often overcame the 90%. The farmers, agriculturists and labourers, were not the only protagonists: artisans, masons and workers accompanied them.

Among the motives for the exodus included: the disastrous effects of the agrarian crisis, high-imposed taxes in the southern cities after the unification of the country, the decline of the old artisan works and the domestic industries. In the South Italy rural areas, the conditions had changed from the presence of small owner farmers, to the rich landowner.

The job performed in those 2 countries by the immigrants depended therefore on the offers of the market of that country. In the United States, Italians assembled in the great cities of the East North privileging by high salaried jobs. When returning to Italy, they were employed in the factories, in the construction of roads and railroads and in the mines ^(14, 15).

All these events discussed above were very much influential to encourage millions of Italian citizens to immigrate to another country in search for a better, safer, more prosperous quality of life.

Italians have emigrated to other nations that included:

- Argentina, which it encouraged the immigration of Italians for the colonization of its lands;
- Brazil, in which it encouraged the immigration of Italians because in 1888 slavery was abolished in Brazil, and from that year on there was an urgent and increasing need of workers to work in the “fazendas” (farms) to replace the slaves. Overseas labourers were recruited and they worked for the rich farm owners, in a sort of share-cropping ⁽¹⁴⁾. For example in 1888, 104.353 Italian immigrants arrived in Brazil. By in 1894 this number has reduced to 34872, however in 1891 the numbers have increased again to 132.326⁽²⁸⁾.

Research done by the Centro de Estudios Migratorios Latino Americanos indicates that up of 1,020,000 Italians arrived in Buenos Aires between 1882 and 1920. The information is taken from the disembarkment lists (*Registro general de los inmigrantes* and *Lista de inmigrantes*). And it is also estimated that about 27,000 Italian emigrants arrived in Brazil, Vitoria between 1858 and 1899 ⁽¹⁶⁾, and from 1500 to 1933 it is estimated that more than 1.5 million Italians have immigrated to Brazil⁽²²⁾. Please, refer to the table below.

Immigration to Brazil periods from 1500 to 1933 ⁽²²⁾						
Period	1856-1883	1884-1893	1894-1903	1904-1913	1914-1923	1924-1933
Italians	100,000	510,533	537,784	196,521	86,320	70,177
Source: Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics (IBGE)						

Below is a table showing the number of Italians from various Italian regions arriving in various seaports in Brazil between 1876 and 1920.

Italian Immigration to Brazil (1876-1920)	
Italian Region Origin	Numberof Immigrants
Abruzzo e Molise	93.020
Basilicata	52.888
Calábria	113.155
Campânia	166.080
Emília-Romagna	59.877
Lácio	15.982
Ligúria	9.328
Lombardia	105.973
Marche	25.074
Piemonte	40.336
Puglia	34.833
Sardenha	6.113
Sicília	44.390
Toscana	81.056
Úmbria	11.818
Vêneto	365.710
Total : 1.243.633	

Fonte: Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística

Fonte: Brasil 500 anos de povoamento. IBGE. Rio de Janeiro. 2000

http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imigra%C3%A7%C3%A3o_italiana_no_Brasil#S.C3.A3o_Paulo

<http://www.ibge.gov.br/ibgeteen/povoamento/italianos/regorigem.html>

An interesting point to note here is that most of the "Lafratta" family members living in Brazil are descendants of Angelandrea Lafratta and Rosa D'Amico from San Giacomo degli Schiavoni (see photo 21 and 22 next page). Which means that they all belong to the same family tree. Refer to www.lafratta.com.br. Angelandrea and Rosa had 10 children⁽²⁶⁾. It was their oldest son Domenicantonio Lafratta born in 1870 in San Giacomo degli Schiavoni who emigrated from San Giacomo degli Schiavoni to Brazil with his wife Maria Tereza Nicola Valentini and their two young babies Angelo and Rosa to São Paulo, Brazil arriving at the Santos port on the 22nd December 1894⁽²⁷⁾. The other 9 children have immigrated to the USA and other countries. Today the members of the Lafratta family tree living in Brazil alone totals more than 235 descendants. And from the other 9 children, there are more than 280 members living in other countries such as the USA, Germany, France, Australia, Japan and Italy⁽²⁶⁾.

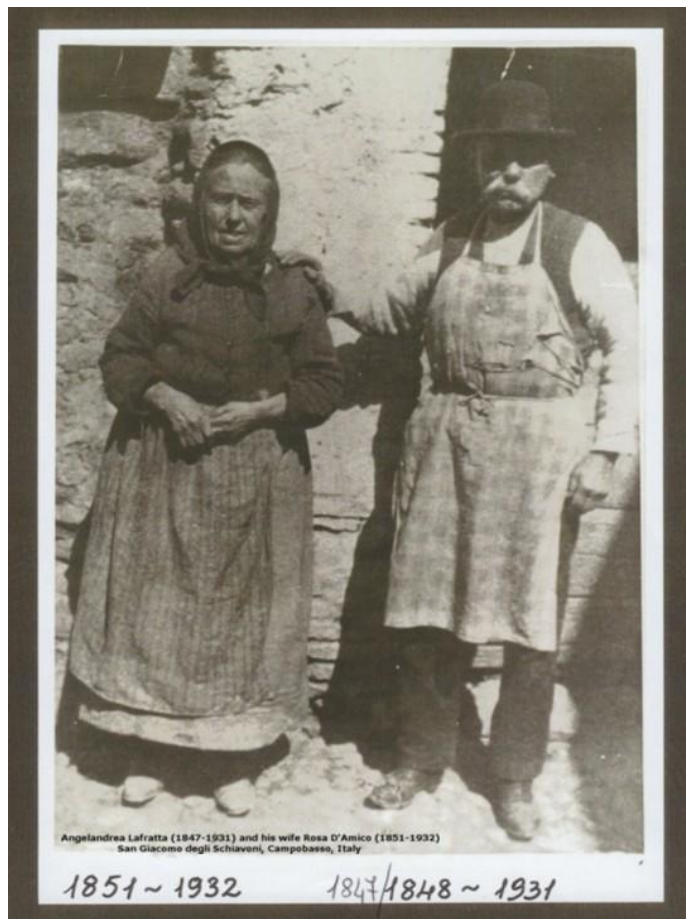


Photo 21: Angelandrea Lafratta (1847-1931) and wife Rosa D'Amico (1851-1932)
San Giacomo degli Schiavoni, Campobasso, Italy



Photo 22: Angelandrea Lafratta (right side) was a succesful wine barrel maker and a businessman.
San Giacomo degli Schiavoni, Campobasso, Italy.

THE PORTS AND THE SHIPS



Foto 1: 1910: Emigrants embarking on a ship from Naples harbour(4)

When the ships were leaving the dock, one could hear the echo of the ardent of 2 songs:

“ S .Lucia luntane” and “ Partono i bastimenti”

In Brazil, the Italian immigrants arrived by ship at the seaports of Santos, Vitória, Rio de Janeiro, Paranaguá, Florianópolis and Porto Alegre. The São Paulo seaport alone processed more than 2.5 million immigrants in its almost 100 years of continuous operation. People of more than 70 different nationalities were recorded.



Photo 2: Italian immigrants just arrived in São Paulo, Brazil - Memorial do Imigrante^(20, 27)



Photo 3: Memorial do Imigrante 1886 - São Paulo – Brazil^(20, 27)

Transport and time spent on the ship

In Italy, the means of transport chosen by the emigrants to travel from their houses and villages to the port were dependent on the proximity of the port, communication means, and the inexpensiveness of the means of transport. For example, emigrants from the North Italy, preferred to cross the Alps in railroad by the North or to embark at Genoa port on the direct ships in South America. For the emigrants from the Southern harbours it was more economic to go to the port by ships. Most Italian people used to embark from the Naples' harbour. They normally would travel together with other fellow townsman.

The third class was the most popular place on the ship, among the humble Italian passengers, because it was the cheapest class available. Aboard the third class, the passengers normally received on consignment two aluminium cups, a little can for the wine, a pouch for the bread and 10 bands for mattresses. Broth, chickpeas meal, pig in glaze and soups was the menu of the third class.

The townsmen normally used to bring with them only a few luggages. In some cases, the bags were simple suitcases made of fibres and cardboard tied with the string in which inside they carried personal belongings and their passport that had just been issued on site by the competent authorities.

The cost of the third class ticket varied between the 150 and the 180 liras. The cost of the ticket corresponded to about 100 days of job.

For the rich and aristocrats of the first class, refined menu were daily prepared by the chefs on board of the ship.

There is a song that reminds us about the price of the travel ticket who says:

*“Mamma mia dammi cento lire che in America voglio andare “
“...mum, give me one hundred liras that in America I want to go”*

Until 1850, steamboats and sailing-ships were used for the overseas trip and it normally took 57 days to travel from Naples to America. However, in the first years of 1900, new and faster motor ships were introduced in which had shortened the crossing to only 13 days. Therefore in only one month, the motor ship had completed a full travel from Italy to America and back to Italy. Some ship names that our ancestors have travelled included: Re d'Italia, Madonna, S. Giusto, Conte Rosso, Roma, Dante Alighieri. Between 1880 and 1924, the cost of a travel ticket Naples–New York had increased from 5 to 30 American dollars. This was because of the introduction of the new motor ships.

The long hours spent on board of these ships by the Italian pioneers to America, provided them with plenty of time and the opportunity to think about their own life, their families, their future, their past. As they look at the immense expanse of the ocean, they probably spent hours and hours thinking with nostalgia and love about their own dearest relatives left back in their country, the vineyard left behind, to the olives trees that would may not have been looked after properly, to the taste of their own earth that cannot be forgotten. They also probably thought about the kind of life they would have in their destination country, America.



Photo 4: Italian passengers travelling in an Italian ship⁽²³⁾

On board of the ships, third class passengers, invented many games and sports in order to provide entertainment, boost their hopes, happiness, to make all passengers, man, women, children, smile and feel happy and enthusiastic while awaiting to arrive in their destination.



Photo 5: Passengers of the third class motor ship playing the competition⁽¹⁾
"Eaters of spaghetti by tied hands"

The following games are known to have occurred in such ships:

- the competition of the "eaters of spaghetti by tied hands " (photo 5) and
- the "to stay standing on a can that rolled on the deck of the ship" (photo 6)



Photo 6: Passengers of the third class of a motor ship playing the competition⁽⁸⁾
"to stay standing on a can that rolled on the deck of the ship"

Looking at these photos, we don't notice opulence; neither there is show off of wealthy lifestyle. We notice, however an extraordinary dignity, courage, hope, dedication, cheerfulness, commitment by the men and women. We also notice a certain melancholy, hope, expectation, anticipation, especially in the faces of the children and the women.



Photo 7: Map of Italy showing Campobasso Province, and Molise Region⁽²⁴⁾.



Photo 8: San Giacomo degli Schiavoni in the year 1920⁽²⁵⁾

San Giacomo degli Schiavoni Emigration

San Giacomo degli Schiavoni, today is a pretty Italian town (“commune”) of a population of 1111 people (535 men and 576 women)⁽⁹⁾.

The first recorded “SanGiacomese” (people from San Giacomo degli Schiavoni) families who emigrated toward “ La Merica “ (as the United States was so often called by the poor people) were⁽⁵⁾:

- the Alberico (1893),
- the Silviani (1896), and
- the Candigliotti (1901).

From 1892 to 1924, approximately 269 local SanGiacomese departed to New York. For a small town like San Giacomo, of a population of approximately 1000 people, it meant that almost a third of the population had emigrated during that period. Of these 269 local Giacomese, almost all were of young age.

Through the Internet site of Ellis Island, which contains a register of Italian emigrants (www.ellisland.com), I was able to track down 84 different surnames that had emigrated from San Giacomo degli Schiavoni. This means that at least one member of each family had emigrated.

Some of the people with these surnames and descendants of these emigrants still lives in San Giacomo. Others however, have moved the whole family to America and today are American citizens. And because of this reason their names are no longer present in the Ellis Island registry. I was able to track down from the Ellis Island registers the 84 surnames:

Alberico, Albino, Alessandro, Altieri, Amicone, Angelucci, Barone, Belvedere, Biondelli, Bosco, Bucci, Caccavalle, Candeloro, Candigliotti, Caruso, Chilleri, Cianci, Ciccarone, Cocco, Colaneri, Concetto, Console, Consorte, Conte,

D'Adamo, D'Alessandro, D'Amario, D'Auria, De Lellis, De Lena, Di Lena, De Virgilis, Di Cecco, Di Foglia, Di Girolamo, Di Giorgio, D'Ippolito; Di Mirco, Di Salvatore, Di Tilla, Di Toro, Di Virgilio, D'Orso; Fabrizio, Galasso, Garzella, Ippolito, Lafratta, Lallo, Lannutti, Leone, Lizzi, Loreto, Luciani, Luciano, Mancini, Mastromonaco, Maurizio, Meccia, Menna, Miletta, Miticocchio, Moscatelli, Murazzo, Pellicciotti, Perfetto, Perrotta, Pesce, Pilli, Ricci, Romolo, Rosati, Rossi, Sciarretta, Silvani, Tancredi, Terpolilli, Tittoferrante, Traglia, Valentini, Valentino, Vena, Verdastro, Vitelli.

The graph below show the emigration number per year from San Giacomo to America from 1893 to 1924 ⁽⁵⁾.

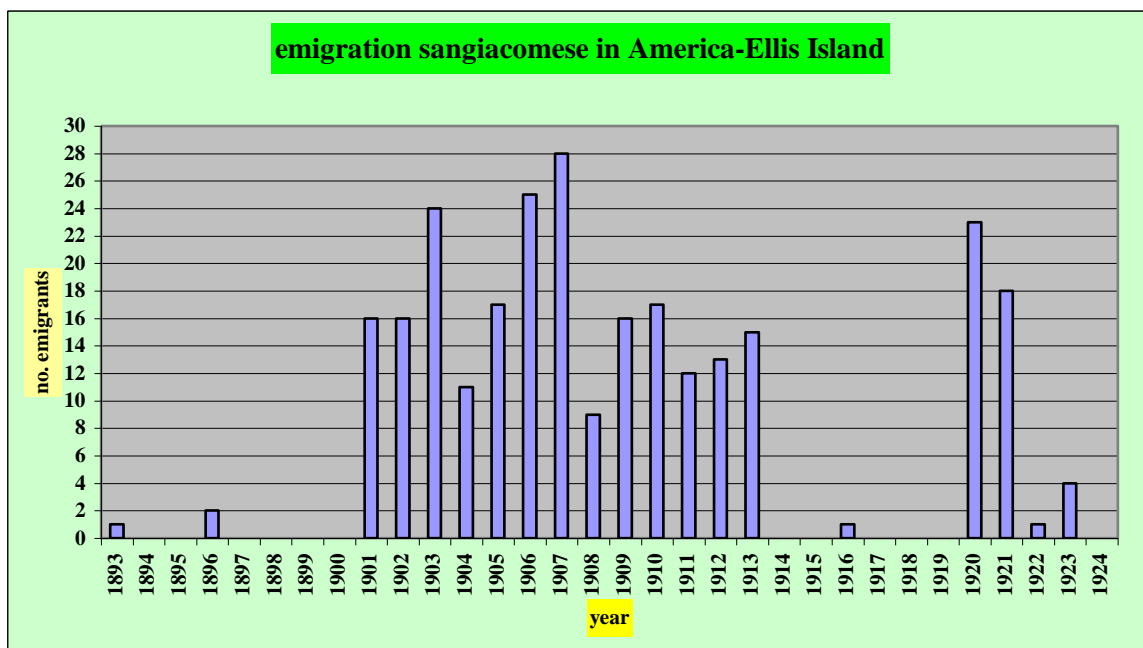


Table 1. Source: statistic elaborated by the author

Below are pictures of antiques of 70-80 years old, present in the houses of San Giacomo.



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

In the first half of the 1900 when the Italian emigration phenomenon continue to increase, a Giacomese worker earned around 1.5 to 2.5 liras for a full-time working day, if and when they were lucky to find work. The daily working hours could cover up to 11 hours, included Saturday and sometimes Sunday. In comparison, in 1920 the workers of the factory Willys-Overland in America, manufacturing society of automobiles, earned \$5.000 dollars per year^(4,6). Bread cost 35 cents a kilo, the oil cost one lira, and a kilo of meat could cost 15 cents.

These high prices of living costs, increased taxes on food, and extremely low wages, imposed by the selfish government, were two reasons, of many others ones, that persuaded a lot of San Giacomese to leave their own loved countries in search of better pays and living conditions. They would rather work overseas and send the money they earned back to their family in Italy.

STATEMENTS AND STORIES TOLD BY A GIACOMESE EMIGRANT:

(by the author Oscar de Lena)

When I was a little boy, and my grandfather Oscar de Lena (1879-1963), with same name as mine was back to San Giacomo from America, we used to sit next to the fireplace together with my other little cousins, in the winter evenings, to hear my grandfather's stories about his trips, life and work in America. While grandfather was inhaling mouthfuls of smoke from his pipe, he used to tell us his stories and teach us some words in English. He told us of the long days he spent on the ship, looking at the immensity of the ocean, of when he had seen in distance the first sights of America, and when he finally left the ship and touched for the first time the American grounds. After the medical check-up that took place in the large room at Ellis Island, finally grandfather departed to his final destination, which was Pittston, a coalmine town, approximately 200 km from New York. I do not have information around what means of transport my grandfather used for reaching Pittston by bus, train, truck or perhaps horses. He would meet with his other fellow townsmen, where they have been living and working for some years.

Grandfather used to tell us about the Pittston coal mines, when he entered in the dark coal mines, and about when he comes out from the deep of the mine he was all dirty and covered in black powder from his day work.

Grandfather also used to tell us about the economy of Italy that it was reduced to its lowest level at that time and this had caused people to live in complete poverty and food shortages, especially for the families who had many children to feed and support. "It was not easy", said my grandfather. The sentences that often other poor persons repeated were:

"Or to be a migrant or to be a brigand"...

" to emigrate or to steal ".

Grandfather said that after the departure of the first members or families to America, a chain of calls would follow. For example after a member had emigrated to America, he would invite relatives in Italy to join them in America. Relatives would invite friends too and the friends would travel too. The news of a good life in America would spread quickly in this way in Italy and relatives and friends would emigrate to America. In this way the Italian immigration to various countries would increased year after year.

Disappointed with the Italian working and life conditions, feeling hopeless and frustrated with what the Italian government was offering to its people, grandfather tried his luck and with his adventurous spirit he decided to depart to America for work.

He used to tell us how Pittston was famous for its coal mines. My grandfather, who for many years had worked in the country in San Giacomo, under the sun curing his olive plants and his vineyard, had to adapted himself to work in the dark and dusty coal mines of Pittston. Whenever he could, grandfather would send money to grandmother in Italy. However, as the transfer of money in those days were very difficult to do and with a lot of bureaucracy, he would save the money with himself and would bring to Italy later when he returned to Italy.

At Pittston, when grandfather was not working, he liked to be in the company of his friends, drinking and eating and often grandfather would pay the food and drink for everyone. Grandfather used to play the mandolin and during the fests among Italian friends, he gladdened the evening singing Italian songs and playing the mandolin.

These stories told by my grandfather, which seemed fables to us, boys, pushed me to investigate further, to try to know more about him, his travels to America and his American way of life. I was wondering how a person, living 100 years ago, managed to move from his Italian country town for a completely different country, and without knowing a word in English?

I decided to make further research about the life of my grandfather and about all of his fellows townsman that had gone through similar experiences of leaving San Giacomo for best lifestyle and quality of life, to bet on a best future for them and for their children.

However, I was only able to complete my research recently, thanks to the technology that we have today to our disposition: more and more powerful and faster computer, the Internet and the other things the science offers us.

My grandfather, Oscar de Lena was born in 1879 at San Giacomo degli Schiavoni, and died in San Giacomo in 1963. In the 1914 he was called by the army to combat in the “First World War”, even though he was 35 years old. Just a few months earlier, grandfather had married Mariannina Traglia, a local Giacomesse lady. However, during his work for the army, the family grew. And at the end of the war grandfather and Mariannina had three children: Federico (my father), Antonietta and Amelia.

It was the 1921. Grandfather embarked to Naples’ harbour on the ship San Giusto together other eleven Giacomesse. They arrived in New York on the 13th March 1921, after 13 days of navigation. They then travelled to Pittston.

After living and working in the United States of America for 5 years, my grandfather Oscar returned to San Giacomo to see his family and he brought some presents. It was 1926. He remained at San Giacomo only a few months. He decided to go back to America again, because of the higher wages being paid over there in America.

At this point, grandfather have had learned to speak English. It was then that grandfather had thought about being able to earn more money, by exporting Italian products to America. He invested all his saving to buy and store many cans of San Giacomo’s olive oil. He would take the products with him to America. He left for Naples with his load of olive oil and re-embarked on the ship Conte Biancamano. Unfortunately before arriving at Ellis Island, a passenger was found sick and the whole ship was put in quarantine in a far place, some miles from New York coast. Grandfather’s cans of olive oil were confiscated and with that he lost all the savings of his first five years of his job in the mine. He had to start working again, however, this time he chose to work in a farm where they cultivated mushrooms. The dream of an easy enrichment was vanished!!!

In 1930, my great-grandfather fell ill, and because of this, grandfather decided to return to San Giacomo. Unfortunately great-grandfather died some months later, and grandfather inherited his father's properties. Grandfather did not return to America. He decided to live the rest of his life at San Giacomo with his family and administering his newly inherited properties.



Photo 12: Oscar De Lena, Pittston, 1924

Photo sent by grandfather from Pittston to my grandmother Mariannina in San Giacomo.



Photo 13: Photo sent by my grandfather Oscar from Pittston to my grandmother Mariannina in San Giacomo. Oscar Di Lena (right side), with friends Cesidio Amicone and Erminio Conte, also from San Giacomo. They used to wear clean and professional outfits when taking photographs, to demonstrate to their dear ones in Italy how beautiful, modern and rich was to live in America.



Photo 14: S.Giacomo 1922. Photo sent from my grandmother Mariannina to my grandfather in Pittston. Grandmother with her three children in Sn Giacomo: Antonietta (left side), Amelia (right side) e Federico (my father).

LIST OF PASSENGERS FOR THE SAN GIUSTO SHIP

When the San Giusto ship departed from Naples with its destination to New York, on the 1st March 1921, taking my grandfather as one of its passengers, there were other 12 fellows from San Giacomo that were present with him on this ship. Their names are listed below:

<u>Surname, Name</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Age</u>
Di Lena, Oscar	Male	41
D'Amario, Carmela	Female	16
D'Amario, Francesco	Male	17
D'Amario, Anna	Female	7
D'Amario, Antonia	Female	17
Di Salvatore, Teresa	Female	44
Galasso, Federico	Male	27
Luciani, Giuseppe	Male	14
Luciano, Raffaele	Male	16
Miticocchio, Teresa	Female	49
Rossi, Michele	Male	24
Terpolilli, Corradino	Male	18



Photo 15: Ship: San Giusto⁽³⁾

LIFE AND WORK AT THE COAL MINES OF PITTSTON

During my research, I found out that the most popular town chosen for settlement, by the Giacomese was a small town called Pittston, located in the state of Pennsylvania which was approximately 200 Km distant from the two largest cities New York and Philadelphia.



Photo 16: Picture portraying the main street of the town of Pittston⁽¹⁰⁾.

Pittston, a county of Lucerne, in the state of Pennsylvania in the USA, was famous for its numerous coal mines and consequently plenty of work. And that's why San Giacomo's fellow townsmen chose to live over there. However, life was not easy, they were required to work under hot weather and sunny fields of their newly chosen town. They were required to adapt themselves quickly in order to start work as soon as possible and start earning money quickly.

During a normal day's work, the workers were required to enter deep down the mine for many times. They would go to the dark of the long galleries, they would dig out the coal with the pick; they would transport mountains of coal to the coal deposits outside the mine.

The Giacomesse were not the only Italian present in Pittston. There were also Italians from Gualdo Tadino, from San Cataldo and Montedoro.

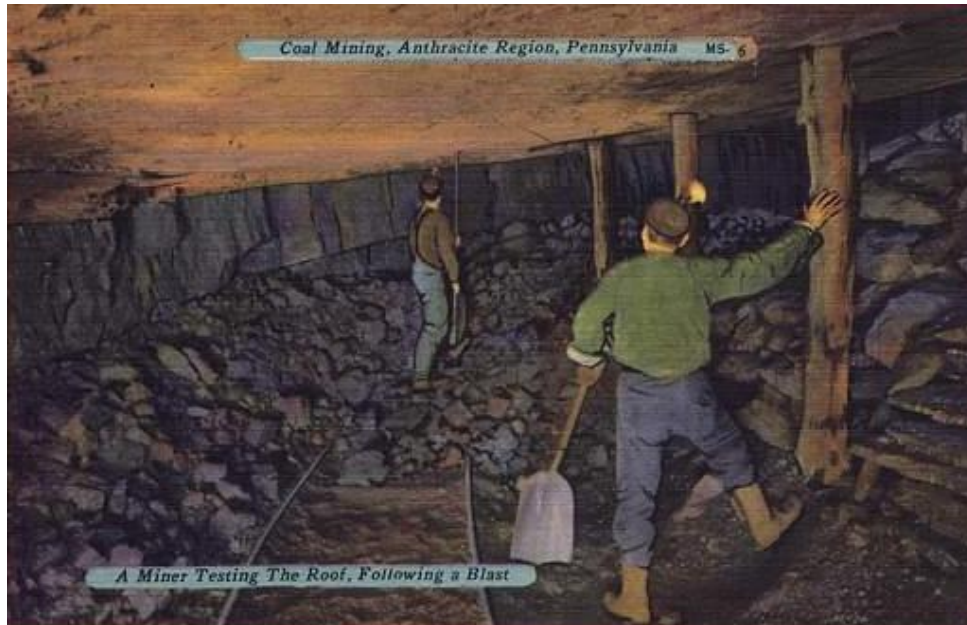


Photo 17: Pittston 1920: Coal mines and miners⁽¹¹⁾



Photo 18: Miners coming up from Mine Shaft on Mine Motor Car⁽¹¹⁾

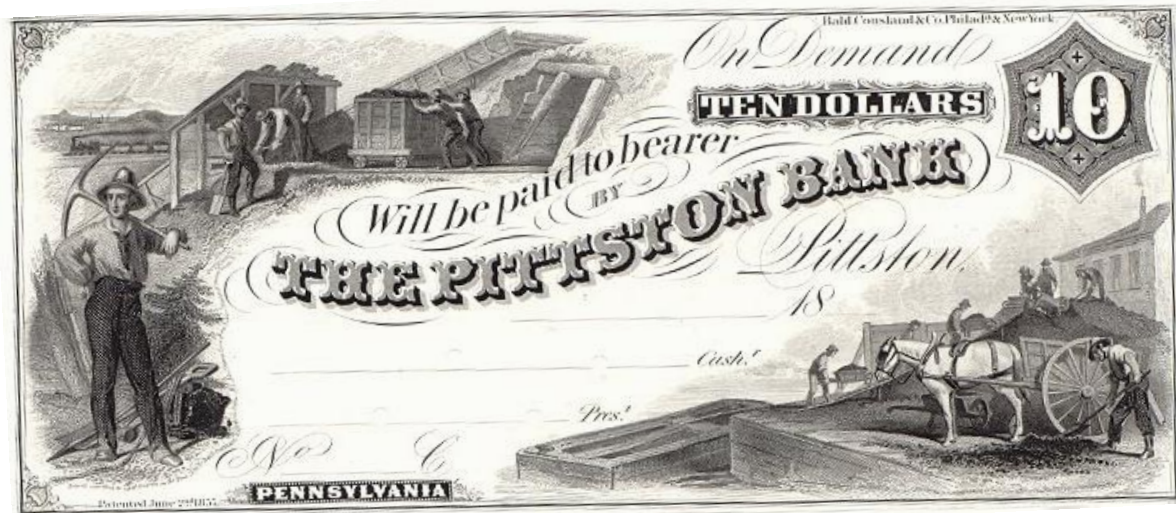


Photo 19: Ten dollars note, showing the work at the coal mines⁽¹¹⁾

After a long series of accidents that has taken so many Italian lives and made so many corpses, today the Pittston mines is closed. Today, the generations that have survived and succeeded enjoy a good living standards and a discreet comfort at Pittston. There are many success stories. For example, the current mayor of Pittston, is the child of an Italian emigrant from the Italian commune of Gualdo Tadino, of the Perugia province, Umbria region. Most of all residents of Pittston are descendants of Italian emigrants and are still attached to their country of origin and their culture. They travel to Italy when they have an opportunity and they keep in touch with their loved ones left in Italy.

Here in San Giacomo, a memorial plaque was erected in 1922 to remember the soldiers of San Giacomo who died during the "First World War". The memorial plaque was funded by the Giacomesse man working in the coal mines of Pittston. The monument can be seen at the entry of San Giacomo.

The Giacomesse people, who migrated to the America, have certainly contributed to the economy and development of not only the town of Pittston but also of the state and the country.

"ITALIANS OF NORTH EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA"

During my research, which continues to this date, I have met many interesting people, who like to discuss about the Italian emigration. While conducting my research in the Internet, I contacted and sent a photograph of my grandfather with other fellow townsman to a site of Pittston, because I wanted to contribute with that photograph which demonstrated the contribution of the Giacomesi to the comfort of the economy of the American nation.

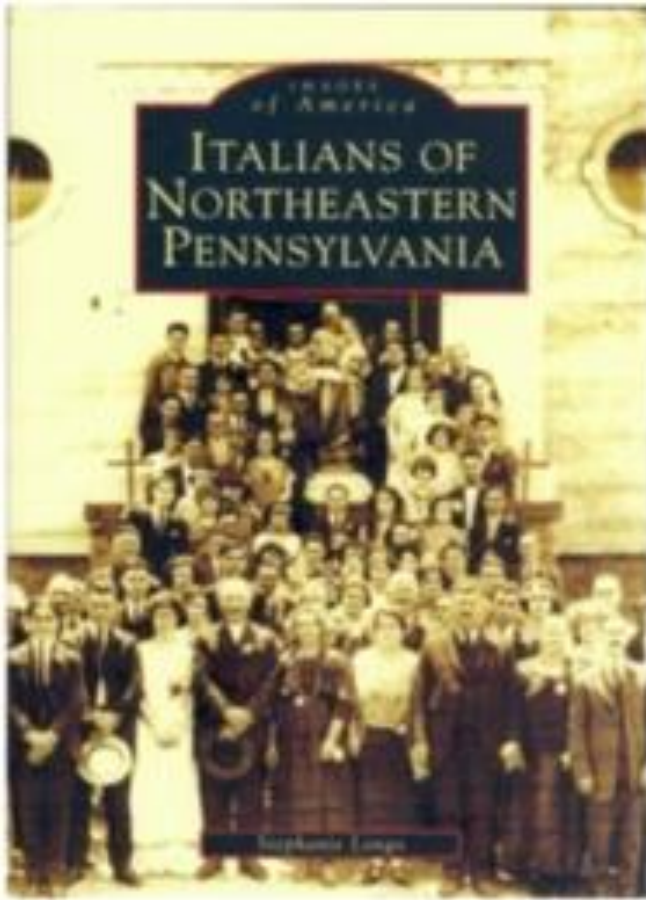


Photo 20: Book Cover
Italians of Northeastern Pennsylvania

From my contribution, I have received an e-mail from an American writer called Stefania Longo, of Scranton city, in the USA, which is approximately 15 kilometres distant from Pittston. She had just graduated in Italian Language and she was invited by her lecturers to write a book on the Italian emigration in that area. Stefania had contacted me and asked me the authorization to use my photos in her book. I gladly and proudly authorised it.

The book has been published in 2006 and I have just received a copy of it.

The book names' is:

"Italians of Northeastern Pennsylvania"

(See picture 20 above)

The book can be purchased through the web site:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/0738536393/202-3700828-1087044>

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this essay was to bring to our international readers a general awareness of the Italian emigration history and in particular it aimed to include personal stories, pictures and statistics from those courageous Giacomesi men and women from the small town of San Giacomo degli Schiavoni, located in Campobasso Province, Molise Region in Italy that happened mainly between 1876 and 1976.

The life of the 45 million Italian emigrants who departed to many countries such as The United States of America and countries in South America was definitely not an easy one. The life and experiences lived by the 267 Giacomesi who had worked in the coalmines of Pittston (USA) was not easy either. Their lives were a life complete with hard work, emotions, sacrifices, enthusiasm, commitment, bravery, courage, and most of all nostalgia, hope and love.

I feel fulfilled and happy that I am being able to contribute to spread the history of the Italian emigration, and to be able to record the sacrifices of these Giacomesi relatives of ours and fellow townspersons, and to learn that their effort have not been vain.

I end this essay by thanking all Giacomesi who, with their precious time, effort and hard work, have left an indelible imprint in various countries around the world, and have prospered their cities, have entertained the local people as they continue up to this date to entertain them, engraving deeply in the social fabric, and also in their economic structure, in their traditions and in their popular memory.

I also take this opportunity to thank everyone that I have met (by internet and those I have met personally) while conducting my research. No doubts, my research will continue, and I do hope to meet many more people along this interesting journey. A big "Thank you" to each one of you.

When my friend Stefania sends me her e-mails, she uses to close it with this sentence:

"It is really the possibility to realize a dream that makes the interesting life."

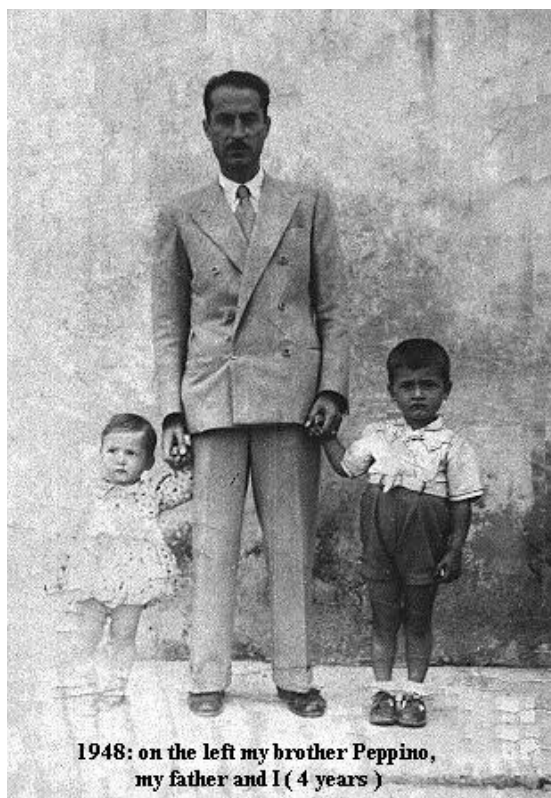
About the Author:

Oscar De Lena was born in San Giacomo degli Schiavoni, province of Campobasso, region of Molise, in Italy, in April 1944.

In 1963, he has completed a Diploma in Electronics in Fermo commune, Provincia di Ascoli Piceno, Regione Marche. He has worked as a teacher in Electronics for a couple of years in the Nautical Institute of Termoli. He also has worked for two years in the Veglia Borletti in Milan (instruments for automotive).

After that, Oscar has worked for 38 years in the Glassworks Society Italian Glass in the Department of Search and Development located in the San Salvo comune, Chieti province, Abruzzo region. In this job, Oscar was responsible for developing prototypes in the laboratory. To date he has patented more than 20 products. And he has travelled all over the world as part of his job for technical meeting and conferences. During these years spent in Society Italian Glass he has also produced two scenographies in glass for the television show Eurovision; and for Hollywood he has produced a car with special glasses used in some television serial.

Oscar married Egilda and they had two sons and 3 granddaughters. Currently he is retired and living in Termoli. However he works now as a technical consultant in Electronics. He also manages the website of San Giacomo in his leisure time and participates in the activities of the Archeoclub of Termoli. He likes reading books about History and Archaeology. Recently Oscar has published his first book entitled: "Termoli from the archaic period to our days."



1948: on the left my brother Peppino,
my father and I (4 years)

Photo 23



1950: from left: my brother Mario,
my father Federico, I and my brother
Peppino

Photo 24

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