

We didn't arrive Yesterday

TITO CECILIA





Fr Tito Cecilia was born in 1929 in Rieti, Italy. He is a member of the Scalabrinian order of Catholic missionary priests and has served in Australia since his ordination in 1957.

He has travelled extensively in Australia and this book arose out of a compelling desire to recognise the contribution made by the ordinary Italian migrant to the Australia of today.

Fr Tito has a relaxed style of narration. He prefers a natural, personal approach and the result is a deep involvement by the reader. At times he is concerned to give the historical perspective but never far away are the personal stories of the hardships and successes of the Italian migrant.

There is the shameful story of some Italians, ignorant of their destination, being taken to the cattle sale yards and offered to the highest bidder – and this in 1920!

Then there is the story of the chicken thief who, when caught by the Italian owner and put in a cellar for the night, escaped by tunnel with the help of some friends, taking with him what wine and provisions he chose from the cellar.

The social impact on the ordinary man in the street, the awakening of many closed, prejudiced minds to a more balanced viewpoint, an appreciation of the flesh and blood migrant behind the historical facts, are factors just as important as the historical worth of this unique book.

We didn't arrive Yesterday

Outline of the history of the Italian migration into
Australia from discovery to the Second World War.

TITO CECILIA

Translated by: Moira Furey
Moreno Giovannoni
Walter Musolino

Translation editor: Moira Furey

The Sunnyland Press
Red Cliffs, Victoria



GA

8.5

13

Original title: "Non Siamo Arrivati Ieri"
(The Sunnyland Press, Red Cliffs, Vic., 1985.)

© Scalabrinians 1987

Published by Scalabrinians
National Library of Australia
Card Number and ISBN 0 7316 0868 2

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced without permission from the author.

Typeset and printed by The Sunnyland Press

DEDICATION

I dedicate my book to commemorate the Centenary of the Scalabrinian Fathers who work incessantly for the spiritual welfare of Italian migrants throughout the world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I realize that writing a historical book does not involve just one person – it is a collective work, the result of direct or indirect collaboration of many people.

To all these people I wish to acknowledge my gratitude, especially His Lordship, Bishop Francis Peter De Campo, Sr. M. Pianta, and Mrs Moroney, who have provided the biographies of their respective families and other precious information.

Sincere thanks also go to the translators of this book – Mr W. Musolino and Mr M. Giovannoni; and to Mrs M. Furey for her invaluable work on the translation and editing of this book, and for solving the many other problems involved in producing the book.

I would like to thank, very specially, my Superior, Fr Joseph Visentin. Thanks to Fr Savino Bernardi, Director of CIRC, my confreres and friends for their interest, advice and encouragement to me while working on this book.

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	7
<i>Introduction</i>	9

1. <i>The end of a legend</i>	14
2. <i>From prison to colony</i>	31
3. <i>Italian migration in the pre-unification era</i>	35
4. <i>From the unification of Italy to the First World War</i>	57
5. <i>A tale of woe: the Italian migrant at the beginning of the 20th Century</i>	69
6. <i>Populate or perish</i>	79

II

NEW SOUTH WALES

(Brief geographical and historical outline)	93
7. <i>From free immigration to the census</i>	97
8. <i>A tragic episode</i>	110
9. <i>From 1881 to the Second World War</i>	129
10. <i>The agricultural miracle of the Riverina</i>	145

VICTORIA

(Brief geographical and historical outline)	161
11. <i>The discovery of Gold</i>	163
12. <i>The Italian rural communities of Victoria</i>	177
13. <i>The Italian community of Melbourne</i>	211

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

(Brief geographical and historical outline)	226
14. <i>The origins of the Italian community in Western Australia</i>	229
15. <i>Italians in the goldfields</i>	243
16. <i>The growth of farming and fishing</i>	263

QUEENSLAND

(Brief geographical and historical outline)

		274
17.	<i>The first pioneers in Queensland</i>	277
18.	<i>The Italians replace the Kanakas</i>	287
19.	<i>Italian migration to Queensland between the two wars</i>	301

III

The Professional and Religious contribution

		323
20.	<i>The professional contribution of the Italian doctors</i>	325
21.	<i>The Italian contribution to music and the figurative arts</i>	339
22.	<i>The Religious contribution</i>	355
	<i>Bibliography</i>	382
	<i>Index</i>	391



Preface

Noel Hicks

PREFACE

At last here is a book that many Australians have been waiting for.

Certainly those one million or more citizens who have a direct Italian heritage will greet this history with a great deal of enthusiasm and pride.

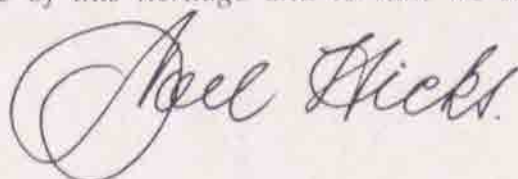
For those who have forgotten, or never knew of the feats performed by their unique pioneering forbears, Father Tito Cecilia's book is a must.

All students of Australian history will find the publication a valuable asset, as no history of this nation would be complete if the story of the Italian contribution was not told.

The Italian influence has existed from the earliest days of European exploration and settlement, growing in importance as the years have passed and adding a vivacity to our Australian culture.

From the cane fields of Queensland; the mines of Broken Hill and Kalgoorlie; the vineyards of the Riverina to the chicue fashion houses, leading restaurants and the stock exchanges of the Capitals, the Italian heritage is now evident.

We know the full story has not yet been told, but in "Non Siamo Arrivati Ieri" Father Tito Cecilia has challenged us to learn more of this heritage and to him we say "Mille Grazie".

A large, elegant handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Noel Hicks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'N'.

NOEL HICKS MP
Member for Riverina-Darling



Introduction

In an article published in 1971 in *Quaderni dell'Istituto Italiano di Cultura* entitled "Italians on the Pacific Frontier", Professor Hugh M. Laracy of the Australian National University wrote: "The Italians achieved little in the South Pacific as their explorers left few names on maps, their missionaries made few converts and their settlers did not establish roots." (1)

Many years before Professor Laracy, Federico Gagliardi, himself a writer and migrant of the second half of the nineteenth century, had this instead to say about the Italians of that time in his book *L'Australia e i suoi commerci*: "... We have farming settlements which truly do Italy proud and are singled out as models... Furthermore, one finds Italians everywhere occupying responsible positions: they are to be found in the post and telegraph offices, in public and private schools, in port carpentry workshops, in the press, the legal and medical professions, in commerce and in industry..." These are two diametrically opposed views: the one negative and the other positive. (2)

It is not the aim of this work to arouse controversy, nor is it meant to be just a compilation of facts and figures, a task I am happy to leave to the statisticians. Its intention is merely to reveal the human face of the individuals who represent the pioneering history of Italian migration, a history written by them in this, the country of their choice. In other words this work is intended to bring to light their contribution to the development of this nation, for which their reward has been a life of sacrifice that was often more difficult than it should have been.

A few years ago an Australian Prime Minister said that Italian migrants from every level of society had for decades made a substantial and significant contribution to every facet of life in this country.

There are whole areas of Australia where Italian enterprise has been of crucial importance. Australia, from east to west, from Victoria to the Northern Territory, would today be materially and culturally poorer and more isolated had it not been for the Italians.

In fact the development of primary industries such as the growing of sugar cane in Queensland, the fishing industry in Western Australia and the wine industry in Victoria is attributable to Italian pioneers.

Italians from Piedmont and Lombardy established prosperous dairy farms in the Castlemaine district where their descendants still live. In the same way the development of the Riverina, the Goulburn Valley, the Sunraysia district and many other areas are veritable monuments to the determination of these Italian pioneers.

Others pioneered various industries: for example, the first glass factory in Australia was opened by an Italian. In Gippsland two Italian miners started a flourishing mining industry, while a group of craftsmen at Hunter's Hill in New South Wales set up an entire village, the only one of its kind in this country.

For all these reasons and more, Professor Laracy's statements appear superficial and, if nothing else, imprecise. Two other factors, which in my opinion are of the greatest importance, should also be kept in mind.

The first is that Australia, at least until the end of the First World War, had sought only migrants who would be farmers, never mechanics, skilled tradesmen or professionals. On the contrary, (apart from the few cases we shall see), these categories of migrants either found it very difficult to have their qualifications recognised and to practise their skills or were simply prevented from doing so. The Consul Bertola in 1905 went so far as to try to discourage the ordinary migrant from coming to Australia:

"The Italian migrant with an insufficient knowledge of English should not even consider Australia as a place in which to practise his trade or be employed in manual labour unless he has relatives, friends or people from his own village to guarantee him suitable employment or a place to stay until he has found his own.

"There are no government or community organisations here to care for the migrant and each is left to himself and his own resources. Professional people such as engineers, architects, etc., are not recognised. Doctors are, in general, accepted after a brief apprenticeship, but in order to be employed they must speak the language and must move out into the interior where none of the locals wishes to go.

"There is no point even in discussing what would be the lot of young people who have studied commerce or of anyone with any sort of education, as they would not find work here." (3)

The second factor which will not escape anyone who studies the history of Italian migration to this country was the widespread prejudice, verging on contempt, towards anyone who was not British. Italian migrants were often accused of being parasites who had come here to take the food from the mouths of Australians, threatening their standard of living and spoiling the genetic stock. It is an historical fact that during one particular period of Australia's history Italian migrants were invariably treated with hostility, being envied and despised as an inferior race, a race of coloureds. People with qualifications were not normally accepted as migrants and the few who did come out found that the practice of their profession was deliberately made difficult, if not denied them altogether. The missionaries, whose work and success cannot be measured on the scale of human achievement, and to whom history has not yet given the recognition they deserve, were treated as intruders. Caught in the middle of Anglo-Irish squabbles, they were criticised and laughed at for their foreign accents and because their apostolic method was not Irish. The poor migrant, a willing worker anxious to contribute to the growth of the nation, was often relegated to the lowest, dirtiest, heaviest and most humble of jobs which the locals and their British mates refused. When the most menial work became sought after, as happened during the depression, the Italian migrant was denied even this. One need only recall the history of the Western Australian mines or the Queensland sugar cane industry, to cite examples.

Italians were able to achieve some recognition of their trade and professional skills and of their intellectual and creative qualities only

when the trade union movement and the Labor Party, still disorganised, were too busy fighting Chinese labour and the Kanakas.

"The year 1890 marked the turning point in Australian attitudes towards the Italians," writes N. Pike. "In a way it was a pity that the Australian labour movement should gather momentum at a time when two important industries, the Queensland sugar industry and the mining industry in Western Australia, needed manpower... The labour movement was opposed to Italian immigration in any sector and particularly in these industries. Italian migrants, by swelling the size of the labour force, would have put the employers in the invidious position of being able to offer work to the unemployed at lower rates of pay." (4)

Federal and State enquiries which repeatedly examined these accusations invariably proved them to be unfounded.

The number of migrants later increased, but there were fewer skilled people among them. This was because the unions and the Labor Party, little by little, imposed their views on the nation, refusing to recognise the qualifications of non-British migrants, ignoring their technical and creative skills and barely tolerating the poor agricultural worker who agreed to vanish into the interior of the continent. Perhaps it is no exaggeration to say that after 1890 Italian migrants coming to this country were often made to suffer, were persecuted and hounded. However, thanks to their widely recognised honesty, frugality and tenacious desire to work, the Italians never gave up.

They willingly accepted the dirtiest, most menial jobs in the steel-works and on the assembly lines. They often achieved economic independence by setting up new industries or seeking refuge in agriculture which, partly at least, gave them once more the kind of freedom they had enjoyed before emigrating.

This book merely aims to record certain aspects of this human adventure. It does not pretend to be a comprehensive and systematic history of Italian migration to Australia. I leave the historical analysis to those who are more skilful. I have concerned myself with the different aspects of the lives of migrants and with the settlement problems they encountered. While a few of the names in this book may belong to professional people, for the most part they are those of ordinary labourers.

Finally, this book has been written for ordinary people, the people most often ignored. They are the people closest to my heart, the people for whom I too, in solidarity with them, became a migrant.

Tito Cecilia

NOTES

- 1 - H. Laracy, "Gli Italiani nel Pacifico del Sud" in *Quaderni dell'Istituto Italiano di Cultura*, No. 4, Melbourne, 1971, p. 67.
- 2 - F. Gagliardi, *L'Australia e i suoi commerci*, Tipografia Commerciale, Florence, 1897.
- 3 - C. Bertola, "Notizie circa le condizioni degli immigrati italiani in Australia", in *Emigrazione e Colonie*, Rome, p. 544.
- 4 - N.O.P. Pike, "Some Reflections on Italian Immigration into Australia", in *The Australian Quarterly*, December, 1946, p. 36.

I

*"You lose your identity
if you ignore your past.*

*The past is what you are;
if you don't understand that
you will have no sense of your
real identity."*

Dr. Brian Crozier.

1— THE END OF A LEGEND

SEARCHING

History will perhaps never be able to tell us with any certainty who first set foot on the vast Australian continent. Archaeological research has revealed that the Aborigines were here at least as long ago as 40,000 years B.C., while the Chinese and the Egyptians are supposed to have visited Australia before the beginning of the Christian era.

Since the sixteenth century, European navigators had set off in search of the great southland. A lot of strange and exaggerated things had been said and written about it since Roman and Greek times, and the debate had continued with increasing vigour from the Middle Ages through to the Renaissance.

Writers and poets, scholars and travellers, mathematicians and geographers had provided descriptions of it and had even drawn surprisingly accurate maps. A group of Italian scholars caught between the myth and the reality called it *Terra Australis Incognita*.

Others called it "the elusive continent" because just when they were sure they had discovered it someone else would prove that they had not. This happened to Jorge De Meneses in 1526 who, while sailing along the northern coast of New Guinea believed he had discovered Australia, and called it "*Terra Australis*" (1). Pedro Fernandez De Quiros (1605) made the same mistake and gave the name "*Australia de Espiritu Santo*" to what were in fact the New Hebrides. (2)

Many others maintained they had landed on its shores, but no one knows for certain who was first. Some say it was the Portuguese, who landed on the northern coast of Australia in 1542 while exploring the archipelago of the East Indies. However, they kept their discovery secret so that the Spaniards who had invaded their country could not benefit from it.

Others claim that Torres, known as "The Spaniard", landed on the northern coast of Australia as early as 1606 when sailing through the strait, now named after him, between New Guinea and the unknown continent.

According to other sources the French were first, through the provençal sailor Guillaume le Testu who returned from the South Seas with maps of "*Terra Australis*" (3)

But since the Spaniards and the Portuguese kept their discovery well hidden for selfish political and commercial reasons, the credit for revealing the existence of the new continent to the rest of Europe must go to the Dutch. To them must also go the honour of being known as the first to set foot in the land they called "New Holland".

The Dutchman Willem Jansz, captain of the *Duyfken* (little dove), sailed into the Gulf of Carpentaria in March, 1606. Some of the crew who went ashore were massacred by Aborigines. He called the natives "wild, evil black savages". Ten years later in 1616, another Dutchman, Dirk Hartog set foot on the continent at Shark's Bay.

Hartog, who was Captain of the *Eendracht*, left behind what is evidence of the earliest European contact with this, the last continent to be discovered – an engraved pewter plate. (4)

On board the Dutch brigantine there was a Genoese sailor by the name of Mario Sega who is mentioned in the captain's shipboard diary. He is supposed to have met a young Aboriginal woman while out walking along the beach and to have fallen hopelessly in love with her, never returning home. (5)

The Dutch sent expedition after expedition with the aim of exploring and eventually colonising the new continent. However, all their attempts were in vain: first because of the hostility of the Aborigines, second because several expeditions were shipwrecked on the west coast, and finally because time after time all they found was arid, sandy terrain with no trace of gold or silver.

Willem Jansz, captain of the *Duyfken*, reported: "We did not find a single fruit-bearing tree, or anything which might be useful to man, and the few natives encountered were the most miserable and primitive race in the world...they differ but little from brutes." (6)

The most fortunate and "romantic" expedition of all was the one headed by the intrepid and lovelorn explorer Abel Tasman.

It is said that he had asked for the hand in marriage of the daughter of Anthony Van Diemen, the Governor of Batavia. The governor told him that he could marry her only if he distinguished himself by some great enterprise. Tasman, who was determined to succeed, set out to be the first to sail around the unknown southland. With this in mind he left Batavia on 6 August 1642 and, in the two ships the *Heemskerk* and the *Zeehaen*, sailed for the island south of Australian continent which he called Van Diemen's Land in the governor's honour. By the time he turned north to return to Batavia he had discovered both the large, fertile islands of New Zealand to the east and had circumnavigated the mysterious southern continent, thereby proving that it was indeed an island, although it still remained "Terra Australis Incognita". (7)

In 1644 Tasman again sailed southward, this time heading due east towards the south coast of New Guinea. However, he was unable to

find his way through the many coral reefs and into Torres Strait, and like the explorers Jansz and Cortensz before him, ended up on the shores of Cape York Peninsula. Heading west he followed the Australian coastline as far as North-West Cape and from there sailed for Java. (8)

Disappointed that their discoveries did not lend themselves easily to commercial exploitation, the Dutch East India Company sent its ships to other shores for quicker and more profitable returns.

The first Englishman to set foot on the unknown continent, 40 years later in 1688, was William Dampier the pirate. As Captain Swan commanding the ship 'Cygnets', stolen from other pirates, he and his crew scoured the seas intent on piracy and not in search of new lands. They were forced to dry-dock on the West Australian coast in order to scrape the ship's hull clear of barnacles and they stayed for three months, in which time Dampier was able to study the land and the Aborigines. In 1697, having returned to England, he published a book entitled *A New Journey around the World*, in which he partly repeated what the Dutchman Hartog had said: "The land is dry and sandy, the inhabitants do not even know how to construct a hut for themselves or grow plants." (9) His book aroused considerable interest among British merchants who asked him to go back to explore the eastern coastline. So in 1699, with the backing of the British Admiralty, he left to explore the east coast of the continent as captain of the 'Roebuck'. But he again ended up on the west coast, and from there headed north. Running short of water after having explored about 600 miles of coastline, he took shelter on the island of Timor and from there returned to England, having achieved little. (10)

Throughout the eighteenth century, France, Spain and England competed for control of the seas and, therefore, of trade with the colonies. (11)

DISCOVERY AND POSSESSION

In 1770 Captain James Cook, the luckiest and most famous of English sailors, discovered the east coast of Australia quite by chance on his return journey from New Zealand. With its abundance of vegetation and wildlife it did not resemble the west at all. (12)

After accompanying a team of astronomers to Tahiti to observe the transit of Venus across the sun, Cook, under instructions from London, had continued on towards the south-west in search of the elusive continent. A storm forced him onto the New Zealand coast where he remained for six months, charting 240 miles of coastline and putting to rest the theory that New Zealand was nothing but the promontory of another great continent. On 19 April 1770, sailing north-west from New Zealand and after almost a month at sea, he sighted Point Hicks (today known as Cape Everard), between Orbest and Mallacoota, naming it after the lieutenant who had first spotted it. Ten days later, on 29 April, the *Endeavour* dropped anchor at 34° latitude south, in a magnificent harbour. This was later called Botany Bay

because of the great variety of plants and flowers discovered there by the botanist Joseph Banks and his Swedish assistant, Solander.

No sooner had the British flag been unfurled at Botany Bay, than the first white man was buried there. It was as if the body of sailor Torby Sutherland (13) now stood guard over the flag, symbolising the British Empire's taking possession of the new continent.

On 6 May, after discovering and naming Port Jackson, Cook turned north and continued to chart the coastline. On 22 May he landed at latitude $24^{\circ} 20'$ south, and again on 30 May at $22^{\circ} 10'$ south.

On 10 June, near Cape Tribulation, not far from modern-day Cairns, the *Endeavour* ran aground on a coral reef. Having managed to free her, Cook guided her for repairs into the safety of the estuary of a river he named the Endeavour, at latitude $15^{\circ} 26'$.

His crew took a month to repair the seriously damaged ship. However, it was an eventful month for Cook and his men who saw their first kangaroos. "[They] cannot be compared with any other European animal," he wrote. (14)

On 11 July the first small group of four Aborigines approached the crew of the *Endeavour*. Cook in his diary describes them as follows: "They were naked and their skin was the colour of ebony; their hair was short and glossy. Certain parts of their bodies were coloured red with white stripes on the chest and face. Their features were not ugly and their voices were soft and melodic." (15)

During this enforced rest many of the crew became alarmed when one sailor said he had seen the devil, describing him thus: "He was as large as a five gallon cask, he was black with horns and wings; I could have touched him with my hands." It was later discovered that this formidable apparition was nothing more than a flying fox, which is generally 30 centimetres long and has a wing-span of about one yard. "It must be recognised," wrote Cook, "that it has a frightful appearance, and is black and as large as a woodcock." (16)

On 21 August 1770 the *Endeavour* reached the far northern tip of the continent, which Cook named Cape York and from Possession Island he took possession of all the eastern part of the country in the name of George III with the following words, "As I prepare to leave the east coast of New Holland, which I have followed here from latitude 38° and which I am certain no other European has ever seen, I once again raise the English colours. Although I may already have taken possession of several places I now take possession of the whole of the eastern coast under the name of New South Wales, in the name of my sovereign George III, King of Great Britain." (17)

Cook was sufficiently pleased with his discovery to write in the ship's diary: "Except in the marshes we found good soil everywhere, light and sandy, good for producing a great quantity of good pasture. Further inland from the coast the soil was richer and black in colour."

As if foreseeing the use to which it would later be put he continued, "Most sorts of grains, fruits and plants will grow here and no serious obstacle to the establishment of a colony can be envisaged." (18)

Back in England after three years at sea, Cook aroused extraordinary interest throughout Europe with the account of his discoveries.

Aware that the British were preparing to send another exploratory expedition to the South Seas, the French, anxious to rival Captain Cook, sent Marion De Fresne in two ships to explore the South Seas. But the expedition was tragically interrupted. Landing in New Zealand, De Fresne was killed by the Maoris. This misfortune did not deter the French from wanting to take possession of Australia and make it their colony, and so they sent the famous La Perouse with two more ship-loads of settlers to claim it and start a settlement. However, La Perouse sailed around the seas of Polynesia for two years and when he finally landed at Botany Bay he learned that the English were already there, having arrived six days earlier. Six days had changed the course of history and Australia was to be a British possession rather than a French one. It is impossible to imagine what might have been.

The illustrious, though unfortunate, La Perouse, seeing that the place was already occupied, set sail once more. Neither he nor his expedition were ever sighted again and their disappearance remains a mystery to this day. (19)

ITALIANS IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE BEFORE COOK'S DISCOVERY

At this point a question springs naturally to mind: what part did the Italians, who down through the ages have been the best sailors in the world, play in the discovery of Australia?

It is as difficult to establish who might have been the first Italian to set foot in Australia as it is to know with any certainty which European first discovered the "unknown continent".

Without attributing a greater significance to them than their role warrants, it is not hard to prove that Italian scholars and explorers contributed to the exploration of the Southern Hemisphere and to the discovery of the great southern island. It can be argued that the Italians were among the first to open up exploratory routes to the Far East and to set other explorers on the road to discovering the unknown continent.

Marco Polo (1254-1324), who lived for many years in Asia with his merchant father, was the first to give thirteenth century Europe a glimpse of the mysterious east by pointing out new trade routes.

In his book, *Il Milione*, Marco Polo told of a great island beyond China to the east, but few in the west believed him. "Nevertheless the Nuremberg geographers based their calculations on Marco Polo's accounts, and these together with Ptolemy's mistakes in longitude, led Christopher Columbus to believe that the shortest route to the eastern parts of Asia lay to the west. This in turn led to Christopher Columbus's discovery of America, on which it seems any knowledge of Oceania was to depend." (20)

Furthermore, the cartographers of the time began to sketch the outline of the Australian continent on the basis of Marco Polo's tales. "Marco Polo's *Million*, in fact," wrote the historian Arnold Wood, "for centuries influenced those who undertook voyages of exploration in the seas around Australia." (21)

Among the great travellers and scholars who spoke of a southern continent were the two missionaries Fra Oderico da Pordenone, in the early fourteenth century, and Fra Mauro, a Venetian cartographer, in the second half of the fifteenth century. They left maps and descriptions of "Terra Australis" based on the information gathered by other explorers, and recounted stories about many of their own contemporaries who supposedly journeyed to those parts and never returned. (22)

On his return from having taken part in the first circumnavigation of the globe, which proved that the earth was round, Pigafetta, born in Vicenza between 1480 and 1490, reported the existence of the "great southland". Pigafetta, who was in the service of the Papal Nuncio in Spain, was not a sailor. However, because of his great interest in exploration the Spanish King allowed him to join Magellan's expedition to sail around the world (1519-1522). He later wrote a fascinating account of this voyage (1525). (23)

Another Genoese sailor, whose identity remains a mystery, went as far as the Moluccas where he was captured by the Portuguese. (24)

Italian sailors figure prominently in the history of Spanish and Portuguese sea travel, which is not surprising given that Naples and Sicily were part of the Spanish Empire. (25) It was therefore quite common to find Neapolitan and Sicilian seamen on the ships of these countries and often in charge of their sea-going expeditions.

Even Portugal used Italian crews on its ships when, during the reign of King Alphonse I and later, especially under the House of Aviz, it experienced a golden age of economic sovereignty and territorial expansion.

"During this period Portuguese navigators with Italian crews discovered a sea route to the Indian and Pacific Oceans by sailing around Africa." (26) The Italian presence on Portuguese ships increased when the country was invaded by Spain towards the end of the sixteenth century. It is almost certain that this is why at least a part of Pedro Fernandez De Quiros's crew on the expedition to the seas of the Southern Hemisphere consisted of Italians. Once the expedition reached New Guinea in 1605, the ship captained by Torres became separated from that under the command of De Quiros who thought that he had found the southern continent when in fact he had discovered the New Hebrides. It was Torres, however, who first sailed through the strait between New Guinea and Australia which was later named after him.

Two other names are worth mentioning in the context of this Italian involvement in the exploration of the Southern Hemisphere: Andrea Corsali, a Florentine traveller who paved the way for Portuguese

expansion into the Far East (1515-1517), and Giovanni Rodriguez, a cartographer from Messina who drew an accurate map of the northern coastline of Australia. (27)

Further proof of the Italians' cooperation at this time with the Portuguese and the Spaniards is found in a letter to Pope Urban VII from the Milanese Jesuit Fr. Cristoforo Borri. In his letter, the Jesuit priest informed the Pope that he had been invited to a meeting of the King's Council in Lisbon to discuss a certain Dutch ship which, forced off its route by a storm while sailing near the Cape of Good Hope, had reached the mysterious continent referred to in the maps of the time as 'unknown land'. The sailors themselves had seen this "vast, wide and densely populated" country and the King's Council decided to send His Majesty's ships to explore it. (28)

Fr. O. Riccio (1621-1685) from Santa Maria at Cintoia, near Florence, and prior of the Monastery of St. Dominic in Manila, wrote to the Cardinals of the Evangelic Congregation on 6 June 1675, expressing a desire to go to this "Terra Australis", this unknown land, the "fifth" part of the world, land of many kingdoms and nations, to carry the word of God.

"Men born along the coastal areas of the southern land," Fr. Riccio wrote, "have been brought to Manila by Dutch sailors. They are tanned, some are black, and they are brave and strong.

"I offer myself as leader of this mission and if I die I do so carrying out God's great work". (29)

But the letter took seven years to reach Rome and the favourable reply another five to arrive in Manila, a year in fact after Fr. Riccio's death. One can only guess what might have been had it arrived in time.

One hundred years later, in 1770, the Englishman Captain James Cook was to discover the east coast of the new continent, thus establishing its existence once and for all as far as Europe was concerned. Meanwhile there were two Italians even on board Cook's ship the *Endeavour*: James Mario Matra and Antonio Ponto.

We shall see later how important Matra and his plans for colonising the new continent were in the history of Australia.

AFTER THE DISCOVERY OF AUSTRALIA

Alessandro Malespina was the last great Italian sailor to head a scientific expedition on behalf of the Spanish Government and to undertake a sea journey of any importance, landing in Australia only five years after the foundation of the colony. Born in Lunigiana into a noble Tuscan family, he grew up and was educated in Palermo where his father had moved the family to be near his wife's uncle, Giovanni di Fogliano, the Marquis di Fogliano. After having attended a school for the nobility in Palermo while still a very young man, and being a lover of the sea, he enlisted in the Spanish navy and fought against the British, first in Northern Africa and later in Spain.

With several decorations for bravery he was made a Knight of the Order of Malta and promoted to the rank of lieutenant. Having been given command of the ship *Asuncion* in 1782, he crossed the Atlantic several times and spent two years sailing around the world. On 21 September 1789 Charles IV appointed Malaspina, whom he had already promoted to captain, as leader of a scientific expedition which lasted five years, one month and 21 days. It was a voyage to explore and gather scientific knowledge along the east and west coasts of Patagonia, from Peru to Alaska and on to the Maryanne Islands, the Philippines, the New Hebrides, New Zealand and Australia, where he arrived on 10 March 1793. (30)

Before sailing into Port Jackson the two corvettes anchored for several days off shore in order to better observe a partial eclipse of the sun.

"At dawn," wrote Malaspina, "our position was excellent: the entrance to Botany Bay was to the south-west and that to Port Jackson 45° of the needle to the north-west. We were only about three leagues away. The British flag had been flying over this same port since the previous day and the weather was excellent. A south-westerly wind was blowing and the sea was rather choppy with no sign of abating, so we had to abandon our plans to enter Botany Bay and chose Port Jackson instead.

"Thanks to the skill of our crew an English pilot was able to board the corvettes at 8 a.m. We then sailed north-west and at 10 a.m. dropped anchor because, with the wind and the tide opposing us, we were unable to proceed as far as Sydney Cove where the colony had been established. Immediately, an armed launch drew up alongside the *Descubierta*. It carried on board the Officer of the Garrison bearing the good wishes of the Acting Governor, who had given him orders to enquire about how the settlement could be of assistance to us". (31)

Malaspina replied that apart from taking a rest they needed fresh supplies of water and firewood and to see to the usual repairs of the ship. They also intended to collect botanical specimens for the Royal Cabinet, study the heavens and conduct gravitational experiments. As guests of the colonial authorities for a month they completed their examination of the skies as well as a study of the water courses. While Antonio Tova often went out hunting, Brambilla, who was from Milan, and Alessandro Belmonte, from Rimini, painted many landscapes as well as Sydney's beautiful harbour. During their stay relations between the visitors and the inhabitants of the colony were excellent. (32)

The Australian historian Colwell in his *Story of Australia* writes that on 2 April, before leaving, Malaspina gave the colony an Andalusian cow as a gift. (33)

Having returned to Spain, and while busy classifying the enormous quantity of rare material and geographical data collected over the almost six years of the expedition, Malaspina was charged with plotting against the Crown. He was thrown into prison where he languished

for seven years. Much of the material he had collected was destroyed, lost or stolen and was scattered throughout Europe. He was freed by Napoleon and ended his days at Pontremoli on 10 April 1810. (34) In all probability, Malaspina, could have achieved for Spain what it (and France) had wanted so much: the colonisation of Australia. With his premature death his fame as one of the great sailors grew, arousing in others the desire to continue the ancient sea-going tradition of Italy.

After Malaspina, one of the first Italians to set off on the high seas was Count Carlo Vidua di Cinzano, from Casale Monferrato in Piedmont. Having sailed to North America, the Philippines and Java, in 1820 he was in the oceans of the Southern Hemisphere carrying out extensive explorations along the northern coast of New Guinea, which throughout the nineteenth century was to be the destination of the last Italian explorers. Count Carlo Vidua's expedition was brought to a halt by his death on 25 December 1832 as a result of lava burns from a volcanic eruption. (35)

In 1857 Agostino Tortilio in the *Sofia*, the last of the independent explorers of an Italy which had not yet been unified, became the first Italian to sail around the world. An island in the Pacific still bears his name. (36)

Giorgio Emilio Cerruti was another who, after having spent much time sailing around Asia, in 1860 went as far as Australia, visiting Sydney and Melbourne.

During his stay in Australia he wrote a series of articles on silkworm breeding for the *Farmers' Journal* and the *Gardeners' Chronicle* entitled 'The Mulberry and the Silkworm'. Cerruti was struck by Australia's prosperity which he attributed to the transportation of convicts, and firmly believed Italy too should have its penal colonies. He launched a campaign to convince the Italian Government of the benefits that such a move would bring to the nation. With this in mind, Cerruti, accompanied by a military engineer, Captain Di Lena, led a semi-official party to New Guinea in order to study the possibility of establishing a colony of Italian convicts there. (37)

He had to be satisfied with a rich collection of material for the Museum of Natural Sciences in Turin and with leaving many Italian names on the maps of the times: Cape Boria, Cape Riboti, Cape Biagi, Port Emilia, Port Ernesto, Port Maria, Cape Ferraris, Cape Milan, Cape Turin, Cavour Bay and Bonaventure Pass. (38)

In 1865 the corvette *Magenta* left Genoa to sail around the world on a long scientific and trade expedition. It spent some considerable time in the South Seas and visited Australia, the islands of the Pacific and the Far east. (39) In 1870 and 1875 there were other difficult scientific expeditions with New Guinea as their general destination. This suggests that science was not their only object. Newly unified Italy dreamed in fact of expansion, or at least of having colonies to which it could deport its own convicts.

For example, Carlo Racchia, leader of an expedition in the corvette

Principessa Clotilde, had orders to look for territory on Borneo which might be suitable for this. But the interests of other countries such as Holland, the United States and England meant the project failed. The plan to take possession of New Guinea also met with stiff opposition from England.

"Although the Italians arrived too late for discovery or political expansion, there was still scope for exploration in the Pacific, especially in New Guinea which in 1870 was still practically unknown to Europeans. Prominent among the explorer-scientists were the naturalists Odoardo Beccari and Luigi Maria D'Albertis, who spent nearly ten years exploring there, Beccari studying the western part and D'Albertis sailing 580 miles up the Fly River. They were the first Europeans to penetrate into the island's interior." (40)

It was D'Albertis who planted the Italian flag on the highest peak of a mountain range where the Fly River rises, and which he named the Victor Emmanuel Mountains.

Apart from the Victor Emmanuel Mountains his presence is remembered in the names of the D'Albertis Islands, the D'Albertis Junction of the Fly River and, finally, in the name of the same river's estuary, the Neva Strait.

In the last quarter of the century Italy laid claim to part of New Guinea, and Menotti Garibaldi, son of the "hero of two worlds", tried to organise an expedition of two thousand volunteers to occupy and colonise it but failed. An Italian journalist of the time, writing of British and German claims to New Guinea, said, "Let us recall Italy's feeble protest over its supposed claims to Papuasia, following its exploration by Luigi Maria D'Albertis and Odoardo Beccari. If Menotti had left for the Coral Sea with his volunteers, just as his father had left for the Mar di Sicilia twenty years earlier, the Italian flag might now be flying over Port Moresby and perhaps even at Port Breton, where the forgotten remains of many Venetian workers lie, workers brought there to die of fever and hardship by the infamous Marquis De Rays." (41)

JAMES MATRA: FATHER OF AUSTRALIA?

In all this, the most legendary and mysterious character, who is at the same time intimately connected with the colonisation of the new continent, is James Mario Matra.

Without entering into a discussion of its history, it is enough to say that Matra was the name of a powerful Corsican clan. As Bladen says in his introduction to *Historical Records of New South Wales*, the Matras were "a very influential family, one of those families which, with the Gaffori, were the protectors of the island." (42)

Matra is a name still found in Tuscany, on the Island of Elba, and in Liguria. It is also the name of a small town some 30 kilometres from Bastia, nestled among rocky cliffs, which still boasts Matra Castle.

In 1745 Matra, a protector and noble who had sided with the Genoese, was murdered by De Paoli's men. De Paoli, who was the

leader of the Corsican separatist movement and enemy of the Genoese, had vowed to destroy the Matra family.

The Matras, therefore, had to flee the island and seek refuge, initially in England and later in the American colonies.

During their flight, the Matras in all probability changed their name to Magra (the name of a river in Liguria) for fear that the Corsican vendetta might reach them even during their exile.

But the Matras suffered hardship and deprivation again during the American War of Independence, and many of them who had remained loyal to the Crown were stripped of all their assets and obliged to seek refuge in Canada or return to England.

James Matra, who was born in New York, was sent to England to study. For his foreign tour of duty he served on board Cook's *Endeavour* as a petty officer and was present at the historic landing in 1770.

Matra's importance lies not so much in his having taken part in the discovery of the new continent as in his plans for the colonisation of New South Wales.

He was the first to put a proposal in writing and his was the most rational and complete one presented to the British Government. In it Matra reveals himself to be a cultured and practical man, a businessman with the mind of a statesman. (43)

Among the various documents on New South Wales held in the Public Records in London there are two whose authors describe to the government of the day their views on the colonisation of the land discovered by Captain James Cook in the southern oceans.

Here briefly are the main points of Matra's plan:

1 - The proposed colony of New South Wales would first of all compensate for the loss of the American colonies.

2 - The new territory was very well suited for colonisation. "The climate and soil are so much in harmony that any product from Europe and the Indies can be grown there and, with some settlements and good administration, in 20 or 30 years a revolution might be brought about in European trade which would guarantee England a large part of the whole and the monopoly of a part of it." (44)

3 - The colony could become a refuge for those settlers who, having remained faithful to the Crown, have suffered after the American War of Independence. These settlers in fact could form the nucleus of the future population of New South Wales. Matra claimed that this proposal had met with the approval of many Americans whom he had consulted.

4 - The cost of establishing the colony would not exceed 3,000 pounds. At first it would be sufficient to send two ships with two companies of marines and some 20 tradesmen; no more would be required in the initial phase. In the new colony these men would need to prepare the way for the arrival of permanent settlers. Livestock, seed, fruit-bearing plants, etc. would be brought over by ship.

5 - In order to maintain the necessary balance in the population one of the ships could be sent to New Guinea, Tahiti and other nearby islands to bring back families and women willing to resettle in the new colony.

6 - The colony would favour increased commerce with China and open up trade with Japan, Korea and the Moluccas. Timber and flax from New Zealand were of great importance for English shipping. There was also the possibility of considerable growth in the wool trade.

7 - Finally, in response to those who were alarmed at the idea of a new call to emigrate, and feared that the mother country would be weakened by it, Matra noted that the project deserved the fullest support as the settlers would be going to a place where they would be more useful than in the United States.

A second blueprint for colonisation was drawn up by Sir George Young. Using Matra's plan as a guide, he appears to emphasise the benefits of colonisation such as trade, the growing of spices and flax, mining of precious metals, timber, etc., as well as the use of Chinese and South Pacific labour and the establishment of a haven for American loyalists. (45) In this respect it should be noted that while Matra was concerned for his fellow countrymen who had been stripped of all their assets, George Young was preoccupied with the financial benefits which would accrue to England.

Lord Sydney, on the other hand, in a letter dated 8 August 1796 to the Lords of the Treasury and in another dated 31 August to the Lords of the Admiralty, pointed out quite clearly that this enterprise should be undertaken only in order to empty the overcrowded English gaols. In fact the plan enclosed with the letter was entitled: "Fundamental points of a plan to save us from the convicts by the establishment of a colony in New South Wales".

This plan outlines in remarkable detail an expedition to Botany Bay, but makes no mention of migrants or free settlers.

Lord Sydney, having advised the Lords of the Treasury and the Admiralty of His Majesty's wishes, instructed them to arrange with all due haste for the necessary number of ships to carry 750 convicts sentenced to transportation to Botany Bay, along with supplies and agricultural implements. (46)

Referring to his plan he writes: "In order to provide properly for the deportees and to render their deportation mutually beneficial for them and the State, the establishment of a colony in New South Wales, a place with rich soil and a healthy climate, from which it is difficult to return without permission because of the distance, appears particularly well suited and responsive to the views of the Government." (47)

The decision to found a colony in New South Wales was made by the British Government in the interval between two wars - the American War of Independence which had just ended and the Napoleonic one which was to last until 1815. These events profoundly influenced

British colonial policy.

The new colony would in fact solve the problem of overcrowding in British prisons without the need to spend money on a new and uncertain colonial venture. The country could not afford to lose money and men, both of which were so important to the nation.

From 1717 until 1776 England had sold convicts to shipping companies, who then transported them to the southern colonies of America where they were sold to the owners of large estates. (48)

But the American colonies had now won their independence from Britain and had closed their doors to deportees.

The problem of the American loyalists had largely solved itself as practically all of them had resettled in England or Canada.

English prisons had thus come to hold 100,000 convicts who had already been sentenced to transportation and were even kept in old hulks on the Thames. (49)

In wondering who might be called the Father of Australia, the historian James Colwell puts forward four candidates in his *Story of Australia*: Captain James Cook, Sir Joseph Banks, Governor Arthur Phillip and Matra. He quickly dismisses Cook since "he never took any interest in Australia". Adrian adds that Cook "had so little confidence in its future that he, as if from a kind of carelessness, ignored it". (50) But Cook did what he had been ordered to do, and did it well, and he remains the greatest of all sailors.

Even Phillip does not qualify, despite being like a father to the unfortunate deportees, for the decision to found a colony had already been made before he was chosen to lead the first fleet.

This leaves Banks and Matra. Which of the two, Colwell asks, should be given the title "Father of Australia"? "It is evident that in all fairness the title "Father of Australia" must go to Matra. To bestow it on another person would be to honour someone who does not deserve it." (51)

On the other hand, G.B. Barton, in the *History of New South Wales* is equally emphatic about Banks. In fact he states that the credit for the idea of a colony in Botany Bay should go to Banks who first suggested it in 1779. Once the idea had been accepted those who drew up the official proposal for government approval named Banks as the authority on the subject.

Government ministers consulted him with the same confidence shown by the promoters of the project. According to Barton, there is no doubt that it was because of Banks' strong belief in the success of the venture that the Government in the end ordered that the New South Wales expedition be financed and got ready.

Colwell, who had wondered about this, retorts: "It seems that Banks showed little interest in New South Wales as a suitable place for a colony until 18 months after its foundation at Sydney Cove.

"When Banks told a committee of the House of Commons that he was in favour of the idea of a colony at Botany Bay he was thinking

of a penal colony; the committee was, in fact, inquiring into the state of prisons and the issue of the transportation of convicts." (52)

Matra on the other hand had in mind a free settlement to which loyalists from the American colonies, lost in the War of Independence, could be sent.

Perhaps at the instigation of others, including Banks himself, and in order to make it more acceptable to English politicians, Matra added the issue of the convicts, the use of Asian labour and the importation of women from the islands of the South Pacific in the amendments to his original blueprint. In the end even Barton says: "If the Government had adopted the proposals put forward it would have been the greatest historical achievement of the Pitt administration." (53)

Captain J.H. Watson adds: "If Matra's proposals had been implemented how different conditions would have been for the first settlers! How much suffering would have been spared to thousands of unfortunates and how much money the British Government would have saved!" (54)

NOTES

- 1 - D. Pike, *Australia: The Quiet Continent* - Cambridge University Press, 1970, p. 4.
- 2 - *ibid.*, p. 4.
- 3 - J.H. Heaton, *Australian Dictionary of Dates & Men of the Time - History of Australasia from 1542 to May 1879*, Melbourne 1879.
- 4 - G.V. Portus, *Australia Since 1606*, Humphrey Milford - Melbourne, 1932, p. 9.
The inscription on the pewter plate read: "on 25 October 1616 the 'Eendracht' from Amsterdam landed here; Ship's-Commissioner Gilles Miobrais of Lieges; Captain Dirk Hattichs of Amsterdam: it set sail again on the 27th. Deputy Commissioner Jan Stins, Chief Pilot E. Doores of Bil. (Cf. G.V. Portus, *op. cit.*, p. 11).
- 5 - Al Grassby, *Italian Connection*, (paper), p. 5.
- 6 - D. Pike, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
- 7 - G.B. Balangero, *Australia e Ceylon*, ed. Paravia, Turin, 1885, p. 54.
- 8 - D. McLean and C. Emanuel, *The Great South Land*, Angus and Robertson, 1975, p. 31.
- 9 - G.V. Portus, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
- 10 - D. McLean and C. Emanuel, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32. (Cf. G.V. Portus, *op. cit.*, p. 18).
- 11 - D. Pike, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- 12 - R. Rivett, *The Modern World: Australia*, OUP, 1968, p. 123.
- 13 - M. Barnard, *A History of Australia*, Angus and Robertson, Melbourne, 1976, p. 50.
- 14 - J.H. Heaton, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-43.
- 15 - *ibid.*, pp. 41-43.
- 16 - *ibid.*, pp. 41-43.
- 17 - *ibid.*
- 18 - R.M. Younger, *Australia and the Australians*, Rigby Pty. Ltd., Adelaide, 1974, p. 38ff.
- 19 - G.B. Balangero, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
- 20 - F. Gagliardi, *Lettere alla Gazzetta d'Italia*, 12/11/1878, p. 348.
- 21 - *ibid.*
- 22 - A. Giordano, *Marco Polo and After*, Adelaide, 1974, pp. 110-111.
- 23 - *Dizionario Scientifico de Agostini*, Novara, 1972.
- 24 - H. Laracy, "Italiani nel Pacifico del sud", in *Quaderni dell'Istituto Italiano di Cultura*, no. 4, Melbourne, 1971, p. 67ff.
- 25 - *ibid.*
- 26 - Bernardino Barbadoro, *Ventisette secoli di storia d'Italia*, Firenze, 1967, p. 142.
- 27 - *Dizionario Scientifico De Agostini*, Novara.

- 28 - Ralph M. Wiltgen, *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Oceania - 1823-1850*, Australian National University Press, 1979, p. 164.
- 29 - *ibid.*, p. 170.
- 30 - *Dizionario Scientifico De Agostini*, Novara.
- 31 - A. Giordano, *op. cit.*, p. 38ff.
- 32 - *ibid.*
- 33 - Colwell, *The Story of Australia*, (6 vols.), Sydney, 1925.
- 34 - A. Giordano, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.
- 35 - *ibid.*, p. 49.
- 36 - H. Laracy, *op. cit.*, p. 67ff.
- 37 - A. Giordano, *op. cit.*, p. 51ff.
- 38 - *ibid.*, p. 64.
- 39 - E. Giglioli, *Viaggio intorno al mondo della pirocorvetta Magenta*, Milan, 1875.
- 40 - H. Laracy, *op. cit.*, p. 67ff.
- 41 - N. Randazzo, "Italiani in Australia", in *Il Globo*, (supplement), 26/9/1967.
- 42 - Bladen, *Historical Records of New South Wales*.
- 43 - P. Bosi: "Giacomo Matra did not see Australia again. He was first appointed as Consul in Tenerife (Canary Islands) and later in Tangiers (Morocco) where he died on 29 March 1806. It is not known where his mortal remains are buried. There are no monuments erected in his memory. There is only the Sydney suburb of Matraville named after him, and an oak tree planted in his honour in Somerset, England".
- 44 - *Oggi, Domani*, Compendio Enciclopedico, vol. 1, no. 2, November 1983, p. 72.
- 45 - G.B. Barton, *History of New South Wales*, vol. 1, 1889, pp. 423-429.
- 46 - M. Barnard, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32.
- 47 - *ibid.*, p. 32.
- 48 - *ibid.*, p. 32.
- 49 - M. Clark, *A Short History of Australia*, New American Library, New York, 1963, p. 20.
- 50 - D. Pike, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
- 51 - J. Colwell, *op. cit.*, p. 3ff.
- 52 - *ibid.*
- 53 - *ibid.*
- 54 - J.H. Watson, *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 10, 1924.



1.



Tasman's Voyages of 1642 and 1644

2.



3.

1. The pewter plate left behind in 1697 by the Dutch navigator Dirk Hartog on the island in Western Australia later named after him.

2. The voyages of Abel Tasman from 1642 to 1644.

3. The landing of Captain James Cook in Botany Bay on 29 April 1770.

2 - FROM PRISON TO COLONY

AUSTRALIA AS A PENAL COLONY

The first fleet of 11 ships left Portsmouth on 13 May 1787 under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip, who had been appointed first governor of the penal colony. The wretched human cargo consisted of 568 male and 191 female convicts. In addition there were officers, ordinary soldiers, prison guards and their families; all in all a total of some 1,500 people. Also on board were 92 cattle, 7 horses, 29 sheep and 74 pigs. The fleet reached Port Jackson near Botany Bay on 26 January 1788 after eight months at sea. (1) The ships of this fleet were the first of many which, for a quarter of a century and at the rate of one a month, discharged the rejects of British society onto that distant shore which would soon become known for the degradation, slavery and abasement that inhabited it. 160,000 convicts were transported during that time, without counting those who perished in the frequent shipwrecks or as a result of illness or poor conditions. Under King George III and King George IV transportation, which had become an integral part of the British justice system, was the most feared sentence after capital punishment. Until 1830 there were 200 different crimes punishable by transportation.

In later years the death sentence itself would often be commuted to one of transportation. Those sentenced came from every class: there were lawyers, doctors, clerks, clergymen, political reformers, members of religious sects such as the Quakers, who refused to swear allegiance to legally constituted authority, and even a member of Parliament. Nor were children spared.

The Scottish and the Irish would often be sentenced to transportation for trifling offences such as breaking curfew. For our purposes it is important to note that it was not only the English, Scottish and Irish convicts who were transported. There were also Indians, Ukrainians, Frenchmen, Canadians, Italians, Corsicans and Brazilians.

For several years conditions in the new colony were extremely difficult. Convicts arrived in a land which, although potentially rich, did not offer any of the comforts they were used to other than those they brought with them. At night they had no roof over their heads and there was no shelter from the cold and rain. A fourteen year old boy, for example, lived for a while in a weeping willow. There was no one

to make clothes, there were no markets or shops, no entertainment, no newspapers, no pleasant place in which to gather, and no friends or relatives to lend a hand. The voyage home remained a dream; even if it had been possible it would have been long, costly and dangerous. The settlers found they were surrounded by natives whose customs and attitude towards intruders they knew nothing about. Every plant and bush was a potential hiding-place for a hostile Aborigine. And there was bush everywhere, as far as the eye could see...

It was not only a new land, but an alien one with an unfamiliar climate. Life was oppressive because of the surrounding emptiness and the silence that was sometimes broken by the laughter of a strange bird, the kookaburra, which many believed was the devil himself. The very landscape, the hills, seemed inhospitable.

To make matters worse there was the harsh, albeit sometimes necessary, discipline. The slightest misdemeanour incurred the lash. The theft of food, which was scarce, was punished by hanging, and any act of violence meant transportation to Norfolk Island. (2) William Bryan, a head fisherman, was whipped for secretly selling half his catch. When six marines were caught stealing flour, meat, tobacco and alcohol from the stores for some amusement with their female companions, Governor Phillip had them all hanged. One man found guilty of stealing a pair of oars was sentenced to one month's imprisonment. On the last day of his sentence he was publicly flogged the length of the route from the police station to the pier at the end of King Street. (3) It is estimated that on a per capita basis the number of executions in Sydney was 325 times that of Great Britain. Thus, to all intents and purposes, the occupied part of Australia became one vast prison.

Many convicts died before they could earn their freedom. Others escaped, hoping to reach China, and died of thirst or starvation or were murdered by the Aborigines.

It was thanks to the ambition of some convicts, their determination to survive at all costs and also the firm hand of the governors, that the majority began cultivating the land or turning it into pasture. The colony survived only because of the economic and social contribution of former convicts, many of whom became money-lenders, merchants and farmers.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the governors had realised that New South Wales would not achieve social stability without the arrival of industrious and carefully chosen settlers. In other words, an Australian nation could not be founded on the misfits and derelicts of society.

Therefore, even the governors before Macquarie began a struggle with the government back in England for a steady flow of immigrants.

However, England had just come out of the costly War of Independence against the American colonies with a national debt of alarming

proportions. Moreover, the war against Napoleon which had just begun (1793) was to exclusively occupy the minds of English politicians until 1815. So the Crown rejected out of hand the persistent entreaties of the colonial governors.

The British Secretary of State wrote: "Since it has not been founded for any territorial or commercial advantage, the settlement of New South Wales must chiefly be considered as a receptacle for offenders...its growth as a colony must be a secondary consideration. It is necessary to maintain in New South Wales such a system of just discipline as may render transportation an object of serious apprehension." (4)

Other reasons for the opposition to an open door policy on immigration can be summarised as follows:

- the British need of manpower for arms production during the Napoleonic wars of 1793-1815;
- the further need for manpower to consolidate and expand trade in the Indies and the Antilles;
- the belief that Britain's population was too small anyway;
- the fear that anything which tended to lower the population of a country led to its impoverishment;
- the mercantile belief that prosperity depended on the size of the population; (5)

The most energetic and progressive governor of the colony of New South Wales was Lachlan Macquarie. Convinced that he would be unable to change the British government's settlement policy he opposed the immigration of free settlers since, given its large number of convicts, the colony did not lack for manpower and would not, in any case, have been able to provide work for all settlers. Macquarie did not like wealthy immigrants as they expected all kinds of privileges and were always the first to complain and to criticize the governor. The policy he initiated was aimed at creating a free society on the foundations of a penal settlement. In the space of ten years he transformed life in Sydney.

He succeeded in setting up a meritocracy among the former convicts and in the process created two factions, as was to be expected: the "exclusives" (free settlers, officers and soldiers) and the "emancipists" (the entire class of ex-convicts). He encouraged agriculture and grazing by distributing livestock to settlers, thereby also reducing the risk of famine. He built schools, roads, bridges, hospitals, wharves and buildings for public offices, and founded the Bank of New South Wales. He built churches and encouraged education, religious observance and moral rectitude. He offered encouragement and special favours to the emancipists, gave them land, admitted them to public office and asked them to social functions at Government House, thereby inviting them to join the society of free men. (6) Macquarie fiercely defended the principle that once a convict had regained his freedom he was to be considered in every way the equal of any other

person in the colony, "as befits his character and position in life". (7) He appointed as magistrates certain emancipists who were then ostracised by the exclusives. The famous Protestant clergyman, Samuel Marsden, refused to take his place alongside them on the bench.

The exclusives, who wanted to keep the ex-convicts in a state of servitude as cheap labour, bitterly opposed the governor.

Meanwhile, London became concerned at what was happening and condemned Macquarie's emancipist policy, forcing him to resign.

In 1822 Governor Macquarie, tired and disillusioned, left Australia uttering the famous phrase: "I found New South Wales a prison and I leave it a colony." (8)

THE FIRST ITALIAN CONVICTS AND MIGRANTS

Between 25 January 1788 and 31 December 1822, 32,266 convicts were transported to New South Wales, several thousand of whom died en route from illness or as a result of shipwreck. In that same time there were only some 1,300 free settlers. (9)

There are Italians both among the convicts and the immigrants, but until 1820 any details about their backgrounds are difficult to obtain.

Giuseppe Tusa's name appears on the convict lists, often spelt Tuzo, Tusor or Tuza, though no-one knows precisely who he was or where he came from. He may have come from a small town of the same name between Messina and Palermo. Some say he was a sailor on an English ship, while others maintain he was a jeweller.

Many sources suggest he was transported on the first fleet directly to mainland New South Wales. However, according to the *Norfolk Island Victualling Book* one Giuseppe Tusa arrived on Norfolk Island as a convict on 13 March 1792 to serve out a seven-year sentence and was only transferred to Sydney on 21 September of the same year. (10)

In 1804, 1807 and again in 1808, Tusa placed notices in the *Sydney Gazette* stating his intention to leave the colony, as required by law. In 1813 the same newspaper reported that Tusa had joined the police force.

It appears that Tusa decided to remain in the colony after he fell in love and married a woman called Rebecca, who had arrived in 1811 as a "free servant". Four children were born from their marriage: William, Mary Ann, Priscilla and Joanna. Bigge's *Return of Births Appendix* shows that Joanna, daughter of Giuseppe and Rebecca Tuzo, was born on 6 October 1818. (11)

A different source reveals that in December 1820 Giuseppe Tuza, a married man, acquired a 50 acre property in Sydney.

Giuseppe Tusa died in Sydney on 6 October 1825. The death notice in a Sydney paper read; "Mr Giuseppe Tuzo, a resident of this town since its foundation, died last Tuesday." (12)

In 1828 the first census held in New South Wales recorded the presence of other Italian convicts. One was a certain Joseph Antonio, a 40-year old fisherman who, having been sentenced to life imprisonment, was transported to the colony on the ship *Surrey* in 1813. He soon received his "ticket-of-leave" for good behaviour and returned to fishing. Joseph lived in Gloucester Street, Sydney, with his brother Augusto. The latter, who had also received a life sentence and who arrived on the *Baring* in 1825, worked for Cooper's distillery.

There was also Mary, the wife of one Giovanni Marzagora, who had been sentenced to transportation and had arrived on the *Mary Ann* in 1816. Her husband and son William arrived that same year on the *Fanny*. Their daughter Amalia was born in the settlement.

Pier Luigi Beni (or Berni), his wife Jane, little daughter Emma and others are also recorded. The census shows too that a certain Giacomo Lavello (or Lovello), age 39, his five year-old son Alessandro and three year-old daughter Margaret were all born in the colony. This necessarily means there was an earlier Lavello who arrived on the first or second fleet.

Another couple, John and Mary Stanton are recorded as living with their four children at Castle Hill, New South Wales. However, they do not appear under that surname in the 1828 census where they are registered as Haskitt. John Stanton had been sent out under the name Stephano Haskitt and, having got his "ticket-of-leave", was required to give the same name in the census.

It is interesting to note the discrepancy between the P.R.O. and the A.O.N.S.W.: the former gives the name as Stephano Haskitt, while the latter has Stephen Haskitt. This suggests that the clerk who made the second entry thought the person concerned was English. He was actually a Sicilian who had been born in Palermo in 1782 and who had taken the name Haskitt on emigrating to England.

He had been transported to New South Wales in 1813 with another Italian, one Pietro (Pietro) Poloni, who does not appear at all in the 1828 census. Stefano changed his name to John and, after his marriage to Mary at St. John's in Parramatta in 1820, took his wife's name. However, the marriage register at St. John's parish church shows his real name as Stefano Posich. (14)

Pietro Patullo and Giovanni Battista D'Arietta were typical of the type of free settler arriving during this period. D'Arietta arrived in Sydney on the *Duchess of York* in 1821, hailing from England where he appears to have had important friends and acquaintances and may even have married a woman of rank as he brought with him two letters of introduction. The first dated 16 August 1820 was from W.M. Pitt to the Rev. Samuel Marsden, and explained how D'Arietta proposed to introduce to New South Wales a new way of making oil and wine. The second was from J. McArthur Jun. for Captain Piper.

In 1821 D'Arietta wrote a letter to Governor Macquarie asking for the 'concession' of some land, adding that with capital of £5,000

to back him he intended to become a wine and olive grower and sheep farmer.

In 1822 Macquarie granted him 2,000 acres of land near Campbelltown "with usual indulgence of victualling and labour". In 1825 he was joined by his wife and children who arrived on the *Harvey*. Giovanni Battista D'Arietta died in 1837 aged about sixty. (15)

But D'Arietta was not the only Italian landowner or even the first. In April 1821 Pietro Patullo had owned 80 acres of land in Pittwater. On 16 January 1816 he was promised some land which was part of a Mr Roche's vast holdings at Roche's Hill, although a court later granted it to a certain Mr Crew.

It was not until 30 October 1832 that Governor Bourke gave Patullo another 80 acres at Baysview on condition that he either clear and cultivate at least 30 acres or carry out fencing or building improvements on the property to the value of 150 pounds. (16)

In 1824 the governor gave 1,000 acres at Hunters Hill, near Jericho in Van Diemen's Land, to a T.F. Marzetti. Marzetti, an Italian who had married a French woman, was later given another 700 acres. His daughter Maria married a Robert Paterson in 1835. (17)

Emmanuel Neich arrived in Sydney in 1826 by a rather fortuitous set of circumstances. He had been on the island of Mauritius and, tired of wandering, had decided to return to Europe. Having gone down to the port to look for a ship that was sailing for Europe he saw one called the *New Holland*, thinking that it was heading for Holland he went aboard. After the ship had left and he found out that they were sailing for Australia he was flabbergasted, but by then it was too late. When he landed in Sydney and saw the semi-naked aboriginal beggars and the chain-gangs going about their work in the town, his amazement and self-recrimination knew no bounds.

Deciding to make the best of a bad lot, he first of all made several trips to Tasmania and the Friendly Islands and later sought permission to buy a hotel at "the Rocks". Captain J. Rossi, the licences' magistrate, refused him on the grounds that he was not married.

Soon after, Neich married the daughter of one James Cooper who gave the young couple "The Bath Arms" hotel that he had built at Concord. Neich was the licensee of the hotel without interruption from 1834 until 1893. The stretch of road between Burwood and Liverpool roads was named Neich Road (today's Parramatta Road).

Near Neich's hotel lived the humble Catholic priest Fr. Dean McCarthy, first parish priest of Concord. Neich himself is remembered as a great philanthropist by the parishioners of St. Mary's in Concord.

He was a parish trustee for many years and made generous donations of money, time and land to the church. (18)

A PERIOD OF TRANSITION

Historians refer to the ten or fifteen years following Macquarie's

governorship as a period of transition, for, although it was in many ways the most turbulent time in the early history of Australia, it was nevertheless only a sober prelude to the rapid change and progress of the next two or three decades. It was an important time in Australian history as it saw the first steps being taken towards independence from the mother country, the setting up of a legislative council and the reorganisation of public administration, without which the colony could easily have gone from being an autarchy to being in a state of anarchy. It soon became apparent that there was strong resentment in the colony over every decision made in faraway London as well as hostility towards new arrivals.

Furthermore, exploration was opening up the interior: new pastures were being discovered, new settlements established and the continent was proving to be immensely more vast than the early settlers had imagined.

Exploration was to consume the energies of some of the finest of men for the next one hundred years.

In 1813 explorers crossed the Blue Mountains for the first time. Beyond this mountain range, which for twenty years had formed an impenetrable barrier to the hinterland, they discovered the vast pasturelands of the west where the city of Bathurst would later spring up. After this, explorers such as Blaxland, Lawson, Wentworth, Oxley, Cunningham, Mitchell, Sturt and Palmerston (Carandini) pushed further into the interior, heading north and south, opening up new routes, discovering pastures and studying the water system and the courses of the great rivers.

These aspects of Australian history are reported here not only for the information of the reader who may not be familiar with them, but also because some Italians took part in the exploration of the continent.

The first was a convict called Bombelli, a blacksmith, who was in Major Thomas Mitchell's first expedition in 1831. The expedition had set off to discover the source of the Darling River, the great river of the south-west. Having reached Namoi, Mitchell "sent a convict, one Bombelli, to Sydney with a despatch", and with orders to return immediately and wait at the base camp. But a month later Mitchell returned to the camp from his explorations only to find that Bombelli and his bullock-driver had been massacred by Aborigines. (19)

Another Italian, Marco Dominico, took part in the Queensland expedition of the famous explorer Dalrymple, who charted the estuaries of the northern Queensland rivers. (20)

Christopher Palmerston Carandini, son of the famous Carandini family of artists, explored many parts of northern Queensland, some of which still carry his name. (21)

Apart from the explorers, the convicts and especially the squatters, also played a very important part in opening up new frontiers. They undertook dangerous journeys, built bridges, cleared bushland, opened up roads and established new settlements.

The saga of the exploration of the Australian hinterland has occupied a special place in history from the very beginning: dedication, determination, a refusal to give in to thirst, distance, the brutal sun, the hostility of aboriginal tribes, the inevitable heartbreak in following rivers which flowed into swamps or disappeared beneath the earth or into deserts which extended beyond the horizon." (22)

With the passing of time the people born in the colony and those who had seen out their sentences began to make themselves heard in the affairs of the colony. They felt strongly that the colony and its wealth belonged to them as the offspring of those who had worked to create such wealth and because this was their home.

The wealthy British who had invested money and exploited the fathers of the native-born for financial profit and for Britain's benefit came to be seen as "foreign bastards".

The bush-rangers were usually convicts who had escaped from their masters, often out of desperation at the harsh discipline and the indiscriminate use of the lash, used to punish the slightest misdemeanour. It was not difficult to "go bush": the convicts worked out in the open, they were not locked up at night and were often sent on distant errands without a guard. Some bush-rangers were honest men who had been victims of circumstance, others were violent types, but all were brave and foolhardy. (23)

Having absconded into the bush they had to make a living somehow and the easiest way to do this was to loot houses or hold up travellers. Of course anyone who resisted often paid for it with their lives. These outlaws later enjoyed the support of the rural population and would one day acquire the status of popular folk heroes.

With the 1865 Bush-Rangers Act the government required all travellers to carry a pass showing they were not escaped convicts or bush-rangers. However, many ordinary farm-hands suffered because of the arbitrariness of this system. Unscrupulous employers would often refuse to hand back the passes in order to force workers to stay on with them.

One man to whom an employer had refused to return a pass was kept in chains for seven weeks while being taken the 250 miles to Sydney under suspicion of being a bush-ranger. He was freed on arrival in Sydney and left for the Murrumbidgee in search of work, only to be arrested again for the same reason. (24)

The crossing of the Blue Mountains had made it easier for bush-rangers to roam free and unhindered. The escaped convict Fred Ward, for example, after crossing to the other side lived in the north near Bourke. Once, when one of his gang had been wounded and captured, he moved east to the New England district, near Armidale. It was there that in May 1870 an Italian commercial traveller, one Capasotti, was robbed while staying at the Hotel Blanche about five miles south of the small town. Capasotti, who was extremely agitated, rode at breakneck speed to Uralla to give the alarm. Two policemen on horseback hurried to the scene and came across the bush-ranger

Ward who had just stolen a horse. Seeing the officers almost upon him, Ward got down from his horse but did not surrender. He threw himself at one of them who shot him in the chest with his last bullet.

NICOLA ROSSI: POLICE SUPERINTENDENT

Brisbane was the first governor who found himself having to deal with a crimewave. In one year alone he had twenty-two bush-rangers hanged. He also created the first mounted police force to fight the outlaws who were springing up everywhere.

The regular police force was totally ineffective. It was made up of convicts who had been set free for good behaviour and who were often nothing more than corrupt scoundrels who sympathised with the outlaws. Darling, who was to succeed Brisbane as Governor of New South Wales, sent Nicola Rossi on ahead as Chief of Police to re-establish order in the colony. The bush-rangers had become so arrogant that they were even committing robberies along the Parramatta Road, at the very edge of the town.

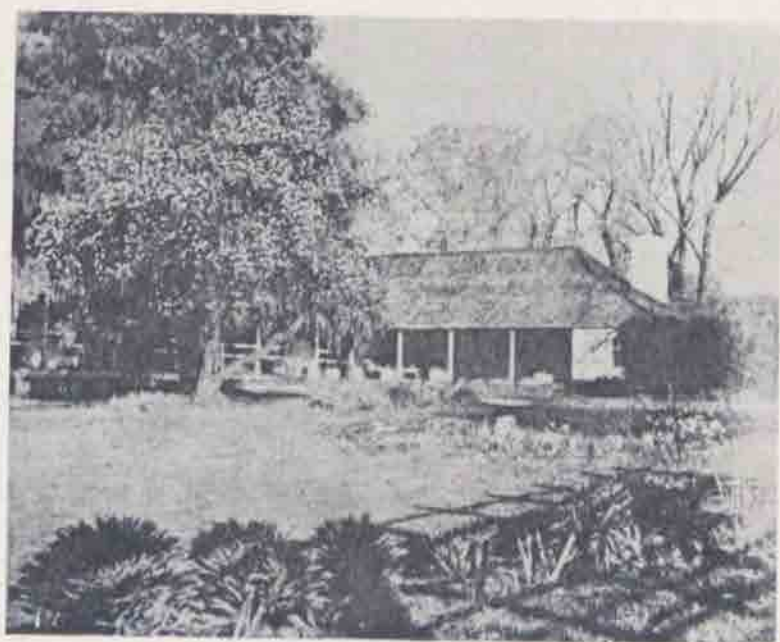
Rossi was born in Corsica in 1776 into a family of nobles. (26) At the age of 15 he was caught up in the whirlwind of the French revolution and fought for Corsica's independence from the French alongside Napoleon, son of the family lawyer Bonaparte. When Corsica passed under British rule, Napoleon moved to France to fulfil his destiny, and Rossi stayed behind to enlist in the Corsican regiment formed by the British. He later fought in Holland, Gibraltar, Malaya, India and Ceylon.

In 1811 he was in Mauritius as assistant to Sir Robert Farquhar, the governor, but his whereabouts for several years after this remain shrouded in mystery. His enemies always maintained that he had been sent as a secret agent, under the alias Theodore Majocchi, to spy on the dissolute Caroline of Brunswick, wife of George IV, in the courts of Italy and throughout Europe. Whether this was true or not his enemies never forgave him.

In 1823 he returned to Mauritius as assistant to Major-General Ralph Darling who at the time was Acting Governor and Commanding Officer of the island's troops. The two got on so well together that a year before Darling's appointment as Governor of New South Wales the Colonial Secretary sent Rossi on ahead as Superintendent of Police on an annual salary of £1,200.

When he arrived in Sydney, Rossi found a corrupt police force protecting the outlaws and brigands who attacked bullock-trains and held sway over the town and the surrounding district.

In a report to the governor, Rossi gave a detailed account of the parlous state of the colony, the increased crime rate, and the geographical distribution of the convict population, both free and still in custody. First of all he emphasised the need to increase the size of the police force, to raise police pay in order to discourage corruption and



4. The map of 'Terra Australis' sent to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith by Fr. Vittorio Riccio in 1676.

5. The Italian navigator Alessandro Malaspina.

6. 'Micelago' - part of Francesco Nicola Rossi's farm.

to carry out a more careful screening of recruits. He also recommended the abolition of the honorary police force, the upgrading of facilities and the employment of more administrative staff.

He also wanted the police to be properly armed. When he took command the total armoury consisted of ten muskets, eight swords and four pairs of pistols. There were times when the police had to borrow weapons from private citizens.

He thought that salaried magistrates should be appointed to the force and put in charge of supervising police activities in each district.

Because of poor health (and the low pay) Rossi left the post of police superintendent and for two years was in charge of the customs department. He re-organised it, transforming it from a corrupt and financially bankrupt government office into an efficient revenue gatherer. He also appointed a "Port Captain" and set up a maritime police corps.

By 1830 Rossi had finally succeeded in ridding the colony of undesirables and had created a force of 103 well-disciplined men, of which 48 were patrol officers, 16 night constables and 16 conductors.

In 1831 Governor Darling was replaced by Bourke, and Rossi was given Charles Windeyer as his assistant and police magistrate. After Darling's departure Rossi's enemies had thought that the police superintendent might also be replaced, but the new governor found Rossi too efficient and hard-working to be able to do without him.

From the time he arrived in the settlement Nicola Rossi had been continuously harassed. In 1826 he was summoned before a special judicial enquiry to answer charges of slave-trafficking during his posting in Mauritius. Later he appeared in the Sydney Supreme Court charged with corruption and misuse of public office. He was cleared of the first charge and the second was dismissed for lack of evidence, although costs were awarded against him.

In 1835 a tired and embittered Nicola Rossi retired to his farm at Rossiville near Goulburn, but even then had no respite. In Sydney attempts were still being made to strip him of all his assets despite his 30 years of service to the British Crown. In 1834 doubts were raised about his British citizenship, a requirement for the granting of farmland.

The Colonial Office in London forwarded a copy of Count Nicola Rossi's citizenship certificate and even George Gipps, the Governor of New South Wales, intervened on his behalf, recalling the man's military and civilian achievements. But the Sydney judiciary continued to raise questions about his citizenship and, therefore, his right to a land grant.

London was forced to step in to instruct the New South Wales Legislative Council to amend the legislation on land concessions in order to give naturalised British citizens equal status with those who were British by birth. Nevertheless, Rossi had to endure the humiliation of

relinquishing his properties which were then re-allocated to his British-born children. Although he had retired to his farm far from hostile Sydney, and despite the continuous harassment by his enemies, Rossi did not remain idle or totally divorced from public life. For many years he was a magistrate in the small town of Goulburn and maintained close friendship with the governors of the colony, who often visited him to spend some time in the peaceful haven of his farm.

A story is told about how "the Governor and Lady Gipps visited the small town of Goulburn in 1842 and, not wanting to stay as guests of the local authorities, preferred to go to Rossville to the house of Captain Rossi". "So also Governor Fitzroy in 1849 preferred to stay with Rossi in Rossville. The story goes that the governor arranged to arrive by an improvised route opened up especially for the occasion through the Nicholson property. Part of the fence was removed under the supervision of an engineer in order to let the party through so that they would not be seen or recognised by the people of Goulburn. This occurred on 27 January 1849 and the following day, a Sunday, the governor attended a religious service in the old Church of St. Saviour. Then on the Monday, without giving the people of Goulburn any warning, he arrived at the Court House for the public reception in his honour. There was great indignation when Captain Rossi, a naturalised foreigner, rose to invite those present to affirm their loyalty to the Crown, forgetting to introduce the town gentry and merchants to the governor, who seemed completely mystified by this display of Corsican etiquette." (27)

Nicola Rossi, who had been suffering from ill-health, died on 1 December 1851. A farming district near Goulburn carries the name Ross-ville in his memory.

CLOSED-SHOP PROFESSIONS

The first Italian medical doctor to practise in Australia was Carlo Fattorini who was also one of the first naturalised Australian citizens. While others have Italy, Austria and Germany as their birth-places in the earliest naturalisation records, Fattorini was born in Paris and became an Australian citizen on 21 June 1851.

Fattorini took out his degree in Gottingen, Germany, in 1828. On 15 and 19 May respectively of that same year he qualified as an obstetrician and a surgeon at Edinburgh in Scotland.

He arrived in Sydney in 1829, and in 1836 went as a prison and military doctor to Port Macquarie where the rowdiest and most dangerous convicts were kept. The Inspector General of the hospital later appointed him as a temporary medical officer.

He was dismissed from this post in 1842 and became the subject of many official inquiries during which he had to report to the Coroner on his activities as a salaried government doctor. (28) Following appeals and petitions against the laws that prevented anyone who had

not graduated from an English university from practising medicine he was finally registered and allowed to practise in 1846.

Dr Fattorini was the first to fight for the recognition of his profession. As time passed it became more and more difficult to have foreign professional qualifications, diplomas, degrees and even simple tradesmen's certificates accepted. This attitude, which rather restricted the size of the professional population in Australia, was supposedly justified by the claim that Italian academic standards were inferior not only to Australian ones, but to those of Ireland, Scotland, South Africa and New Zealand. In reality non-recognition only served to protect the "privileged professional class from possible invasion" by too many competitors. It was the same with skilled workers who continuously came up against union prejudice, prompted by protectionist attitudes and professional envy. This was to be a cause of endless frustration for Italian tradesmen.

NOTES

- 1 - Charles Bateson, *Convict Ships 1787-1868*, Glasgow, 1959, p. 97.
- 2 - *Daily Mirror*, 17/4/1978.
- 3 - J.H. Heaton, *Australian Dictionary of Dates and Men of the Time*, George Robertson, Sydney, 1879, p. 71.
- 4 - A.C.L. Shaw & A.D. Nicholson, *Growth and Development in Australia*, Angus & Robertson, 1970, p. 15.
- 5 - *ibid.*, p. 17.
- 6 - *ibid.*, p. 15.
- 7 - Marjorie Barnard, *Macquarie's World*, Melbourne University Press, 1961.
- 8 - *ibid.*, p. 121.
- 9 - J.H. Heaton, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
- 10 - *Norfolk Island Victualling Book*, p. 236.
- 11 - Bigge's Appendix Return of Birth, p. 65.
- 12 - *Sydney Gazette*, 6/10/1825.
- 13 - Files - Mitchell Library, Sydney.
- 14 - 1828 Census Book, p. 18, (Cf. Castle Hill Catholic Church Baptismal Register, p. 123).
- 15 - Files, Mitchell Library, Sydney, (Cf. Pino Bosi, *Blood, Sweat & Guts*, Sydney, 1970, p. 21).
- 16 - Charles Swancott, *Dee Why to Barrenjoey & Pittwater*, pp. 325-33.
- 17 - L.S. Bethell, *The Valley of the Derwent*.
- 18 - Delaney & Daws, *They Passed this Way. History of the First 100 Years of St. Mary's Concorde, New South Wales, 1870-1970*, Sydney, p. 45ff.
- 19 - J. Colwell, *The Story of Australia: Past and Present*, (6 vols.), Sydney, 1925.
- 20 - D. Jones, *Hurricane and Blue Umbrellas*, G.K. Bolton Printers, Cairns, 1973, p. 68.
- 21 - *ibid.*, p. 196.
- 22 - R. Rivett, *The Modern World: Australia*, OUP, 1968, p. 27.
- 23 - William Joy & Tom Prior, *The Bushrangers*, Rigby Ltd., Sydney, 1963, p. 7ff.
- 24 - A.C.L. Shaw & A.D. Nicholson, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-50.
- 25 - W. Joy & T. Prior, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
- 26 - R.T. Wyatt, *The History of Goulburn*, Lansdownie Press, Sydney, 1972, p. 48.
- 27 - *ibid.*, *passim*.
- 28 - John Alexander Ferguson, *Bibliography of Australia*, Vol. IV, 1846, 1850, 1855, Sydney, p. 278.



1.

2.



3.

1. Migrants: forever wandering the world's byways.
2. Migrants waiting to embark.
3. Load your own luggage.

ITALIAN 3 - MIGRATION IN THE PRE-UNIFICATION ERA

Mass Italian migration, as a social and economic phenomenon, began after the political unification of Italy. It was one of the most extraordinary migrations in history: first, because of the number of people involved and the routes they followed; second, because of the period of time it covered and the effects it had on the countries of destination.

Well before the unification of Italy, the population of the Venetian estuary had already established a pattern of migration towards the East, with its plantations and major trading posts, while the Ligurians favoured the rich and virgin regions of the Americas, with a preference for those of the South American continent.

"Migration then followed from the provinces of northern Piedmont, especially from the poorer areas of the immense alpine basin, which stretched from the Alps touching the sea through the Cozie, the Graie and the Retiche mountains to what was then the Austrian border." (1) Many peasants from Savoy, which at that time was part of the Kingdom of Piedmont, migrated, for example, to South America.

"...What you found then, in almost all European cities and throughout others in America, Africa and Asia, were hordes of Italian singers, musicians and jugglers that made you feel mostly sad or ashamed." (2)

Under the rulers throughout the rest of pre-unification Italy, it could be said that there was no emigration in the true sense of the word. It was frustrated and impeded by the various governments and, indeed, in the south it was savagely outlawed. (3)

During the second phase of migration, it was the itinerant workers, labourers owning no property which might tie them to the land, who left Liguria, the Veneto and the coastal areas of southern Italy. (4)

During the 1815, 1821 and 1831 uprisings, which were part of the struggle for national liberation, and for the next 30 years a procession of thousands of patriots, political refugees and exiles spread throughout the big European cities and to other continents. According to the estimates of the *Annuario Statistico*, at the time of the unification of Italy some 220,000 Italians were already living abroad;

76,500 in France, 47,000 in the United States, 14,000 in Germany and Switzerland, 18,000 in Brazil and Argentina, 11,000 in Great Britain, 4,500 in Tunisia, 12,000 in Egypt and an unspecified number in the Far East and Oceania. (5)

These figures show that Italian emigration, a spontaneous and totally unplanned working-class exodus, consisting of people leaving either temporarily or permanently, had already begun long before statistics were kept.

Great Britain, which for many centuries had welcomed as migrants the cream of Italian society, opened its doors at the beginning of the nineteenth century to a more popular migration. To a large extent, Great Britain became the spring-board for Italian emigration to the Australian colonies.

By 1820, substantial Italian communities had already been formed in London, Liverpool and Glasgow. These were swelled by great numbers of patriots and political refugees as a consequence of the political upheavals in pre-unification Italy. (6)

These communities were the first to be influenced by news of the new colonies and by the writings of explorers and travellers, who told of a strange land of uncommon beauty, full of contrasts: droughts and sudden floods, immense forests and terrifying bushfires.

Once the transportation of convicts had ceased and the colonies were opened up to general immigration, Italians and others living in the United Kingdom as residents or refugees, were tempted to try their luck because of the increased publicity, the promise of assisted passage and the prospect of easy money. Among them we can recall several who have already been mentioned: Pietro Patullo, D'Arietta, Emmanuele Neich and Fattorini. Later we shall meet others, such as Dr Giustiniani, the Marquis Girolamo Carandini, the chemist Giuseppe Bosisto, the jeweller Carlo Brentani, Count Leopold De Salis, and Garibaldi's followers, G.C. Azzolini, Carlo Marina and Raffaello Carboni, together with other Italian nationals such as Legge, Grano, Marzetti, Masina, and Verga.

In fact, this influx of migrants from England never ceased, as we shall see later.

The first sketchy reports about migration directly from Italy itself date from the 1840s, although in at least some states in pre-unification Italy, Australia was not entirely unknown before then.

In fact, diplomatic and cultural relations with Australia date from many years earlier. For example, according to the English historian Harold Acton, cultural relations between Italy and Australia began to develop at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the king of the Two Sicilies acquired a pair of kangaroos in exchange for two manuscripts that were part of his private collection.

Furthermore, in the early 1850s, the Kingdom of Savoy was already represented in Sydney by a consul, in the person of Stuart Donaldson, and in Melbourne by a vice-consul, Fabrizio Fabiani.

Similarly, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies had their own diplomatic representatives in Victoria and New South Wales. (7)

In the second half of the 1840s, the brothers Joubert – as we shall see later when we look at New South Wales – recruited stonemasons and artisans from Lombardy to build a village at Hunter's Hill near Sydney.

The first links between the fledgling Catholic Church in Australia and the Church in Italy were forged in this period. The first Australian Catholic Bishop, Bishop Bede Polding, consecrated in 1835, returned to Europe in 1842 to recruit priests prepared to carry out their ministry in Australia. Five Passionist Fathers and several Italian diocesan priests returned with him. (8)

On his return from Rome where he had been consecrated, Bishop Brady, the first Catholic Bishop of Western Australia, also brought with him some Italian and Spanish Benedictine monks to establish a mission among the Aborigines.

Among this group were Canon Martelli, Caporelli the catechist and Father Confalonieri. Other priests, together with some Neapolitan tradesmen, (the first 200 Italians to set foot in Australia), arrived three years later with Bishop Serra, a Benedictine monk who had been consecrated bishop in Rome, as Bishop Brady's assistant. (9)

For the period which followed and which coincided with the gold rush, the bulk of the documents describing the life of Italians in Australia consists of references to individuals, in carbon copies of letters and in certain shipping documents. One of these, for example, records the arrival in Australia on 12 October 1855, of a ship carrying a large number of Italian migrants. According to the Victorian deputy agent for immigration, 608 Italians arrived in the colony that year. (10)

Between 1855 and 1861 several vessels arrived from various Italian states: the *Goffredo Mameli* (1855) with a cargo of marble, bricks, wine and 84 migrants; the *Lidia* carrying a cargo of barley; the *Amelia* carrying sugar; the *Petronilla* and the *Aquila* carrying Chinese cargo (1861). It is most likely that all these vessels carried a certain number of Italian migrants.

Furthermore, in 1853, a Tuscan manufacturer of mining tools and equipment sent representatives to Australia to examine the possibility of setting up a subsidiary. As a result of their investigations a small publication appeared in Florence in 1853, entitled *Ragguaglio delle cose dell'Australia* (Report on Australian Affairs); but no business venture ever resulted. (11)

From other sources we know that many migrants from Piedmont and Lombardy were part of the historic wave of Ticinese emigration, and were to some extent absorbed within it. (12) Correspondence of the time includes reference to a certain Gagliardi, mentioned in a despatch, dated 9 April 1859, concerning a letter sent by him

to the foreign affairs ministry of the Kingdom of Savoy.

In fact, during the 1850s, diplomatic despatches regarding Italian miners in need of assistance were being sent back and forth between the Kingdom of Sardinia and its representatives in Victoria. "Most probably," writes Gianfranco Cresciani, "although there is no clear evidence in this regard, it was the presence of a relevant [sic] number of Italians in Victoria and N.S.W. that prompted those colonial governments to establish diplomatic relations in the mid 1850s with the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Grand Duchy and Tuscany and the Kingdom of Sardinia." (13)

In conclusion, from the time general migration to the Australian colonies began, until the unification of Italy, there were two main sources of Italian migrants: Great Britain, from which came sailors, political refugees, professional people and labourers who were already living in that country; and Italy, from which at first came priests, missionaries, stonemasons and tradesmen from Lombardy and Naples, later followed by peasant farmers and labourers from Piedmont, Lombardy and Liguria, together with some from Naples and Sicily, all of whom were attracted by the discovery of gold. However, these were still instances mainly of individuals and small groups migrating from quite specific areas.

As for their numbers, they were sometimes estimated in the thousands, sometimes in the hundreds, and were even put at 20,000 in the Ballarat district alone. (14) It is impossible to arrive at even an approximate figure.

At this point, before continuing with our account, we should try to understand why they emigrated, the manner in which they were enticed to do so, and the dangers they faced during their long and difficult voyage.

With the discovery of great quantities of gold in Australia, the first to be stricken by the gold fever that had earlier gripped Northern Europe, America, Canada and even China, were the peasant farmers from the valleys of Piedmont, near Switzerland, from the Monferrato region and from the provinces of Bergamo and Brescia in Lombardy, where living and working conditions were similar to those beyond the border, especially in the canton of Ticino.

By the beginning of the 1850s, immediately after the big gold discoveries, Switzerland had become the centre where propaganda and news about the colonies abounded for those wanting to try their luck. In order to make the journey easier for migrants and prospectors, Great Britain, by an Act of Parliament, repealed the "Navigation Laws" which had given English shipping companies the monopoly of the sea lanes leading to the colonies.

Thus began a bitter struggle, especially on the part of the German companies, to corner the market in the business of transporting human beings. They had the ships but not enough people to transport to the Californian goldfields. But now they had the perfect bait – Australian gold – and the time was right.

News of the gold discoveries appeared with great speed and frequency in European newspapers, and the eye-catching promotions of the shipping companies intensified, becoming increasingly seductive. Even the Turin newspapers wrote favourably of the Australian goldfields and about how easy it was to find well paid work there. Thus, "the first Italians started to arrive in Australia around 1850", writes Oda Branchetti, "often seeing themselves only as temporary migrants. Many of them came to Australia with the specific aim of sending back to relatives and friends, information about what conditions were really like there, and what the chances were of finding work and making money." (15)

But "this mass migration towards the land of gold" observes Giorgio Cheda, "was not a spontaneous phenomenon...as is often maintained. The exodus...was nothing more than the disastrous result of the persistent, organised publicity campaign waged by the powerful shipping companies to freely and calculatedly seduce very simple people with the guarantee of easy riches." (16)

In 1868, the honourable Ercole Lualdi, member for the electoral district of Busto Arsizio in Milan, noted: "There are organised groups scattered throughout northern Italy and in the nearby canton of Ticino, which, driven as they are by the desire for profit, employ every possible means to make these poor people emigrate." (17)

There were three companies working to promote emigration to Australia: the Oswald brothers' company, the Bech-Herzog company, and the Steinman-Drevet company, all three based in Basle. Their purpose was to lure migrants not only from the Swiss cantons, especially the poorer ones such as Ticino and Vallese, but also from across the border, from the valleys of Piedmont, Lombardy and Sardinia. In fact, the Oswald brothers employed as their principal recruiting agent Paolo Giuseppe Rebora, "an adventurer from Piedmont with a criminal record, hiding out in Locarno to avoid being arrested for criminal bankruptcy involving the sum of half a million francs." (18) Rebora had associates scattered throughout the two Swiss cantons and particularly the Italian towns along the border.

Carlo Muller from Lucerne was the general agent for Bech-Herzog, a major Swiss shipping company. In no time at all he set up a "network of local helpers in the Sopraceneri area and in the Italian districts of Lago Maggiore." (19)

Those in charge of Bech-Herzog's Italian operations were Franco Pero dall'Aquila in Alexandria, Cesare Piceni in Arona, Giovanni Gentinetta in Domodossola, Francesco Antonio and Lorenzo Cobianchi in Intra.

Last on the scene was Steinman-Drevet, which also represented the Malvois company of Paris. At first their general agent was Dominic Steiger, but "because of differences of opinion between himself and the company, he was replaced by Giuseppe Baldini from Lugano as the representative for the Ticino area." (20)

These companies which were in the business of recruiting migrants, competed frantically with each other, promising fast and comfortable sea-crossings, plenty of fresh food, with doctors and company representatives on board every vessel, proper sanitary conditions and protection from all the adversities a migrant might be exposed to; in short, everything one could possibly want.

Not satisfied with making promises they never kept, the companies placed outrageous newspaper advertisements giving an abundance of details about the voyage, about living and working conditions in Australia, and about how easily a migrant could make money, lots of it. According to the publicity, Australia was the "land of gold, vineyards and wool".

It was the glitter of gold and the illusion of easy riches to be had "in a fabulous and far away Eldorado", disseminated through the press and by word-of-mouth through local agents, that stirred in people the desire to leave. Many were roused: the young and the old, single people and married couples.

It was inevitable, however, that the villages most affected by this desire were the poor ones, where the chances of eking out an existence from the land could be destroyed by the smallest farming crisis, by floods and other natural catastrophes.

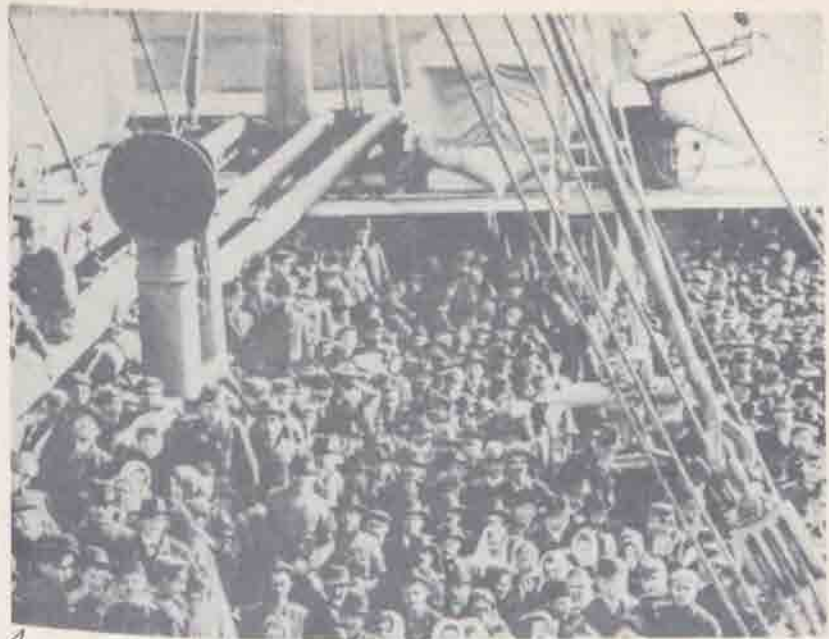
Those who had the most courage led the way in this exodus, in the secret hope of making a little money and then returning to their families and villages. Thus began that endless migration that saw people leave singly or in groups, without in fact ever returning, because the good fortune they had hoped for never materialised.

In order to travel from their villages to the ports where they were to embark, they used the most varied means of transport such as carriages, large boats, and for some stretches of the journey, that 'infernal machine', the train. But there were few railroads and this meant much of the journey was made on foot.

On top of the usual difficulties encountered along the way, "one must add the treachery of scoundrels who were expert at stealing from migrants". (21)

"As soon as we reached Basle," recounts G. Respini, "we were surrounded by swindlers. Consequently, the rest of the trip was often a struggle between these astute and expert speculators, and the migrants, anxious to arrive as soon as possible at their destination." (22)

Before letting them aboard ship, various companies made the migrants sign a statement confirming they had been well-treated during the journey. The companies led them to believe that the statement concerned only the journey from their village to the port, whereas it covered the sea voyage as well, right up to their arrival at their destination. The following is an example of such a statement printed by Bech-Herzog as part of a long advertisement in the *Gazzetta Ticinese*, endorsed by, of all people, the Swiss Consul in Hamburg: "We the undersigned emigrants from the Ticino and Piedmont declare, in praise of the Bech-Herzog company of Basle, in Bellinzona,



4.



5

4. Migrants crammed on the deck of a vessel steaming towards the promised land.
 5. Having disembarked, the trauma continues

with which we contracted to travel to Australia, that the care received during our trip to Hamburg was exemplary. No less satisfying was the quality and quantity of food served on the trip to Melbourne, which we undertook on the very beautiful ship *Agen and Heinrich*, under the command of Captain Oldejane. Finally, our thanks to Mr Müller, the general agent for Bellinzona, and to our dear guide Mr. Gundlach, who made our trip as enjoyable as possible. Hamburg, 31st May, 1855." This was followed by one hundred and fifty signatures of migrants from the Ticino and Piedmont. (23)

The unscrupulous shipping companies were able to use the relatively good treatment they offered migrants on the journey from their villages to the ports where they were to embark as favourable publicity for themselves.

But during the long months on board ship, the migrants were at the mercy of the captain of the vessel and often the treatment was not as good as it had been in the early part of their journey. To begin with, the trip itself was long, uncomfortable and hazardous. If then, as often happened, there were unfavourable winds, monsoons or bad seas along the way, the trip became extremely long indeed. To make matters worse, the shipping companies did not honour the contracts they entered into with the migrants. The little they provided by way of food was not fit for animals and was barely enough for human beings to live on. This well-organised and systematic exploitation of migrants lasted until the first letters started arriving from Australia, revealing the whole sorry story of the tribulations suffered along the way.

These letters sparked a series of "accusations of ill-treatment, broken contracts, of abuse of every kind suffered during the long months at sea." (24)

The agents of the shipping companies were described in such vivid and bitter language as to leave no doubt in the reader's mind what was thought of them. For example, "that much admired, highly respected, great cheat, Mr Muller", agent for Bech-Herzog, was nothing more than a trafficker in human beings; (25) the Oswalds were tricksters, who employed that notorious character, Rebora, and other swindlers to defraud migrants. (26) "And with reference to the Steinman company, there is talk of some of our migrants travelling to Australia having been betrayed...We have all been swindled." (27)

The paucity of food was such that by the time migrants reached their destinations they were so thin and weak they could barely stand. In some cases even the colonial authorities "wouldn't let them disembark and placed them in quarantine, for fear they carried some horrible contagious disease. By the time they arrived, their starvation and misery had left them so unrecognisable that their countrymen who were already here wrote: 'we no longer knew our fellow countrymen and were moved to tears at seeing them so afflicted.'" (28)

The food was not only scarce but often spoilt.

"Mr Reborà," writes Gambetta, "promised me three biscuits a day; at sea they gave me one for 15 or 20 days, and thereafter half a biscuit each day, and that rotten as well; we gave some to the piglets they had on board, and they died." (29)

The remonstrations and protests of the migrants to the captain of the ship, usually made matters worse. These facts emerge from the migrants' own correspondence. Here is one example among many: "When on board I felt the hunger pains," writes a migrant, "we went before the captain to make him live up to his side of the bargain; he then told me that if we caused a nuisance he would take us to Brazil, and did I want to get everyone hanged, so what I had to do was nothing but keep my empty belly and keep quiet." (30)

Finally, to save on food and cut the journey short, some captains would force passengers to land at Sydney instead of Melbourne, when Melbourne was in fact the destination on their ticket.

Because the new arrivals did not know the language and were often without money, they had difficulty in finding work, especially in the cities. Furthermore, the hope of quickly accumulating a fortune and the illusion of finding gold were so strong that they set off in long processions towards the gold-fields, where their suffering dragged on and on because of the hard and mostly fruitless labour. (31)

The following letter written by an unknown Swiss-Italian digger on the Jim Crow goldmines at Daylesford in Victoria, describes the life they found in the new Land.

"At last: after three months of travelling upon an angry and unpredictable sea, I touched that land called golden. I thought I was to see my dreams realised, I thought I had arrived at the desired destination, I thought that in the end I would find a compensation, for the sacrifices endured and the dangers confronted; but, all vain illusions. Where I thought to find gold, I found stones, where I thought to find bread, I found hunger and terrible visible misery, with work altogether disproportionate to the strength of a man, and barely a morsel of bread as its reward. As soon as everyone disembarked, I criss-crossed the streets of Melbourne looking for work, but in vain. I spent days knocking on door after door, to put my trade to profit, but wherever I went, I was told there was no need for such work. In the end, worn out by continual rebuffs, I made my way, as directed, to the mines, there to earn, with hard labour, my daily bread. It is true that on occasion destiny smiles on someone, but the day rarely comes when the sight of the shining metal is greeted with an exclamation of joy from its happy finder.

There are 5,000 of us from Ticino, and not a single one can brag about wealth. Torn from our native country, by the irresistible desire of an easy fortune, we are now being punished because we disregarded the advice of those who knew life better than we did, who nourished us as children, and whom we respected as a mother.

Oh! you who read this letter, it would be better if you would think carefully on your plans and do not allow yourselves to be led to a hasty decision, which will determine your entire future. Do not be tricked by those blood merchants; they promise you ideal wealth, in order to strip you of what you have. You, who among this unhappy lot, have a father, a spouse, a brother, a relative or a friend, let your voice cry out to stop our fellow countrymen from being shut up in such vile conditions on a terrible ship, then to be cast up, if the sea does not first swallow them, on this unfriendly shore, 5,000 leagues from home..." (32)

As we shall see later, once they forgot about striking it rich, these early migrants formed the first colonies of Italian farmers who made their mark in the Ballarat, Bendigo, Beechworth and other districts.

NOTES

- 1 - Leone Carpi, *Delle colonie e dell'emigrazione d'Italiani all'estero*, Firenze 1871, pp. 58-60.
- 2 - *ibid.*, p. 60.
- 3 - *ibid.*
- 4 - *ibid.*, p. 62.
- 5 - R.F. Foerster, *The Italian Emigration of Our Times*, Cambridge, Mass., 1919, p. 4.
- 6 - Umberto Marin, *Italiani in Gran Bretagna*, Roma, 1975, p. 51.
- 7 - MAE, Affari Esteri, 1861-87, Serie IV, Busta 270.
- 8 - Patrick O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia - A History*, Melbourne, 1977, p. 121.
- 9 - *ibid.*, pp. 76-77 (Cf. Dom Salvado, *The Salvado Memoirs*, Perth, 1977).
- 10 - Victoria, Votes and Proceedings, 1858-59, IV, pp. 1ff.
- 11 - G. Cresciani, "Australia, Italy and Italians", 1845-1945, in *Studi Emigrazione*, A. XX, Marzo 1983, N. 69, pp. 8-9.
- 12 - Giorgio Cheda, *L'emigrazione cinese in Australia*, undergraduate thesis, Locarno, 1976, 2 vols.
- 13 - G. Cresciani, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
- 14 - S.J. Blair, *Blair's Guide to Victoria*, National Mutual, Melbourne, 1983, p. 95.

- 15 - Oda Branchetti, *Gli aspetti geografici dell'emigrazione italiana in Australia*, undergraduate thesis, Università degli Studi di Parma, Anno Acc. 1974-75.
- 16 - Giorgio Cheda, op. cit., p. 108.
- 17 - Angelo Filipuzzi, *Il dibattito sull'emigrazione*, Firenze, 1967, p. 5.
- 18 - Giorgio Cheda, op. cit., p. 109.
- 19 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 110.
- 20 - *ibid.*, op. cit.
- 21 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 114.
- 22 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 121.
- 23 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 172.
- 24 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 174.
- 25 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 176.
- 26 - *ibid.*, op. cit.
- 27 - *ibid.*, op. cit.
- 28 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 175.
- 29 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 220.
- 30 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 176.
- 31 - *ibid.*, op. cit.
- 32 - *ibid.*, op. cit., p. 226.
- 33 - *Growing together: building tomorrow's Church*, Catholic Adult Education Centre, Melbourne, 1985, p. 7.



FROM THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY TO THE FIRST 4 - WORLD WAR

The discovery of gold was a decisive factor in the growth and development of the Australian colonies, at the same time contributing to a remarkable increase in the size of the population. Between 1850 and 1860 the population of the colonies tripled, from 450,000 to 1,145,000; three quarters of the increase was made up of net gain from immigration.

The initial chaotic influx brought faraway Australia to the attention of the rest of the world, which initially saw it as an "Eldorado", a land where with a bit of luck easy riches were to be made. It later came to be known as a land of opportunity, with a pleasant climate, extraordinary natural resources, wide empty spaces and a small population enjoying a high standard of living and general well-being. (1)

The economy, which until then had been almost solely agricultural and pastoral, became more diverse as other primary and secondary industries began to grow: mining companies sprang up; the basis was laid for the manufacturing and processing of textiles, canned meat and other foodstuffs; machinery was introduced into agriculture and construction, and roads and railways built to provide access to the more remote areas of the continent.

In 1855, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania received self-government, with South Australia and Queensland achieving it in 1856 and 1859 respectively. Western Australia had to wait until 1891. (2)

However, demographic, social and economic growth still depended on the migrant intake. (See footnote three for a comparison of each colony's size with its population.) (3)

Australia possessed all the qualities and had every opportunity of becoming an "United States" of the Southern Hemisphere, given that this was also the period in which the great exodus from Europe to the New World began and a time in which travel, and therefore emigration and immigration, was seen as the natural right of every citizen. In many developing countries the principle of the right to emigrate was serenely accepted, and was often guaranteed by the constitution. Sometimes, as in Australia's case, immigrants were needed for national survival and growth. (4)

Influenced by their loyalty to the mother country and by the pressure applied by the mass of the population under the leadership of the fledgling unions, the governments of the colonies leaned instead towards restrictive immigration policies (especially where non-British immigration was concerned) inspired by an inward-looking, radical nationalism that would eventually result in blatant racism replete with discrimination and prejudice. "The rulers of the colonies," writes Oda Branchetti, "reflected the attitudes of the average Australian citizen, who understood the country's need to populate but always carried within him a certain hostility towards the new arrivals." (5)

In fact the governments of the colonies, one by one, began imposing restrictions on Chinese immigration from the early 1850s, and with the "Restriction Bill 1896" prohibited the entry of all coloured races. At the same time any new arrivals were regarded as undesirable, especially those from Southern Europe who were thought incapable of being assimilated into the social fabric.

Finally, immigration came to be seen as a kind of tap that could be turned on when times were good and turned down or shut off completely when they were bad.

Therefore, the influx of migrants was never a steady one, nor were all those who wanted to come to settle in this empty continent able to do so freely. Immigration policy was based on considerations of colour, economic circumstances, and later the moods and prejudices of the union movement.

The only migrants actively sought and given assisted passage and other help in settling were of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant type, as they were more likely to blend into the social and religious environment. This preferential approach, which also aimed at preserving racial, cultural and religious homogeneity, severely limited the number and the diversity of migrants from other countries. Even among the migrants who were allowed in from European countries there was an obvious scale of preferences. They were graded as more or less capable of fitting into Australian society, depending on where they came from and on their presumed degree of natural adaptability.

Even the Italians were divided into two large categories: the Northerners and Southerners - all the good migrants came from the north and all the bad ones from the south.

FIRST STEPS TOWARDS A STEADIER AND MORE ORDERLY INTAKE OF ITALIAN MIGRANTS

Some colonies showed an active interest in bringing out Italian immigrants. However, formal moves in this direction rarely amounted to much, either because of the approach adopted, the lack of guarantees offered, or because of opposition at home.

In 1861 the Parliament of the Colony of Victoria set aside 4,000 pounds to bring out viticulturists and experts in the production of wine, edible oil and other produce, but the project barely got off the ground. (6)

Another attempt was made in 1862 at the initiative of J.H. Graham, the Italian Consul in Sydney, who in a despatch to his Government proposed the establishment of a special Italian settlement in the colony of Queensland. The Italian Government, for its part, showed the Queensland Executive Council it was willing to assist by encouraging Italian emigration to that colony. But the Colonial Secretary, Robert W. Herbert, made it clear that any Italian migrants had to come from the peasant class, i.e. they had to be labourers or shepherds. There was no room in this country for any other kind of Italian, nor could they ever expect to achieve any success if they came. (7)

In 1864 the Vice-Consul in Sydney, Asselin (or Assolini) tried again, this time presenting to the Italian Government a modest proposal for encouraging Italians to emigrate to Australia. But the Italian Government rejected it because of the lack of guarantees from the other side. (8)

It was not until about 1870 that efforts were made in Italy itself to encourage emigration to the Australian colonies. Italian newspapers began publishing extracts from letters written by migrants living in Melbourne. Others publicised the fact that the Italian Government was in favour of migrants going there. In a report dated November 1875, Mr Marinucci, the Italian Consul-General in Melbourne, invited Italian migrants to come to the new continent with its wide empty spaces and its labour shortage.

In February 1876 the Minister for the Interior sent a circular to all provincial Prefects which partly confirmed the reports that had appeared in the Italian press.

"As far as I am able to ascertain from official information received, conditions for migrants in New Zealand and Queensland are rather favourable," the circular read. "You are therefore given special authorisation to issue passports to those persons who satisfy you that they intend to emigrate to those parts and are able to afford the journey, waiving the guarantees prescribed by article five of the Circular of 18 January 1873, and provided that there are no other obstacles to the issue of a passport. The active recruitment of migrants, however, remains strictly forbidden, as does the promotion of emigration, even to the abovementioned countries. In this regard emigration agents shall remain under the strictest surveillance and shall be brought before the judiciary for appropriate action." (9)

Also at this time a certain John Glyn, an Englishman who had long been resident in Leghorn, was appointed as the emigration agent for Italy and given the task of organising the departure of Italian migrants for New Zealand and Queensland, and, as required, of arranging contracts. (10) In a rather officious advertisement he himself had circulated Glyn tried to promote emigration, particularly from Tuscany, considerably exaggerating the benefits and conditions to be enjoyed, claiming farm-work was available immediately in the colonies' vineyards, mulberry plantations and olive groves.

Glyn's circular generated an immediate, widespread reaction. One of the most qualified responses, however, came from the Italian Consu-

late in Melbourne which itself had encouraged Italians to emigrate to Australia and New Zealand, while painting a truer, more realistic picture of the situation.

Another came from a long-term Italian resident of Queensland, who said that the chances of Italian labourers finding employment there were not very good and that, although a farmer might be well off in terms of the large amount of land available to him for cultivation, there was certainly no work in mulberry farms, vineyards or olive groves. (11)

In 1876, at the suggestion of Henry Parkes, the New South Wales Legislative Assembly decided that 100,000 pounds be allocated immediately to attract migrants from Britain and Ireland, providing generous travel incentives to mechanics, miners, farm labourers and other workers needed in the colony.

"The decision was intended to ensure a preponderance of British migrants. Only one-eighth of the funds allocated could be used for migrants from other European countries, and one quarter for those from the United States. Asians were excluded." (12)

The intent of the legislation was clear and its effects quite dramatic. Nevertheless, the new measures also attracted attention in other European countries and a request for assistance was forwarded to the Agent General in London by the *Società per l'espatrio di migranti italiani* (Society of Italian Emigrants). The Society asked that the normal incentives be made available to Italian migrants and also requested special concessions such as land grants, in order to "allow Italian settlements to be formed". (13) This request was not approved by the New South Wales Government whose reply was that the colony needed labourers, not farmers. (14)

In 1883 another attempt was made by the Cerruti & Co. shipping company which proposed that Italian settlers be brought to Queensland on ships which could load cargoes of wool, sugar and meat for the return journey. The Government rejected this offer as well, saying that the selection of Italian migrants should not be left to a foreign shipping company. (15)

In 1906 the New South Wales Agent General for Immigration, T.A. Coghlan, wrote to the ambassadors of seven European countries to sound out whether they could provide immigrants for his State. The Italian ambassador in London replied that the promotion of emigration and the recruitment of migrants was forbidden in Italy without the special permission of the Foreign Affairs Ministry. In any case, if the New South Wales Government wanted to recruit Italian farmers it would first of all need to establish where the immigrants would be employed and draw up contracts under which it, or private employers, would import Italian workers. (16)

Another attempt was made in March 1910 when an Australian delegation, consisting of the Victorian Minister for Transport, McKenzie, and the Chairman of the Water Supply Commission, Mead, left for

Italy. The purpose of the trip was to study irrigation as practised in Italy and, at the request of the Victorian Premier, Murray, to "seek settlers among the frugal and hard-working farmers of Northern Italy without running the risk of having a flood of immigrant fruiterers, instead of fruit-growers, enter the colony". (17)

The unions and the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce reacted swiftly and bitterly. The Bendigo Labour League warned the Victorian Premier in rather threatening tones against importing boys as farm workers and girls as domestic servants. The authorities in Rome who were still opposed to migrant recruitment drives told the visiting Australians as much, and in any case the Italian Parliament was just then debating new legislation on emigration. Nevertheless, the following year, two expert irrigation engineers, Luigi Banderali and Antonio Parapini, were sent to Victoria to report on the viability of establishing farming settlements. After a careful study of the Goulburn Valley and Mildura districts the Italian visitors had this to say as they prepared to leave Melbourne: "We are certain that a prosperous Italian settlement might be established in Victoria." (18)

But once again the stubbornness of the unions and the Labor Party kept immigration to a trickle. At the time even the *Argus*, which was never well-disposed towards the Italians, said in an editorial: "There is something of the pathetic in the unbounded ignorance of certain Labor Party members on the question of immigration." (19)

It is difficult to assess to what extent such restrictive and selective policies (and even more so to what extent such attitudes) affected Italian migration to Australia. It does nevertheless, on the whole, appear to have been conditioned and severely limited by colonial policy. The settlements wanted farm-hands, not farmers; shepherds and timber-cutters, not mechanics; professional people and qualified tradesmen for the manufacturing industry and the workshops were not required. In effect the only migrants accepted were those who had experience working in the fields or who were prepared to do that kind of work and, as ordinary labourers, remain under someone else's employ. This restrictive policy was aimed at replacing the source of labour that had been lost with the end of transportation, and was hardly meant to provide independent farmers who would play an active and responsible part in the development of the country.

Anyone with a qualification or a skill – craftsmen, tailors, shoemakers, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, etc... – was discouraged, as were professional people such as engineers, architects, pharmacists and doctors, unless they were prepared to practise in the outback where the locals refused to go. The class of individuals who earned a living from the exercise of their mental faculties rather than from the sweat of their brow was advised not to try Australia. "Their success would be extremely doubtful unless they had exceptional ability, knew the language, could wait patiently [for an opportunity] and had the means to

enable them to do so." (20) On the other hand even the ordinary labourers could not be permitted to arrive in too large numbers if they were to make a success of it. It was best for them to be let in a few at a time, many months apart, and with enough money to tide them over for a while without working.

Squitti the Consul remarked: "Unfortunately Italian immigration mostly consists of people who have no other capital but their two hands. They are therefore obliged to head for remote areas where they can immediately be employed for daily wages. Australia is a source of disappointment and suffering for these people. In the cities they would not only be unemployed but, singled out by the labour unions as a threat to wage levels, would also as a consequence be vilified, ill-treated and perhaps worse." (21)

Some 15 years later, in 1905, another Italian Consul, Camillo Bertola, summed up a similar situation, saying: "The Italian migrant with an insufficient knowledge of English should not even consider Australia as a place in which to practise his trade or be employed in manual labour, unless he has relatives, friends or people from his own village to guarantee him suitable employment or a place to stay until he has found his own... With a knowledge of the language and capital of not less than £200 or £300 a farmer could buy enough land for two or three fellow countrymen to work, in the hope of extracting a reasonable profit from it in a few years, but not without considerable hardship and sacrifice. In truth I do not believe that the chances of success are such that an Italian farm-worker with a certain amount of capital set aside should chance his luck so far from his own country." (22)

A PROBLEM WITH NUMBERS

Twenty years passed between the unification of Italy and the first general census of the population of the colonies. Information about the period is sketchy, but even later the available figures are unreliable, both for the way they were collected and because of their great mobility, Italian immigration into Australia was considered by some to be more of a temporary phenomenon than a permanent one. By gathering all available data it is still only possible to estimate the number of Italians present in the colonies.

Carpi, for example, estimates that 1,309 Italians settled in the Australian colonies in the years 1867, 1869 and 1870. (23)

In the years between 1876 and 1918 the *Annuario Statistico Italiano* records 18,200 Italians as having emigrated to Australia. (24)

D. Parker, an expert in Italian migration to Australia, states that the number of Italian migrants who came to Australia was undoubtedly greater than the official statistics showed, as the figures of the time were very unreliable and varied greatly from one colony to another. "It was therefore, and it still is, practically impossible to draw up a satisfactory statistical picture of Italians in Australia." (25)

Parker goes on to say that "secondly, it should be remembered that the Italians were not coming only from Italy". (26) For example, 304 of the 714 Italians registered with the Italian Consulate in Melbourne in 1871 were British-born but of Italian nationality. (27)

This was also the case with the 1,175 Italians who arrived in Australia in 1902: 1,064 came from Italy, 24 from Britain, 22 from Egypt, 19 from Germany, 11 from Ceylon, 10 from the United States of America, nine each from France and New Zealand, three from Canada, two from Honolulu and one each from Argentina and Austria. (28)

Furthermore, the nationality of a migrant did not always correspond with his place of birth.

D. Parker's study yields information about Italian-born migrants of other nationalities: "Of 26,756 Italian-born migrants arriving in Australia, 9,226 were British subjects, six were Austrian, one Estonian, four French, — German, 109 Greek, 17,353 Italian, one Swiss, 13 American, 16 Yugoslav, six various and 13 unspecified." (29)

Italian citizens born in other countries also came to Australia. Of 17,658 Italian citizens 60 were born in Austria, 15 in France, 21 in Germany, 84 in Greece, four in Hungary, three in Lithuania, one in Holland, one in Romania, two in Spain, 18 in Switzerland, four in Turkey, one in Yugoslavia, five in Asia, 10 in Egypt, six in Argentina, four in Brazil, 42 in the United States of America, 14 in other American countries and one in New Caledonia. (30)

Those who wrote about the immigrant question at the time confirm this phenomenon: "The number of Italians in Australia is greater than is generally believed..." (31) "It is difficult to arrive at even an approximate figure for the number of Italians living in Australia. This is made more difficult by the fact that the working class especially, i.e. those employed in the mines and in the building of railways, municipal roads, tunnels, aqueducts and similar works largely escape the attention of our consular authorities and statistics collectors because of their nomadic existence, living as they do in tents in the interminable bush, and because they move so often from one colony to another."

The Consul Pasquale Corte also wrote: "People often move from one place to another and do so at a moment's notice. For this reason censuses in the Australian colonies are very unreliable." (32)

ORIGINS AND OCCUPATIONS OF THE FIRST ITALIAN MIGRANTS

Until 1870 the Italian migrants arriving in Australia came mostly from the coastal cities of Genoa, Leghorn, Naples, Venice, Trieste, Messina and from the Aeolian Islands, and were generally sailors on Ita-

lian or British ships. Others came from further inland, from cities such as Milan and Turin, which had a tradition of trade contact with the outside world, or from the high country around Novara or the Valtellina, which had always had a history of seasonal migration. Even before the unification of Italy these people had begun turning their thoughts towards the New World beyond the seas. Subsequently, between 1870 and 1896, emigration from the coast declined but increased among the peasant farmers from the alpine valleys of Lombardy and Monferrato (which saw a massive exodus), the hilly and mountainous country in the Veneto, Tuscany and around Naples.

The number of migrants from the Aeolian Islands also grew considerably, and for the first time migrants arrived from the coastal towns of the South, such as Molfetta, Reggio Calabria and villages in North-Eastern Sicily.

Between 1860 and 1870 travelling musicians from Viggiano started to arrive, as did Tuscan tradesmen such as the plaster statuette makers from Lucca, and stonemasons from Massa Carrara.

In 1881 peasants from the Veneto, the Friuli and other regions of Northern Italy who had taken part in the ill-fated expedition of the Frenchman, the Marquis de Rays, arrived.

Subsequent years saw the chain migration that was touched off by these first pioneers. Towards the end of the century the first migrants from the hilly country of Reggio Calabria came, as did the first peasants from Monferrato under contract to the sugarcane plantations.

In the years preceding the First World War, Lombardy and Piedmont were still the regions supplying the largest number of migrants to Australia, while immediately after the war this distinction belonged to the Veneto. (33)

Throughout the nineteenth century Italian migrants, most of whom were agricultural workers and miners (and as industrious and hard-working as they were uneducated and unskilled), were obliged to fill those gaps in the labour market that the locals left to them: jobs that were either too heavy or dirty, poorly paid or not unionised.

Still, they had no choice. Other occupations called for two skills they did not possess: a knowledge of the English language and "an approach to work conforming to British tastes". They could not even find work among the true working-class, as the fledgling industries, which were still few in number, preferred Anglo-Australian workers. On one occasion in Sydney the unions protested fiercely when an attempt was made to employ Italian workers.

Theirs was not only a revolt against scab labour but the result of a deliberate, strongly autarchic and protectionist union policy on immigrant workers.

Italians therefore had to be prepared to take whatever work was available before being able to choose the trade for which they might have had some aptitude or inclination. In inland Australia they felled

timber and worked in mines and on sheep and cattle stations. They were also farm-hands, growing and harvesting sugarcane, tobacco, fruit and vegetables.

These occupations led to a concentration of Italians in particular districts, a trend which was to increase even further after the turn of the century. Among the areas affected were the sugarcane growing districts north of Ayr in Queensland, and the orchard districts of Inglewood and Stanthorpe in the same State; the fruit, wine and rice-growing districts of Griffith and Leeton in New South Wales; the fruit and tomato-growing area of Shepparton and the wine-growing district around Mildura, both in Victoria.

"Apart from some 2,000-acre pastures near Wagga Wagga," wrote Pasquale Corte in 1897, "and Fiaschi's magnificent and famous Tizzana vineyard near Windsor, not far from Sydney, most Italians in Victoria live at Daylesford, Brighton, Dunolly, 'Nuova Trento', Benalla, Seymour, Hastings, Ringwood, Yandoit, Ballarat and Bendigo. In New South Wales Italian land ownership is mostly concentrated on the banks of the Clarence River, in the settlement known as 'New Italy'.

"There are also quite a few Italians in Albury and other parts of the Riverina between the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers, and some around Bathurst and Orange. Then there are the market-gardeners, owners of small holdings near Sydney.

"In Queensland the Italians are scattered throughout the north near the Herbert River, where they mostly grow sugarcane; a Piedmontese migrant owns large holdings in Cairns where he grows tropical plants and wine; there are many Italian settlers in the vicinity of Bundaberg and in the Roma district who earn a decent living from growing grapes." (34)

The city dwellers on the other hand were largely involved in fruit retailing, although there were wandering musicians, fishermen, restaurateurs and waiters, tailors, shoemakers, barbers, bakers and noodle makers.

There were distinguished Italian music and singing teachers, sculptors and other talented artists, doctors of medicine, lawyers, naturalists and exceptionally well-qualified engineers. Italians could also be found running import-export companies.

F. Gagliardi wrote: "Throughout Australia one finds Italians occupying responsible positions. They are employed as agricultural surveyors, as draughtsmen, engineers and architects; they are to be found in the post and telegraph offices, in public libraries, astronomical observatories, the railways, in public and private schools, in harbourmasters' offices, in the press, the legal and medical professions, in commerce and in industry; we also have farming settlements which truly do Italy proud and are singled out as models by the authorities." (35)

An example of the connection between the occupations of Italian migrants and their place of origin is seen in the way almost all those

from the Valtellina worked as miners, timber-cutters and in coal processing; the Tuscans and Ligurians as farmers, market-gardeners, wine-growers, cooks, inn-keepers, waiters and as contract labourers in road and railway construction; the Neapolitans as musicians, boiler-makers, shoemakers, barbers, flower vendors, peddlers and shoe shiners; the Sicilians as fruit and vegetable retailers, fishermen and fishmongers.

NOTES

1 - By 1880 this vast continent had been divided into six Colonies (later called States) for fear that some other power might try to occupy it. Some colonies, such as New South Wales (the so-called 'mother colony'), South Australia and Western Australia were founded as separate colonies from the beginning; while others such as Victoria, Tasmania and Queensland were formed by granting autonomy to settlements started up by the original colony.

2 - New South Wales, the 'mother colony', was founded in 1788; Tasmania, having been settled from Sydney in 1803, became independent in 1813; Victoria, founded in 1834, separated from New South Wales in 1841; South Australia, founded in 1834, did the same in 1842. The settlement of Western Australia was founded in 1828 and became a penal colony in 1849; but, because of the great distances which separated it from the others, had little or no contact with them until gold was discovered there in 1890. Queensland, which started life as a penal colony, separated from New South Wales in 1859.

3 - The population of the Australian Colonies was as follows:

	Size (km ²)	Population
i) New South Wales	798,337	348,546
ii) Victoria	227,620	538,234
iii) Queensland	1,727,500	28,056
iv) South Australia & Northern Territory	1,347,519	
	984,400	125,582
v) Western Australia	2,515,552	15,346
vi) Tasmania	48,200	89,821
Italy (1861)	248,000	22,182,000

4 - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: the Constitution of the United States encouraged European immigration in the period before 1880.

BRAZIL: (Article 72.10 of the Constitution of 1891) - "In time of peace any person may enter the national territory whenever and in whatever manner it may please him."

ARGENTINA: (Article 25 of the Constitution of 1853) - "The Federal Government shall encourage European immigration and shall not have the power to restrict, limit or impede by any tax the entry of foreigners on Argentinian soil."

5 - Oda Branchetti, Gli aspetti geografici dell'emigrazione italiana in Australia, U/graduate thesis, Università degli studi di Parma, Anno Acc. 1974-75, p. 111

6 - T.A. Coghlan, Agent General for N.S.W., 'Report of European Emigration to Australia', in *Intelligence Department N.S.W. Bulletin* no. 15, Government Printer, Sydney, 1907, p. 917.

7 - MEA, Archivio Sardo, Serie II-C, busta 47, Graham to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, 17 February 1862.

8 - La *Fiamma* - Supplement - State Visit to Australia of the Italian President, 25-29 September 1967, p. 106.

NOTE: G.C. Assolini (or Assolin), Neapolitan follower of Garibaldi took part in the rebellions of 1848 and in 1849 fought alongside Garibaldi in the capture of Rome. He arrived with his large family in Sydney in 1850 and in September 1861 was appointed Vice-Consul.

9 - *Studi Emigrazione* no. 41: 'L'Emigrazione italiana in Australia 1876-79', Centro Studi, Rome, 1976, p. 103ff. Interesting publications which were widely distributed were also produced. "Fragments of letters written by Italian migrants living in Australia were also collected as evidence of what had been stated in the above-mentioned publications. Every possible method was tried to induce Italian farmers and labourers to emigrate to Australia, even though there were no exaggerated promises made or deceptions employed, which was however the case with the 'agents' of other countries."

10 - It should be noted that although John Glyn "was authorised by the British Government he was not officially recognised by the Italian Government as an emigration agent, in accordance with the laws in force and the provisions of the Ministry of the Interior" "Bollettino della Società del Patronato", 1 (1876), no. 3, p. 50, in *Studi Emigrazione*, 1976, no. 41, p. 114.

11 - *Studi Emigrazione*, article quoted, p. 104.

12 - T.A. Coghlan, op. cit., p. 1284.

13 - *ibid.*, p. 1285.

14 - *ibid.*, p. 1285.

15 - La *Fiamma*, Supplement, op. cit., p. 106.

Italian Consul, Sydney, 26 July, 1862.

16 - MEA, *Affari Esteri* 1961-69 Serie IV, busta 270, Colonial Secretary, Brisbane, to Italian Consul, Sydney, 26 July 1862.

17 - *Argus*, 28/3/1910 and 3/6/1910.

18 - *Argus*, 29/3/1911, 11/4/1911, 4/4/1911, 20/4/1911.

19 - *ibid.*

20 - N. Squitti, Melbourne - Rapporto del Console Cav. N. Squitti - in *Emigrazione e Colonie*, 1891, p. 355.

21 - *ibid.*, p. 356.

22 - Camillo Bertola, 'Notizie circa le condizioni degli immigrati in Australia, 1905', *Emigrazione e colonie*, pp. 543-44.

- 23 - Carpi, *Delle colonie e dell'emigrazione d'italiani all'estero*, 1874.
- 24 - C. Bertola, *Natizie Circa le Condizioni degli Immigrati in Australia, 1905* - In *Emigrazione & Colonie*, pp. 543-44.
- 25 - D. Packer, *Italian Immigration into Australia*, p. 22ff.
- 26 - *ibid.*
- 27 - Censimento degli italiani all'estero (census of Italians living abroad), 31 December 1871, Rome, 1874.
- 28 - D. Packer, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- 29 - D. Packer, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
- 30 - D. Packer, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
- 31 - F. Gagliardi, *L'Australia: i suoi commerci e i suoi rapporti con l'Italia*, Florence, 1897.
- 32 - P. Corte, *Gli Italiani nell'Australia e nella nuova Zelanda, (Rapporto - August 1902)* pp. 1519-20.
- 33 - Oda Branchetti, *op. cit.*, p. 525.
- 35 - F. Gagliardi, *op. cit.*

A TALE OF WOE: THE ITALIAN MIGRANT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 5 – TWENTIETH CENTURY

FEDERATION

On 1 January 1901 with great pomp and ceremony the five mainland colonies and the island of Tasmania, a total population of barely 3,500,000, joined together in a Federation under the name of the Commonwealth of Australia, founded on its own Constitution which had been passed by the British Parliament and signed by Her Majesty Queen Victoria on 9 July 1900.

The celebrations were organised by 30 different committees. In Sydney three triumphal arches were erected – one made from coal, one from wheat and one from wool – symbolising the material wealth of the country. The streets were festooned with banners which read: "One people, one flag, one destiny"; "A continent for a nation and a nation for a continent". There were military and civilian bands, parades, dignitaries in an endless procession of carriages, fireworks, banquets and speeches. (1) It was all meant to show that some kind of national unity and identity had been achieved. In reality there were a great many confused ideas and no one was prepared for the work that had to be done. Newspapers and politicians, while acknowledging the birth of a nation, also expressed a hope for a not too distant national bonding, for there were more causes for division than for unity among the Australian people. The States still wanted to be able to regulate their own affairs, manage their own territories, railways, roads, schools and industries. (2)

Furthermore, the stage had already been set for the rivalry between Sydney and Melbourne in matters of business, the press, the stock exchanges, etc.

The Governor General at first, in what was a strange error of judgement, asked Sir William Lyne, the Premier of New South Wales and an opponent of federation, to form a government. Lyne, predictably, was unable to do so. On Christmas eve Edmund Barton of the Liberal Protectionists was asked to try. Barton, with the support of the Labor Party, succeeded, while the Free Trade Party occupied the opposition benches. (3)

It was now up to Barton to find some common ground on which to base the whole apparatus of federation and prove that the effort had been worthwhile. The one thing on which everyone agreed was the need to draw up and proclaim a policy of White Australia, which for some time had had the support of all the States.

There was no urgent need to turn the first session of Parliament into an important occasion by tabling legislation which restricted immigration. It was merely a way of confirming to the fledgling nation that economic and social advancement was based on racial purity. At this point it is useful to examine the origins of this attitude.

The desire to "conserve in Australia a predominantly homogeneous European society" had existed for some considerable time. It went back to the day when white men, both shackled and free, first set foot on this continent.

From the very beginning of white settlement the racial question took root and gradually flourished in Australian society, taking on different forms from time to time but always based on the same underlying motive. The call to "keep Australia white" implied the extermination of the Aborigines and the exclusion of coloured immigrants. By exploiting the firm belief in the superiority of the British race it was even possible to attempt the creation of an exclusively British society.

It is only in recent years that Australia has shown signs of wanting to free itself from the shackles of this tradition, demonstrating both a recognition and an appreciation of the contribution that other peoples and cultures can make to the nation.

By the time anti-transportation groups were formed the slogan "no convicts, no blacks, no coolies, no cannibals" had already been heard.

DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

The first victims were the Aborigines who were considered more like animals than human beings and were consequently deprived of their land and the right to belong to the new society.

"They had no more right to their own land than an emu or a kangaroo might have had." A newspaper of the colony called them "pests", worthy of no more consideration than "dingoes" or "rats". (4)

In a slaughter which lasted 50 years some 4,000 to 5,000 Tasmanian Aborigines were massacred. Not one survived.

Apart from the killing, the aborigines were the victims of countless episodes of discrimination, harassment, abuse, cultural oppression and exploitation. It is sufficient to say that only some 17,000 were left out of a population of about 300,000 which had inhabited the continent at the end of the eighteenth century. And these were mostly to be found in the more arid, remote and desolate parts of the continent or confined to Aboriginal reserves. (5)

The Chinese and the Kanakas did not fare much better. The first Chinese, some 1,000 in all, were brought to Australia as

shepherds by the owners of the big sheep-farms, while others arrived alone. For several years all went well, but with the recession of the 1840s came the first hostilities. The opposition towards the Chinese became so fierce that in 1842 the Melbourne city fathers passed a motion opposing the importation of cannibals and coolies from India and the Far East.

Henry Parkes, who had brought to Australia some 15 to 30 Chinese typographers, later attacked Chinese immigration in his newspaper, calling it "an act of betrayal on society". (6) During the gold rush the number of Chinese immigrants grew to such an extent that in 1858, in Victoria alone, there were more than 40,000. They were tireless workers, law-abiding, frugal, and content with what they earned. However, many diggers began to attribute their own lack of success to the presence of the Chinese.

So began the violent demonstrations. The worst took place in 1852 at Hanging Rock in Victoria where many Chinese were killed. (7) A year after the 1854 Bendigo revolts, the State Government enacted legislation which restricted Chinese immigration by imposing a tax of £10 on every Chinese immigrant wanting to enter Victoria. In 1858 South Australia adopted similar measures.

Violence against the Chinese had become so serious and commonplace that in 1861 New South Wales introduced legislation that was even more discriminatory. The most recent bloodshed had occurred in 1857 at Buckland River in Victoria, where European miners attacked the Chinese camp, looting it and setting fire to the tents, so that the Chinese were forced to flee. Several Chinese diggers died from the wounds they received or drowned while trying to escape. However, the most cruel and barbaric episode took place in 1861 at Lambing Flat in New South Wales, when some 2,000 or 3,000 miners invaded the Chinese encampment. 1,200 unarmed and helpless Chinese witnessed the looting of everything they owned and the burning of anything the white men themselves had no use for. The survivors were chased out of the district and any official assistance was denied them. (8)

Queensland in 1878 was the last State to introduce anti-Chinese laws. The number of Chinese at the Palmer River gold fields had risen by then to 17,000 as against the 14,000 Europeans.

While laws against Chinese immigration were being passed the cotton and sugarcane plantation owners who were short of labour began employing Kanakas. These people were rounded up in the islands of the Pacific by unscrupulous ships' Captains who then sold them in the ports of Brisbane, Maryborough, Rockhampton and Mackay. Horrible tales of kidnapping, deception and torture circulated throughout Queensland. The Government attempted to control this trade and even abolish it but the powerful plantation owners threatened to stop growing sugarcane and even talked of Northern Queensland seceding.

The Government told the farmers from the north that the employment of black labour was harmful to the interests of the colony which

was to be preserved for the British race, and that it would solve the problem by importing Italian workers under the same conditions as the Kanakas. Only the colour of the workers' skin would be different.

Once the problem with the Chinese and the coloured races had been resolved, the unions, the Labor Party and a section of the press turned their campaign of discrimination and prejudice against Southern European migrants generally and the Italians in particular.

The Italians now became the target of accusations that had once been levelled at the Chinese. The latter had been called "yellow peril", swarms of mongolian locusts, moon-faced barbarians". The Italians, also considered an inferior race, became "dagoes, white dagoes, locusts, people who could live on the smell of an oily rag, blacklegs and wogs". Some people wondered whether they could even be considered members of the white race. Just as the Chinese had been accused of working for below award wages, of taking jobs from Australians, and had been condemned for sending all their savings back to China, the Italians now became the object of similar undue criticism.

Like the Chinese, the Italians were attacked for supposedly living in squalor, lowering Australian social and cultural standards, constituting a threat to the nation, belonging to criminal organisations, living in unsanitary surroundings and leading dissolute lives.

Many of these charges were neither new nor original. Criticism was often gratuitous, like that coming from the President of the Innisfail branch of the notorious British Preference League, who said that "...the Italians have neither the inclination nor the desire to assimilate into the Australian population, and their deliberate observance of Italian habits and their gathering in separate and distinct communities have become a threat to the economic, cultural and industrial well-being of Australia. By forming their little Italys the Italians have introduced to this country the petty political squabbles of their homeland. Their standard of living is a provocation to our race and, unless the flood is stemmed, the higher standards achieved by Australians will inevitably be destroyed". (9)

D.R.G. Packer's comment on such a statement is sober and straightforward: "What needs to be explained and never has been is how a small community corresponding to less than 1% of the population could inflict such destruction on an Australian society which had always claimed to be far superior." (10)

Other statements revealed an ignorance of the true history and growth of the Italian community in America. It was a Federal politician who said: "If we are to judge by those who live in the Italian districts of the United States, then the Italian does not possess the qualities of a citizen in the ordinary Australian sense." (11)

The Italian communities in Australia were to suffer for many years as a result of this ethnic and cultural form of discrimination. What follows are the principal events in this long and trying period.

The first vicious attacks on the small defenceless Italian communities

began in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

In 1887 *The Australian Star* rallied against them in an article under the heading "The Chinese of Europe".

On 24 October 1890 *The Australian Workman*, a union paper, published a virulent attack against Italian migrants. Having called them "brigands, vagabonds and slackers, corrupt in body and soul...", it concluded: "...if boycotts are any use at all then they should be applied in this instance against the Italians. We are confident that our businessmen cannot gain any benefit at all from the importation of these locusts." (12)

The following year the fourth session of the tenth Queensland State Parliament, sitting from June to November 1891, again debated the legislation on assisted Italian immigration which had been passed in March of that same year and was in the process of being implemented.

The issue had come up again as a result of the anti-Italian campaign started by the Australian Workers' Union.

"The Italians will work harder than the Kanakas, will accept lower rates of pay than those set by the unions and will consequently take away employment from Anglo-Australain workers." (13)

Public meetings were held, scuffles and fights broke out and a petition was taken up throughout Queensland calling for the immediate suspension of the Labor Government's assisted immigration scheme.

The rest was left to the Labor members of Parliament, where "the whole Italian nation was put on trial...a whole people, in a misunderstood, far-off land, became an object of general contempt, of absurd accusations and base insinuations about their lack of civilisation. For the first time there was talk in Australia of "mafia", "secret societies", "layabouts" and "Southern European criminals". The economic debate turned into an argument about race, and common sense and truth were its principal victims." (14)

Pino Bosi comments on the events of 1891 by saying: "It was the end of an era in which the Italians had been seen as the bearers of civilised values, art, culture and science into Australia. The stigma of illiteracy and criminal tendency marked Italian immigration for the next 50 years." (15)

The next wave of anti-Italian sentiment received its official seal of approval with the coming of Australian Federation in 1901. The Immigration Restriction Act grew out of the conviction that Australia should be inhabited by a single race and that Almighty God had entrusted the care of this last-discovered bit of earth to Australians for the procreation of a privileged race called to create a superior civilisation. The foundations were thus laid for a policy of racial discrimination, not only against the coloured races but against any foreign national considered undesirable by their masters in the new land.

As a result, in the first four decades of the twentieth century several Royal Commissions were held into the question on non-British immigrants.

THE 1901 AND 1906 IMMIGRATION ACTS

The debates of the first parliamentary sessions of the Federal Government, which fill 17 large volumes of Hansard, were mainly taken up by the Immigration Restriction Bill.

This piece of legislation, which Prime Minister Barton described as "of extreme importance for the future of Australia" (16) formally brought together the various Acts and Regulations passed by the colonies in their time, during their long campaign for racial discrimination and homogeneity.

The task was complete with the passing of The Pacific Islands Labourers Act 1906, which prohibited the importation of Kanak labour and provided for the repatriation of all those working either on the sugarcane plantations of Northern Queensland or elsewhere.

As has already been mentioned, such laws were hardly a novelty. The various States had at first introduced them independently of each other and at their own initiative. Later, with the Restriction Bill 1896, they did so jointly, prohibiting in no uncertain terms the entry of Chinese, Japanese and other coloured immigrants. These laws had caused bitter resentment in Asia, and had created diplomatic and trade problems for the British Government. Joseph Chamberlain, the British Colonial Secretary, pointed out that the laws were "offensive to friendly nations and contrary to the general concept of equality which has always been the guiding principle of all British imperial policy". (17)

Nevertheless, the majority of Australian federal politicians were in favour of the total exclusion of non-Europeans from Australia. Edmund Barton said that as far as he was concerned the doctrine of the equality of mankind did not mean racial equality. (18)

"My objection to mixing the coloured people with the white people of Australia," said J.C. Watson, leader of the Labor Party, "lies in the possibility and the probability of racial contamination." (19)

E. Wilkinson of the Liberal Protectionists said it was essential that Australia be preserved for the future of the finest race on earth and not for the servile races of Asia. (20)

However, while still quite clearly maintaining the discriminatory intent of their White Australia policy, the lawmakers of the new-born Australian Federation, guided and counselled by clever British diplomats concerned that the legislation should appear honourable, introduced the dictation test, a method copied from the Government of Natal in South Africa which had introduced it in 1897.

The legislation prescribed that "Any person who, at the request of an officer, fails to write under dictation in his own hand a passage of at least 50 words in a European language, shall be a prohibited immigrant."

The Act made no mention of a White Australia, nor did it prohibit European immigration or discrimination on the basis of race or language. But in fact the dictation test sought not only to keep out the

coloured races but also to regulate the entry of European immigrants, especially those from Southern Europe. As Pierre George wrote: "In the minds of the legislators the intention of the Act was to stem the flow of migrants as competitors in the labour market and to prevent the entry of persons, particularly Asiatics, who did not belong to the British Empire; i.e. a protectionist demographic policy was implemented. The Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 established a legislative position which remained highly restrictive until the Second World War. In the same year the Pacific Islands Labourers Act provided for the expulsion of Melanesians who had been recruited as labourers by the Queensland sugarcane growers." (21)

The Minister for External Affairs and the Attorney-General had formally guaranteed that the law would not be applied to European migrants. But the Act's weakness lay in its wording and in the fact that its implementation was left up to port officials who often were "factless, ignorant and prejudiced". (22)

H.G. Turner in his book *The First Decade of the Australian Commonwealth* gives a typical example of how the law was applied quite arbitrarily: "In November 1903 an officer aboard a German ship abandoned his post and remained in Sydney. Having been picked up by the local authorities he was given the dictation test. (This officer had a university education and spoke English, German and French fluently). The port official, however, considering him to be an undesirable migrant, gave him the 'dictation test' in Greek. He failed the test, was thenceforth treated as an illegal immigrant and subsequently sentenced to six months' imprisonment." (23)

History, as always, was repeating itself. Together with the Asiatics and other coloured races, the Italians and Southern Europeans generally were described as "people who threaten the purity of the race". "Are the Italians to be considered a civilised people in the true sense of the word?" asked a member of Parliament rhetorically. The reply came from a colleague who may have been trying to tell a joke in bad taste: "They are certainly not the type you would like to meet at night knowing they carry a knife in one hand and a razor in their pocket." (24)

Perhaps the politician had been reading a book about Australian bushrangers! In the end E. Barton, the Prime Minister, gave in to those who disliked Southern Europeans, and made it clear that the dictation test could also be applied, if necessary, to Southern European immigrants, who were "too small, too dark-skinned or too hard-working or threatened to contaminate the purity of the race destined to rule Australia".

On 4 February 1902 Barton was able to reassure Parliament, announcing that 31 Italians had been refused entry to Western Australia because they had failed the dictation test. (25) Alfred Deakin, who succeeded Barton on 24 September 1903, supported the same principles wholeheartedly and maintained that only Australians could decide who would be allowed to come and live among them. He was a strong critic of White Australia's opponents who said that, given its

vast natural resources, the country could have absorbed a much larger number of migrants. Deakin also argued that population growth was not the most pressing problem: "Australia must have a united society and cannot afford the luxury of introducing into its territory people who would find it difficult to marry an Australian or even to think like one." (26)

So Deakin not only opposed coloured immigration, but also immigration from Southern Europe. He believed that a multicultural society would give rise to problems similar to those of the United States, and that the importation of cheap labour would lead to Australians losing their jobs and to a lower standard of living.

Federico Gagliardi wrote: "It is undoubtedly a harsh and racist law. A careful examination reveals the spirit behind it: a partisan spirit which under the appearance of protecting legitimate interests conceals an aversion to any non-British immigrant, and leaves it to a petty official to decide whether to actually admit him or not." (27)

More recently Donald Horne wrote: "Behind the scenes there are still Australians obsessed with 'colour'... The truth about Australians... is that they nurture all kinds of prejudices about race, nationality and religion... prejudices against Eastern and Southern Europeans, Catholics and Jews..." (28)

"A strange law, in Immigration Restriction Act 1901-1905, which sets out, among other things, which people shall be excluded, which shall be admitted and under what conditions." (29)

"This narrowness of perspective and the ever-present fear of compromising their interests," writes G. Capra, "have set the Australian people on the road to ruin." (30)

The immigration question has always troubled Australian society. They have never bothered about increasing the size of their population for fear of losing the vast uninhabited areas with their enormous natural wealth. Rather, they have sought to prevent any population growth. This is why Australia, in its selfish isolation, has grown so slowly.

"Immigrants from other countries, who may even appear welcome, are in reality sometimes hindered and come up against unforeseen and unforeseeable obstacles, so now that the gold no longer flows freely into the 'digger's' pan the principal reason for emigrating to that land is gone.

"On the other hand, the general cry is for 'more people, a larger population', a cry due not so much to a desire to see their immense, wild lands cultivated, thus restoring their diminishing wealth, as to a relative sense of solitude and the fear of one day being attacked, invaded, suffocated, by the Germans, the Japanese and other powers already with some foothold not far from Australian soil; they eye it with envy and base their wildest hopes on the fact that it is so vast and unpopulated." (31)

NOTES

- 1 - D. Horne, *The Australian People*, Angus & Robertson, 1972, p. 163.
- 2 - R.M. Younger, *Australia and the Australians*, Rigby Pty., Adelaide, 1974, pp. 431-432.
- 3 - *ibid.* p. 432.
- 4 - J. King, *Waltzing Maternalism*, Harper & Row Publications, Sydney, 1978, p. 53.
- 5 - *ibid.* p. 53.
- 6 - *ibid.* p. 67.
- 7 - *ibid.* p. 69.
- 8 - *ibid.* pp. 69-70.
- 9 - D.R.G. Packer, *Italian Immigration into Australia*, MA thesis, 1947, University of Melbourne, p. 129.
- 10 - *ibid.* p. 129.
- 11 - *ibid.* p. 130.
- 12 - *The Australian Workman*, N.B. Sydney, Wednesday 24 September 1890.
- 13 - Cf. Nico Randazzo, *Italiani in Australia*, *Il Globo* supplement, Melbourne, 26 September 1967, p. 80.
- 14 - *Official Record of the Debates of the Legislative Assembly*, Fourth Session of the Tenth Parliament, Vol. 64, Brisbane, 1891.
- 15 - Pino Bossi, *Sweat and Guts*, p. 42.
- 16 - R.M. Younger, *op. cit.*, p. 434.
- 17 - *ibid.*
- 18 - *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. 4, p. 5233.
- 19 - *ibid.*, p. 4633.
- 20 - *ibid.*, p. 4648.
- 21 - Pierre George, *Le Migrazioni Internazionali*, Ed. Riuniti, Rome, 1976, p. 235.
- 22 - M. Barnard, *A History of Australia*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1976, p. 467.
- 23 - H.G. Turner, *The First Decade of the Australian Commonwealth*, 1911.
- 24 - Nico Randazzo, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
- 25 - G. Baggio, "Giudizi e pregiudizi sugli emigrati italiani", in *Il Veltro, Rivista della Civiltà Italiana*, A. XVII, no. 2, 3 - 1973, p. 388.
- 26 - P.N. Lamb, *The New Settlers come to Australia*, F.U. Cheshire, Melbourne, 1969, p. 5.
- 27 - F. Gagliardi, *L'Australia d'oggi*, Pisa, 1914.
- 28 - D. Horne, *The Lucky Country*, Penguin Books, 1974, p. 121.
- 29 - G. Capra, *L'Australia nei suoi rapporti con l'Italia*, Tip. Manuzio, Rome, 1910.
- 30 - *ibid.*
- 31 - *ibid.*

6 — POPULATE OR PERISH

Back home after the end of the Great War, the journalist and Australian war correspondent Henry Somer Gullett was appointed to head the Immigration Bureau. Believing that his country faced a grave danger he began gathering support for an immigration policy aimed at attracting as many British migrants as possible to populate the wide empty spaces.

In his book *Unguarded Australia*, published in 1919 (1), he emphasised the fact that Australia, vast and rich in primary resources but with a small population, was situated in an overpopulated region whose countries would not tolerate for much longer that such a large and empty continent should remain the exclusive property of so few thousand. According to Gullett there was only one solution: a massive boost to the size of the population. And the only way to achieve this was through a large increase in the migrant intake which would ensure the country's independence and protect it from possible invasion. "For Australia's immediate and future safety a population of at least 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 is needed as soon as possible. It is therefore necessary to prepare a program which goes beyond party political considerations and is commonly agreed upon, to attract and assist several thousand immigrants — men, women and children — every year. They must belong to the working class and ought primarily to be recruited in Great Britain and only subsequently in Europe." (2)

In a series of lectures given in England in 1921, later published as a booklet under the title *The Empty Continent: Australia and Its Needs*, Sir V. Northcliffe argued that unless a large-scale immigration program was undertaken, free of any considerations of nationality, it would only be a matter of time before Australia's future as a white continent was in tatters. (3)

The Australian Government who understood very well the shifts in the balance of power that had taken place globally, and especially in Australia's own region following the treaty of Versailles adopted Gullett's recommendations and did not hide the fact that it believed a larger population was the essential basis for national security and economic advancement.

W.M. Hughes, who had based his political platform on "capital, enterprise and immigration", maintained that it was absolutely essential to populate the largely empty land through a large-scale immigration

program. His response to a group of politicians who criticised this policy was: "Let us not have any illusions. Australia needs an immediate increase in its population without which we shall be unable either to develop our vast resources or support the burden of post-war reconstruction. There are sufficient resources to support a population ten to 20 times greater than the current one." (4)

The Prime Minister Stanley Melbourne Bruce, who succeeded Billy Hughes with the slogan "men, money and markets", said: "It is impossible for us to preserve our policy of a white Australia, or our current standard of living or to ensure our national security unless we increase our population." (5)

But once again immigrants were only to come from the British Commonwealth. In fact Bruce's idea was that Australia should receive capital and immigrants from the mother country, which would also provide a market for Australian exports. (6)

At the end of the war Great Britain had given assisted passage to returned soldiers, war widows and their families wanting to emigrate to Australia or to other parts of the Empire. In the space of three years 35,000 migrants left for Australia under this scheme. It was however a special arrangement in a time of crisis and in no way altered fundamental British policy which remained that of not assisting emigration. A change in emigration policy came only in 1922 during the annual Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London, at a time when unemployment in Britain had risen to 16%. It was felt that by exporting workers and capital to the Dominions the country's unemployment burden would be alleviated and at the same time markets for British goods would be guaranteed.

This ambitious plan to redistribute the white population of the British Empire resulted in the Empire Settlement Act of 1922. With this Act, Britain undertook to pay up to half the travel and settlement costs of its emigrants, including the cost of clearing and ploughing land. (7) The agreement even covered railway and road construction, irrigation projects and education for the settlers.

For the Australian Government, the aim of the Empire Settlement Scheme which subsequently came into being, was to transplant 500,000 British migrants into the deserted Australian countryside. (8) "Bruce," writes D. Pike, "dreamed of a nation of 100,000,000 whites." (9)

Three of the States declared they were interested in taking part in the Scheme and were prepared to subdivide land into 50 and 100-acre blocks depending on the use to which it would be put. Western Australia and New South Wales undertook to make 6,000 farms available to Britons while Victoria was prepared to provide 10,000 for its immigrants.

What happened in Western Australia was typical of the outcome of this pilot program. The Government had planned for 75,000 migrants, 6,000 of which (including families) were selected for placement on the land. Settlement took place in the following manner: immigrants

were divided into small groups and paid daily wages to plough up half a property at a time; the farm was then assigned by ballot to one of the group. It was soon realised that the land set aside was not very fertile, that the administration of the scheme was inefficient and wasteful and that many new settlers lacked the necessary farming experience.

In the space of a few years only some 1,700 remained to struggle on the land, 4,000 having left and the State having lost nine million pounds.

A total of only 3,000,000 immigrants arrived from Britain. Two thirds of these had had their passage paid. Of the 22,000 farms provided only 500 were actually developed. The British and Australian Federal and State Governments had wasted £34,000,000. (10)

Nor was this the only attempt at solving the difficult settlement problem. Some private schemes are also worth mentioning.

The "Barwell Boys' Scheme" aimed to bring 6,000 boys from Britain to replace the 6,000 young South Australian soldiers killed in the war.

The "Dreadnought Fund" and the "Big Brother Movement" brought out boys to be trained as farmers. (11)

In Victoria a group was formed to financially assist British army officers in India wanting to come to Australia to settle on the land. In New South Wales, even before the war, a scheme had been started to place British children with Australian farming families and make farmers of them.

Kingsley Fairbridge had also opened up agricultural schools for young immigrants in several States. (12)

The most serious and basic flaw in all these schemes was the total exclusion of non-British immigrants when in almost every case, like the British, they continued to arrive in Australia without any resources. The Australian Government's reply to a request by the Italian General Commission for Emigration was that it was not prepared to extend to Italian settlers the same assistance provided to the 10,000 British families that were to be settled in Victoria. The Queensland Government also replied in the negative when approached regarding the availability of a vast tract of land in the north of the State which was about to be subdivided into farming lots. British migrants in both cases were to be given priority. (13)

Donald Horne, in *The Australian People*, writes that under the Empire Settlement Scheme "...only the British were sought as immigrants, although Italians and Yugoslavs, who had arrived regardless, were more likely to succeed in establishing small farming properties since they, in fact, already were and wanted to go on, being farmers". (14)

G. Swinburne, Australia's representative at the League of Nations in Geneva, issued a stern warning. He pointed out the flaws and weaknesses in the migrant settlement agreement between Britain and

Australia and told the Federal and State governments that should it not be possible to increase British immigration to the desired level, then there was an urgent need to populate the country by attracting Italian and other European immigrants, without any delay or restriction.

"The entire population of Australia," wrote Swinburne, "could easily be accommodated in the single State of Victoria, and taking this as the measure of the continent's rate of settlement it is easy to see just how poor, inadequate and slow the immigration policy hitherto pursued by the various governments has been. It is therefore urgent, indispensable and vital that all questions relating to immigration be given the status of major national policy, rather than remain issues over which electoral skirmishes are fought for seats in Parliament. At stake are the defence and safety of the country; the very existence of the Commonwealth." (15)

TRENDS IN ITALIAN EMIGRATION

After the interruption of war Italian emigration continued apace. The favourite destinations were Europe (especially France and Switzerland), North America (United States and Canada), and South America (Argentina and Brazil). From 1918 to 1942, 4,355,240 Italians left Italy, of whom 51% emigrated to other European countries, with 44% going to North and South America. According to Italian statistics only 49,144 emigrated to Oceania.

The number of Italian immigrants who came to Australia between the two World Wars was not as high as was generally thought at the time. Once again this misconception was due ultimately to racial prejudice. For example, of the migrants who arrived in the nine months from January to September 1923, 41,545 were British, 1,407 Italian, 514 Greek, 93 Maltese and 2,347 of various nationalities.

In 1924, when the first rumblings were heard about a supposed invasion by Italian migrants, 88,335 British migrants entered the country, compared with 4,540 Italians. In 1925, more than 30,000 British immigrants were admitted as against 6,016 Italians and 1,000 or so others.

The average annual intake of 910 Italians rose to 3,220 in the decade between 1921 and 1930, only to drop the following decade to an annual average of 1,775. In the five years from 1921 to 1925, 17,092 arrived, making a total of 36,262 for the decade.

From 1931 to 1935, when because of the severe economic depression Italian immigration was, at least in theory, limited to family reunions, the intake dropped to 7,234, later rising to 12,212. Without counting those who returned home, 55,708 Italians settled in Australia from 1921 to 1940.

D.R.G. Packer in *Italian Immigration into Australia* states that no less than 100,000 Italians would have worked in Australia by the time the Second World War broke out. (16)

Gualtiero Vaccari, on the other hand, claims the figure for Italians who spent at least some time in Australia is closer to 123,000. (17)

One of the biggest differences in Italian emigration to Australia during this period was in the places the migrants came from. The biggest increase occurred in the number of migrants arriving from the south, particularly from the province of Reggio Calabria, in Calabria, and certain parts of the Puglie and Campania. In the north the largest increase was in the numbers coming from the Veneto, Lombardy and Friuli Venezia-Giulia.

Most Northern Italian migrants now came from the three provinces of Vicenza, Treviso and Udine, rather than from the traditional sources of the Sondrio, Bergamo and Brescia provinces in Lombardy.

The total number of Sicilians emigrating to Australia also increased slightly. The by now, traditional chain migration from the Aeolian Islands was followed by that from Catania and, of lesser magnitude, from Siracusa.

There were many reasons behind the rapid rise in Italian emigration to Australia in the immediate post-war period, one of the principal causes being the 1921 American law which set an annual intake quota of migrants from each overseas country. The figure was set at 3% of the number of migrants from that country already living in the United States at the time of the 1910 census.

The Italian quota was therefore reduced to some 40,000. New restrictions were introduced in 1924 which reduced the intake further to about 4,000. When many other countries followed the American example the only destinations still available to Italian emigrants were Australia and some countries in South America and Europe.

Another major reason for the rise in Italian emigration was the economic climate. The Italian economy, which had been drained by four years of war, was in a precarious state and the emerging political situation only helped to aggravate it. The peasant farmers, without any financial assistance, were unable to scratch a living from unproductive or tiny plots of land that were too small to support a family.

However, a 1924 survey of migrants travelling to Australia showed that more than a third were not emigrating out of economic necessity, their earnings at home being quite sufficient. They were leaving instead in the hope of bettering their economic circumstances and partly also out of a spirit of adventure. Others were emigrating because they had little work or were unhappy with the pay they were getting. Some, especially the Piedmontese, had had their small properties devastated by phylloxera, while others were fleeing excessive taxes. Only ten of them said they had been unemployed for some time. (18)

Many Italians may initially have been attracted by the rich Western Australian mines and the sugarcane plantations of Northern Queensland, with intensive or mixed farming only later exerting an influence.

It should not be forgotten that many, perhaps the majority, came as a result of being encouraged by relatives living in Australia who sponsored them (sometimes for marriage) and often paid their ticket across.

About two-thirds of the migrants in the 1924 survey had been sponsored, 20 or so had already been to Australia and had returned to Italy for the war, and "no one arrived without some reference point, that is to say without some well-established relative or friend waiting to meet them on arrival". (19)

THE AGONY OF ITALIAN EMIGRATION BETWEEN THE WARS

With the recommencement of Italian immigration into Australia came a revival of political pressures in State and Federal parliaments. However, apart from resulting in a few minor restrictions nothing came of them.

While the necessity of exploiting the natural resources of the country was the subject of debate, there was at the same time a fear that the arrival of non-British immigrants would upset the public order as well as British habits and customs. Despite this the Federal Government stuck firmly to its open-door immigration policy for all Europeans. Renewed attacks on immigrants, however, were not long in coming and were prompted by the arrival in Queensland of the Italian cruiser *Libia*, which was greeted enthusiastically by the Italian community there and in every port in the country. Seeing so many Italians arriving at once, Labor politicians accused the Government of having entered into secret arrangements with Italy. (20)

The Queensland Premier was forced to hurriedly explain to the Parliament that "The Italians are not being encouraged, just as the British are not being discouraged...". (21)

The Queensland Chamber of Commerce wanted the Federal Government to intervene not only to protect Italian migrants but also to increase Italian immigration into the State. However, the Prime Minister replied that while the Government's policy of not rejecting any European migrant would stand "no measures were envisaged to encourage Italian immigration to Australia". (22)

Following disturbances in Queensland the Italian Government decided to send an inspector of the Italian General Commission for Emigration, Giovanni Dell'Oro, to examine the situation with regard to Italian migrants in Australia. (23)

As his report was favourable, emigration to Australia was allowed to continue unrestricted. During an International Economic Conference held in Genoa, Don Sturzo, founder of the Italian 'Partito Popolare', met the Australian High Commissioner to London and proposed a farming settlement plan for Italian migrants. Sir Joseph Cox took little interest in the project, merely lodging a perfunctory report with the Government.

A few months later, on 19 September 1922, he attacked suggestions by the Finance Committee of the League of Nations that Australia provide assisted passage and settlement aid to a group of Italian farmers and forced the issue to be abandoned. (24)

The Australian press dramatised the incident with banner headlines such as "Invasion of Australia proposed". Furthermore, with the arrival at the time of the ship *Ormonde* carrying 200 Italians, it was suggested the invasion had already begun. Wherever there was an Italian presence complaints about unemployment, violence and the poor state of the economy began to be heard and panic spread through the population.

The Italian Embassy in London, after having sought the fullest explanation from the Australian Government, categorically denied newspaper reports of supposed disturbances provoked by Italians. For their part the Australian authorities reassured their Italian counterparts that they had not received any protests or complaints, either directly or indirectly, from the Italian community in Australia. (25)

The situation was not much better in 1923. The Lloyd Sabaudo shipping company's *Re d'Italia* arrived in January bringing 556 Italian migrants. As soon as they disembarked they discovered that the promised weekly wages of £4 or £5 were an illusion and that, because of unemployment, work was hard to find. Many of them went back on board the ship having decided they would not remain in Australia. However, on the return journey they were forcibly made to disembark in Melbourne. Some of them found temporary accommodation at the Cavour Club until, after the holiday period was over, they were able to find work.

The more needy cases were helped by a collection of 200 pounds raised by the Italian community in Melbourne. (26) These migrants were immediately followed by another shipload of 600 Italians "without any specific plans and no money to cover the basic necessities of life as they waited to find work. More than 100 of the immigrants had to be repatriated at Government expense, not without arousing local feelings of distrust and open hostility...". (27)

That such things could happen was due to the lack of employment bureaus and Government assistance for non-British migrants. All non-Britons had to rely on their own resources, were not welcomed by the workers' associations and were often portrayed in the press as "dirty and greasy, able to live off the smell of an oily rag." (28)

D.R.G. Packer writes that during this period "...Italian emigration entered a new phase, a less happy phase, as the influx of migrants was accompanied and then followed by a sudden increase in cultural antipathy and racial hatred...It became a normal characteristic of many Australians to be hostile towards Italians...organised anti-Italian groups were formed, and campaigns in the press, outbursts in Parliament, public gatherings and physical violence were all part of the hostile reception. Australians wanted to maintain the traditional 98 % intake of British migrants... So the White Australia Policy

became even more restrictive than the British-Australia Policy. In conclusion, Australia's immigration policies have suffered from a fear of three major bogeymen: the Chinese, the Kanakas and the Italians. On each occasion as the number of migrants arriving grew so did the opposition..." (29)

In 1924, Hunter, Head of the Immigration and Settlement Service in Australia, expressed himself in the following way about the opportunities for Italian migrants in the Australian workforce: "Australia presents itself as a country of immigration capable of absorbing Italian immigrants in any rural occupation; there is also a demand in the building industry, but none in the mechanical trades.

"The Government, however, is unable to grant them any direct assistance because of its agreement with the British authorities which commits it to the annual intake of a specific number of immigrants from the United Kingdom. The reception and settlement of new arrivals is entrusted to the governments of the respective States and the number of people prepared to leave Great Britain is higher than the number requested by the aforementioned States. The difficulty in the inclusion of Italian migrants lies in their lack of English and in the fact that there is no local organisation to assist their settlement. Every worker should arrive with at least five or ten pounds in his pocket. The only Government offices for the placement of workers in employment are the labour bureaus of the Ministries for Immigration. These, however, deal only with the placement of British immigrants. The State governments do not have at their disposal the funds to assist Italian immigrants and cannot grant them land or other concessions on special terms (payment in instalments over a number of years, refunds of travel costs, etc...).

"There are no difficulties of a political, economic or social nature which might be raised against Italian immigrants. The difficulties remain: 1) the language; 2) the lack of a local organisation to find work for the immigrants and otherwise assist them; 3) Australia's own need to find more resources to assist the new arrivals.

"Australia overall is a country which cannot provide employment on a large-scale for Italian immigrants; Italians can only be accepted under certain conditions, gradually and in small numbers. Nor do I believe it possible, judging by the current state of affairs with regard to British immigrants, to arrive at an agreement with the Federal Government and the governments of the individual States which might facilitate the emigration of Italian workers to Australia, although there is no special reason why this should not be possible in the event of a future major increase in settlement." (30)

Unfortunately by 1924 the situation had become worse and conflict between the new arrivals and the local population had reached fever pitch. On the arrival of every ship carrying Italian immigrants there was an explosion of bitter debate, protests, criticism and threats in the press, by the unions and groups of various kinds. Newspaper articles spoke of the "decadent Southern European race", of "the

degeneration of the racial stock", of Italian eating habits, their poor physical condition, their lack of English and other such things. (31) There was also much discussion of the hardship endured by migrants, of their struggling to survive without any money, of their having no relatives or friends to lend a hand. There were reports that many were exploited by their own countrymen, that fights broke out over work and that there were other serious problems in the sugarcane plantations in Queensland where large numbers of Italians had settled. (32) The newspapers even discussed how it might be possible to bring in Northern Italian migrants and exclude those from the South because their skins were darker. (33)

Robert Murray wrote: "Pressure was brought to bear on the Bruce-Page Government by the unions, the press and certain Protestant churches, for severe restrictions to be placed on Italian immigration." (34)

The political parties began blaming one another for the arrival of too many Italians. Mr Watkins, the Honourable Member for Newcastle, warned about the slow but significant rise in the number of immigrants arriving from Southern Europe, suggesting that these people, who were "hardly desirable", paid only £12 for their journey out when British migrants had to pay £32, and that furthermore, again unlike the British, they were not made to undergo a medical examination before they left.

The Member for Newcastle therefore concluded that the choices being made in the selection of migrants were detrimental to the nation as a whole and specifically to public health and the economy. (35)

Following the rejection of these claims by the Italian Consul in Melbourne, even the Prime Minister on 7 October felt bound to tell Parliament that "The Federal Government neither promotes nor encourages Southern European emigration to Australia in any way, but the Honourable Member will be aware that, for various reasons of various kinds, it would be a rather serious matter to prevent the landing of immigrants from friendly European nations, provided that such immigrants meet the prescribed health requirements and that there is no specific reason, of a political or other nature, for rejecting them. It is even less appropriate to talk of differences between one country's immigrants and another's. Nevertheless, in the interests of the immigrants themselves and in order to try to regulate their arrival, we have reached special agreements with certain countries tending towards the issue of passports to a limited number of persons. I have already mentioned the agreement reached with the Italian Government". (36) (This concerned the abolition of the requirement that Italians emigrating to Australia carry visas issued by the British Consulate).

Having explained the restrictions imposed on immigration from particular countries, the Prime Minister refuted the Member for Newcastle's suggestions about the preferential treatment of Southern European migrants, saying that the break-down of arrivals to the end of

September by nationality was 41,545 British, 1,407 Italians, 514 Greeks, 93 Maltese and 2,347 others.

As for the compulsory medical examination, the Prime Minister said that Italians were required to undergo one before embarking, while British migrants were only examined if they applied for assisted passage, farming settlement concessions or in cases where there would be a financial burden on the Australian Government. (37)

The Italian General Commissioner for Emigration was aware of the situation confronting Italians if they arrived in Australia penniless or without the benefit of sponsorship. He had already ordered that before being granted permission to embark every Italian emigrant not sponsored by relatives or friends had to show he had cash reserves of at least £40.

In late 1924, following a newspaper campaign opposing Italian immigration in general and Southern Europeans in particular, the Australian authorities were also obliged to impose on foreigners the £40 requirement already enforced by the Italian General Commission. (38)

However, despite the measures adopted by governments the year ended amid "a tumult of criticisms, protests, attacks, insults and threats against the immigration of our countrymen into Australia". (39)

i 1925 offered renewed encouragement and hope both for new emigrants and the Italian communities in Australia. First of all the new Ferry Report praised the industriousness and honesty of Italian immigrants. Furthermore, the British Preference League had so slandered the Italians that the Queensland Government had set up a Royal Commission into "The social & economic effect of Increase in Number of Aliens in Northern Queensland". The inquiry, which was to consider the issue of foreign settlement generally in the country's tropics ended up by becoming essentially an examination of the Italian question. Its findings were not at all what had been expected by the Commission's proponents. The Commission in fact once again spoke of the impeccable behaviour of the overwhelming majority of Italians. "The Italian immigrant knows how to stand up for his rights, is loyal to fellow union members, knows how to live well and his standard of living is as high as that of the British." (40)

Even the national press had begun to adopt a more benevolent and sympathetic approach towards the Italians, "pointing out their generosity and recognising their utility with regard to local progress and wealth". (41) It began to be realised that the much-vaunted Anglo-Australian scheme for the settlement of 500,000 Britons in Australia was a failure.

The historic Brindisi-Melbourne-Tokyo-Rome flight of the Italian aviator Commander De Pinedo contributed to this altered perception of the Italian migrant. (42)

The Italian Marquis Francesco De Pinedo, accompanied by his mechanic Ernesto Campanelli, was the first long-distance aviator to

fly to Melbourne from Europe. All around Australia the authorities and the people, Australians and Italians alike, celebrated the courageous flight pioneer in a spontaneous show of communal euphoria. The most memorable moment came when the Italian community in Melbourne presented him with an engraved gold medal mounted on a piece of eucalyptus wood, showing an eagle in flight whose outspread wings embraced both Italy and Australia. (43)

Despite this the year 1925 was not without its sour note. This was the year in which more Italians (6,016) arrived than any other non-British group, surpassing even the number of Germans. However, the scheduling of the intake had been poor: 4,000 arrived in the first six months and only 2,000 in the second. Consequently, excessive numbers of Italians poured into certain areas, such as Northern Queensland, where an over-production of sugar had led to unemployment.

The powerful Australian Workers' Union imposed a boycott on the transport and crushing of sugarcane grown by Italians, and made plantation owners adopt employment quotas of 75% British labour and only 25% foreign.

Emigration from the Italian province of Alessandria was suspended for four months, the only exceptions being family reunion cases or migrants sponsored by farm owners.

These temporary restrictions reduced Italian immigration for the year to 3,952 arrivals, but in 1927 a post-war record of 7,884 was set. After 1927 the Italian Fascist Government started a campaign to discourage Italian emigration in any form and the influx of Italians into Australia dropped sharply.

At the same time the Labor Party, having come to power in 1929, cancelled all agreements with Southern European countries and only allowed the entry of relatives of Australian residents, and of migrants with substantial, unspecified, financial resources. In 1930, in the depths of the Depression, the Government stopped all immigration and was particularly harsh towards the Italians. At the same time that it was putting the necessary legislation through Parliament two Italian ships, the *Otranto* and the *Oxford* were already on their way to Australia carrying 170 Italian migrants. These migrants had satisfied all requirements, including sponsorship by relatives or friends. The Australian government refused to allow them to disembark, despite the protests of the Italian authorities and the local press. After having tried unsuccessfully to land at several ports the two Italian vessels and their passengers were forced to once again set sail for Italy.

The Depression was a difficult time for all, but immigrants were especially hard hit. They were often without family or friends for support. Many did not even have an address at which they could receive mail. They were nevertheless able to survive without flooding into the relief centres. This caused more friction with the local population and increased the hostility and envy felt towards them. Many Australians with the support of the unions and certain organisations such as the British Preference League called for Italian jobs to be given to locals and some went as far as demanding mass deportations.

The Italians had formed small family and community support groups. Those who owned a farm would provide food and lodging in exchange for work. In Northern Queensland several cooperatives had been set up, characterised by good will and trust with respect to hours of work and wages.

1931 has been described by some as a year of panic. In January wages were cut by 10% and in April the Bank of New South Wales closed its doors. Many people sold their savings passbooks to speculators for much less than face value. The number of unemployed continued to grow and thousands of families were threatened with eviction from their homes. In the depths of winter 33,000 people were living on the streets, while more than 400,000 lived in hessian or bark huts or similar shanty-type housing. The unemployed travelled enormous distances looking for work to support their families.

Schools were turned into relief centres for the children of the jobless. In one year alone 60,000 free meals, 7,000 items of clothing and 2,000 pairs of shoes were handed out in Victorian schools.

The Lyons Government (1932-1934) which had succeeded Labor, not only kept the immigration restrictions in place but raised to the absurdly high figure of £500 the capital needed to be able to settle in Australia. However, it was more the country's economic circumstances than its restrictive immigration policy which discouraged immigration. It was only in 1936, after an improvement in the national and international economic situation, that the amount of money a migrant was required to have was reduced and Australian citizens were allowed to sponsor European immigrants, provided that they were guaranteed a job on arrival. In this period it was almost impossible to emigrate to Australia without being able to count on the help of friends or acquaintances.

Once the fear of the recession had passed, the Australian attitude towards Italian migrants deteriorated, not only because of the intense competition for jobs, but also because of certain political events. The 1935 Italian invasion of Abyssinia had alarmed local public opinion and the imposition of sanctions by the League of Nations, of which Australia was a member, meant that once again an obviously uneasy relationship existed between the two groups.

NOTES

- 1 - H. Gullet, *Unguarded Australia*, Melbourne, 1919, p. 494ff.
- 2 - R.M. Younger, *Australia and the Australians*, Rigby, 1974, pp. 494-5.
- 3 - Viscount Northcliffe, *The Empty Continent: Australia and its Needs*, reprinted from 'The Times', 1921.
- 4 - Cf. N. Randazzo, 'Italiani in Australia', in *Ricordo del Santuario di S. Antonio*, Melbourne, 1969, pp. 87-88.
- 5 - *Australia's Heritage: The Making of a Nation*, Jon Sands Pty. Ltd., Artarmon 1970, p. 1777.
- 6 - R.M. Younger, op. cit., p. 505.
- 7 - *Australia's Heritage*, op. cit., p. 38.
- 8 - *ibid.*, p. 1780.

- 9 - D. Pike, *Australia: The Quiet Continent*, Cambridge University Press, p. 175.
- 10 - *Australia's Heritage*, op. cit., p. 1780.
- 11 - D. Pike, op. cit., p. 175.
- 12 - *L'Emigrazione Italiana dal 1910 al 1923*, vol. II, Rome, 1926, p. 338.
- 13 - *ibid.*, p. 337.
- 14 - D. Horne, *The Australian People*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1973, p. 207.
- 15 - *L'Emigrazione Italiana dal 1924 al 1925*, p. 607.
- 16 - D.R.G. Packer, *Italian Immigration into Australia*, M.A. thesis, 1947, University of Melbourne.
- 17 - Cf. Nino Randazzo, op. cit.
- 18 - *L'Emigrazione Italiana negli anni 1924-25*, p. 619.
- 19 - *ibid.*, p. 618ff.
- 20 - N. Randazzo, op. cit.
- 21 - *ibid.*
- 22 - *ibid.*
- 23 - *ibid.*
- 24 - *ibid.*
- 25 - *ibid.*
- 26 - *ibid.*
- 27 - *L'Emigrazione Italiana negli anni 1924-1925*, p. 603.
- 28 - *ibid.*, p. 601.
- 29 - D.R.G. Packer, op. cit., p. 88ff.
- 30 - *L'Emigrazione Italiana negli anni 1924-25*, p. 345ff.
- 31 - Robert Murray, *The Confident Years: Australia in the Twenties*, Melbourne, 1978, p. 125.
- 32 - *ibid.*, p. 125.
- 33 - *ibid.*, p. 125.
- 34 - *ibid.*, p. 126.
- 35 - *L'Emigrazione Italiana negli anni 1924-1925*.
- 36 - *ibid.*
- 37 - *ibid.*, p. 605.
- 38 - *ibid.*, p. 603.
- 39 - *ibid.*, p. 607.
- 40 - *The Social and Economic Effect of Increase in Numbers of Aliens in North Queensland*, Queensland Parliamentary Papers, 1925, vol. III, paper A28, The Ferry Report.
- 41 - *L'Emigrazione Italiana negli anni 1924-1925*, p. 611.
- 42 - *ibid.*, pp. 611-612.
- 43 - N. Randazzo, op. cit., p. 91.

II

In the populated regions Australia differs little from one State to another, while the sparsely settled and uninhabited areas are monotonously uniform.

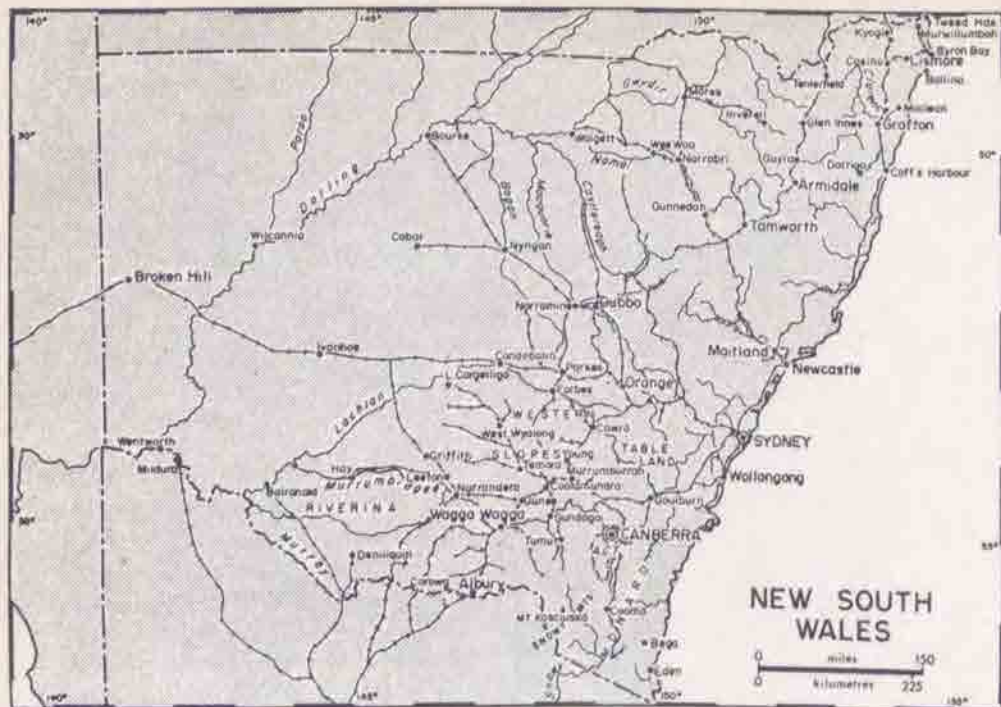
Australia is divided into six States which initially were six colonies, and which strove for independence, first from each other and then from the mother country, because of that natural desire to become autonomous, a characteristic of every pioneering people.

There are no natural borders; the climate and the nature of the soil are identical and the methods of exploiting it are the same.

We find the same types of Italians in all the States and even their life styles are similar.

The Confederation, which united the Australian States in 1901 and imposed common laws, especially in those areas relating to emigration and colonisation in general, readily absorbed the Italians, their ways of living and working, their development of the country and their usefulness as colonisers.

We will look at only four of these Colony-States, those in which the Italians are seen to be most numerous and in which their contribution has been greatest - New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland.



BRIEF GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF NEW SOUTH WALES

New South Wales is situated in the South-East part of the Australian continent and occupies an area of 798,337 square miles. (1)

It shares its northern border with Queensland, its South-West border with Victoria, its western border with South Australia and its shores to the east are bathed by the Pacific Ocean.

It could be divided into four principal regions which run parallel to the coast, (a) the coastal plains which are mostly narrow, fertile and irrigated, (b) the high plains of the Great Dividing Range, (c) the Western hills and (d) the Western dry plains which receive less than 178mm of rain per annum.

The main rivers in the State are; the Murray, length 1,930 miles; the Darling, length 2,560 miles; the Macquarie, length 860 miles; the Namoi, length 850 miles; the Murrumbidgee, length 1,500 miles and the Lachlan, length 1,480 miles.

Like the topography the climate varies greatly. It ranges from a minimum of zero or below zero in the Australian Alps to a maximum of 38°C in the dry areas to the west. (2)

As we have already seen, Australia was first settled on the New South Wales coast at a place called Sydney Cove in the Jackson Bay area.

The place chosen by the botanist, Joseph Banks of Captain Cook's expedition, was declared unsuitable by Governor Phillip to found the colony because the soil appeared sandy and sterile and drinking water was scarce.

As a result Phillip had the prisoners transported, immediately after disembarking, further north where the land seemed better and there was a better water supply. He chose a little harbour in the southern side of the big bay called Jackson and had the cove called Sydney Cove. It was the 26th January, 1788.

During the following year the first Government House was built. Now exploration commenced to find land suitable for agriculture and in 1790 the land yielded its first products. In 1792, because of poor health, Governor Phillip was forced to leave the colony. He was succeeded by three governors – Captain J. Hunter (1795-1800), Philip G. King (1800-1806) and William Bligh (1806-1808).

The latter brought the colony to the point of rebellion. Major-General Macquarie (1810-1821) (3) put the colony back on its feet, re-establishing order, implementing standards of cleanliness and hygiene, opening up roads and means of communication.

In 1823 the first Legislative Council was established and the position of the first Chief Justice was created. In 1830 the numbers of deportees were reduced and in 1840 deportation of convicts finally ceased altogether.

In 1885 a self-governing and democratic government was initiated. (4) The establishment of the political structures corresponded with a certain economic prosperity. The wool industry, the coming of free migration, merchants, artisans and professionals, cattle raising and finally the discovery of gold in the Bathurst district in 1851 all contributed to the economic prosperity.

NOTES

- 1 – A. & N. Learmonth, *Encyclopaedia of Australia*, Hicks, Smith & Sons, Melbourne, 1973.
- 2 – Osmar White, *Australia for Everyone*, Wren, Melbourne.
- 3 – Sydney J. Baker, *The Ampol Book of Australiana*, Currawong, Sydney, 1963, p. 1.
- 4 – John Larkins, *Dictionary of Australian History*, Melbourne, Rigby, 1980, p. 176.

7 — FROM FREE IMMIGRATION TO — THE CENSUS

In the first part of this history of Italian migration to Australia we took a brief glance at the events surrounding the discovery of Australia. We looked at its difficult beginnings as a penal colony, at the first phases of the presence of the Italians, at the immigration laws and at the implementation of the White Australia Policy. Now we wish to present in more detail the events governing the settlement of Italian immigrants in the main Australian colonies. It is a sketchy and incomplete history.

It is made up of short news items, names and facts which we will use, like the tessels of a mosaic, to reconstruct some local aspects of the history of our immigrants in Australia.

It was not, as stated earlier, an organised or negotiated migration; it was not a mass exodus as in other countries and did not originate only from Italy, but it was for a long time, a migration that one could call individual, exploratory and almost temporary.

Many came and returned, leaving hardly a trace of themselves. Others, once they had decided to remain or were forced by circumstances to remain, disappeared among the local, much more numerous population. These little sporadic early nuclei which failed to develop during this time through chain migration (which, until the last World War, became the main characteristic of Italian Migration to this country), were not mentioned in the official history of the colonies.

We find details of our earliest Italian migrants in the local chronicles and in the archives. They are just names listed in old bundles of records, in the holdings of State Libraries and in Church registers where marriages and baptisms were recorded. For many years one could not speak of mass migration. But it is nevertheless certain that the history of our migration begins and nearly always coincides with, or follows a little later, the birth of the various colonies or Australian States.

We start this historical onslaught with the first colony, the Mother Colony, New South Wales. New South Wales, without doubt, can boast of the oldest Italian migration. Indeed, we have already met Italians among the deported convicts and free migrants in this colony.

Since 1840, when Australia opened its doors to free immigration, a migratory trickle began that, for one reason or another, has never dried up.

STONE-MASONS FROM LOMBARDY

The first Italian migrants to arrive in the colony, apart from a few priests invited by the first Catholic Bishop of Australia, Bishop Bede Polding, were 70 Lombard stone-masons, recruited by Jules Joubert, who, together with his brother Dodier, was planning to build a village near Sydney.

"I looked around," writes Jules Joubert, "to buy some land that could be valuable in the future, and in the end, I settled for a site on one of the estuaries of Port Jackson (Sydney Harbor), known as Hunter's Hill. I must confess that the site did not enjoy a good reputation. There were nearly 200 acres of land, occupied, in part, by some very rough people, old convicts or deserting sailors, jail birds, etc... I bought that land in the full knowledge of its reputation and started working honestly to redeem it." (1)

In those days Hunter's Hill peninsula, because of its geographical location, between the Lane Cove and Parramatta Rivers, was almost inaccessible. Its isolation made it a completely separate colony from Sydney, one of the first to be built as a kind of suburb. The two Joubert brothers left France and after a long and eventful journey around the world, arrived in Australia on 1st May 1837, and decided to settle permanently.

They bought their strip of land from a certain Mrs. Mary Reiby with the intention of building a French style village. However, the most difficult problem was to find craftsmen who knew how to work with the soft rock of Gosford, which was plentiful in the area.

Undeterred, and without further ado, one of the brothers returned to Europe to the region of Lombardy, Northern Italy, where he obtained all the professional stone-masons he needed. He drew up contracts of work and engaged 70 of them, almost all from Valtellina and Brescia. We don't know when they started arriving, but without doubt in the second half of the 1840's some were already on the site, because the very fine house of Dodier Numa Joubert was finished in 1847. It was one of the first to be built. (2)

Houses began to spring up everywhere according to a well-organised plan, one after the other, in rapid succession, almost hidden by the thick bush of eucalyptus trees. Under the surprised and hostile eyes of the Aborigines, a rather inaccessible and rocky landscape was transformed into a well planned and well built suburb. The expertise of the Italian stone-masons was such that they began to attract the curiosity of the many people who came from the city to see for themselves what was happening. "Some of the most intelligent people of the colony were also attracted," writes G.N. Griffiths. "At one stage, in fact, six university professors and five judges of the High Court were living there." (3)

"When my work at Hunter's Hill had ended," continues Joubert, "it was possible for me, with the help of those capable Italian stone-masons, to accept other contracts of work in Sydney and district and to erect big buildings and warehouses, etc. Our work was organised through a cooperative system which was economically more advantageous for both parties, in spite of trades and trade unions." (4)

Many of these pioneers have become part of the history of Hunter's Hill. As soon as they had the time and the opportunity, they too, built their own houses in the same place or nearby. People say that the Garibaldi Hotel, which John Cuneo built by himself, was the first of its kind at Hunter's Hill. Cuneo also carved a small statue of Garibaldi and put it in a niche above the main entrance of the hotel. Contemporaries say also, that the hotel was built on a well chosen site; people could stop and drink a glass of beer or wine before going down to the port or on returning from it. It also became a favorite meeting-place for the Italians. Near the hotel there is still a fairly big place which, in those days, was used as a butcher's shop. One of Cuneo's sons was the manager.

Along Sea Avenue there is also the "Floridiana Villa", which belonged to Cav. Carlo D'Apice, who lived there with his family until 1920. He called it the "Floridiana Villa", after the Palace in Naples where he had spent his youth. At the entrance to the Villa he had the masons write on a stone the word, "Benvenuto (Welcome)".

In the second half of 1800, Giuliano Righetti bought a plot of land in Rocklands Avenue, from D.N. Joubert and built his own house from stone. One of his daughters is still living in the house at the present time.

In 1861 A. Bondiotti, a contractor, had already built a house for himself at 31 Madeline Street. In 1886 he sold it to Angelo Tornaghi, who called it "Milano House". Tornaghi, a watchmaker and inventor of precision instruments, was mayor of Hunter's Hill in 1879 and then again from 1882-83. Bondiotti, among other things, is remembered for the construction of the Congregational Church in Alexandra Street in 1875. A descendant of the Bondiotti family was also mayoress of Hunter's Hill. (5)

In the Sydney Directory and in the Parish registers of baptisms and marriages of the Catholic churches at Hunter's Hill and Balmain, the names which recur most often are Ambrogio and Giovanni Ambrosoli, stone-masons; Antonio Bondiotti, contractor; Pietro Canali and Carlo Cerutti, stone-masons; Giovanni Cuneo, owner of the Garibaldi Hotel; Tommaso Cuneo, butcher; Carlo D'Apice, teacher of music and Mrs. D'Apice of a "ladies' school"; Edoardo and Stefano Ferrari, quarrymen; Arturo Frappoli, blacksmith; Giacomo Peati, quarryman; Giuliano and Augusto Righetti, stone-masons; Pietro Vasella, carpenter; Francesco Zola, stone-mason; Mrs. Zola, owner of a laundry and Pietro Zanoli, stone-mason.

Other names which appear are those of Angelo Amazzoli, Azzopardi, Boggi, Cavalla, Foscu, Chilbardotti and Tanzi. (6)

In the last 23 years of the century, we also find the names of Tornaghi, Pasquale Montuori, Marzagora, Bernasconi, Marcolino, Mirando, Antonello, Palise, Russo, Santamaria, Martinelli and Cincotta. (7)

All this shows that, not only did many of the initial group of Lombard stone-masons settle permanently by building their own houses in Hunter's Hill, but also that several of the Italians who arrived later chose the same area as their place of residence. In conclusion, one could say that, through the houses they built, the Italians left a permanent landmark in the municipality of Hunter's Hill. Some, who settled permanently in the place, became honored citizens; others scattered in different localities, where they made their own contributions by dint of hard work and skilled labour.

While Hunter's Hill was in full construction, the first gold was discovered in the colony. The "rush" that such news provoked was not as impressive as the earlier "gold rush" in the colony of Victoria. All the same, it was equally huge in disrupting the life of the city of Sydney, which was emptied of its male population, leaving behind women, children and the elderly. This was the time when other Italians arrived from Northern Italy, together with thousands of gold-diggers who came from all parts of the globe.

Whilst it is still difficult, because of the lack of documentation, to follow their movements, we find from several sources, that, in the second half of 1850, some Italians were well placed in business. For example, Antonio Caproni, pattern maker of 338 Pitt Street; Giuseppe Corti, frame-maker of 300 Castlereagh Street; Walter D'Arietta (son of Gian Battista, who arrived in the Colony in 1824), composer and musician of 324 Bougham Street; Ernesto Spagnoletti, music teacher in Balmain; a certain Lacerda, barber of 206 Paramatta Road; Giuseppe Anselmo, shoe-maker, Sussex Street; Giovanni Battista Bassetti, hotel proprietor, Essex Street and Giovanni Bernasconi, engraver and jeweller, Castlereagh Street. (8)

Furthermore, in 1853, a certain Giovanni Degotardi, printer and photographer, arrived in Sydney on the *Panthea*. He was born in Lubiana of parents of Austrian nationality (it was the time in which the three Venetian regions were under Austria). Degotardi is renowned for his system of printing photographs. He won four prizes at the International Exhibition in London, 1873, and in Sydney in 1879. (9)

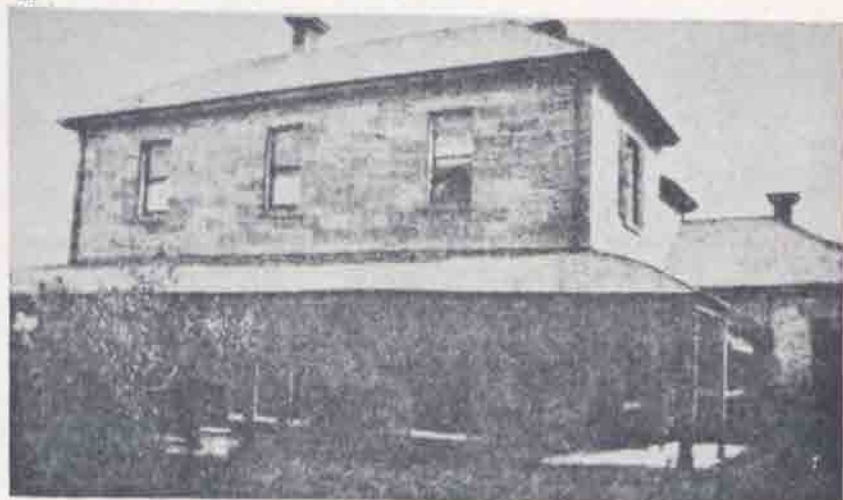
At the time of the first strolling light orchestras began to appear along the city streets. "This type of music existed on charity and rose spontaneously along the footpaths in King Street," writes Isidore Brodsky. "One could never forget Mr Torzillo and his sweet harp and Frank Boffa for the softness of his gypsy violin. Mr Boffa was often to be seen at dusk in front of the Boomerang Hotel, when people were going to or coming from the theatre." (10)

An engineer is also mentioned, a certain O. Fariola De Rozzoli. He must have been fairly well known. As a matter of fact, in 1863, the Catholic priest John Joseph Terrey, who intended to sell the



1.

2.

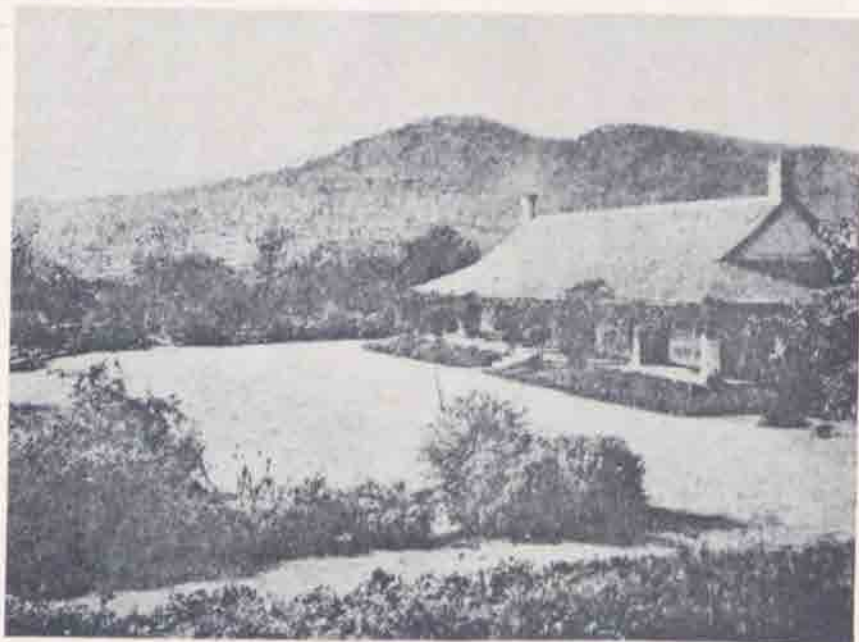


- 1 The Hotel Garibaldi, constructed and managed by Giovanni Cuneo
- 2 One of the houses constructed by the many stone-masons from Lombardy

3.



4.



3 The house of Jules Joubert

4 The original farm house of Count Leopoldo De Salis

(Courtesy G. Nesta Giffiths: *Some Southern Homes of N.S.W.*)

concessions of 1,400 acres of land received from Governor Bourke in 1833 (a concession that extended from Whale Beach to Newport, and from Pittwater to the Pacific Ocean), engaged De Rozzoli to subdivide his vast property into small lots. However, De Rozzoli was not very familiar with English measurements and when the sub-division was completed, it turned out that the buyers received less land than their entitlement. (11)

We find De Rozzoli again in 1887, in Hurstville, a Sydney suburb, where he settled with his family. In May of the same year he wrote a letter to a certain Francesco Sceusa, congratulating him for the "spirited manner in which you have taken up the cudgel on behalf of the Italian residents of Sydney." (12)

ROAD BUILDERS, FARMERS AND SQUATTERS

In an article published in the magazine of the Royal Historical Society, under the title, "Bownfels and Kirkconnel in the sixties", we have further proof of the existence of an Italian community in Sydney.

"During the five or six years that my father spent in the locality, a few teams of Italian migrants were brought from Sydney to carry out roadworks. They were from Piedmont, Northern Italy, and were good types of men, very industrious. I heard of them from my parents. They did not know English, so the superintendent of the works was compelled to study their language to be able to give them instructions and to understand their needs. He did this with the help of his wife who understood a little bit of Italian and she, in her turn, was helped by a knowledge of the classics and she also knew a little French and Portuguese.

"A few years later, my father again met some of these men who, in the meantime, had become prosperous colonists on the Clarence River. One of them was, I think, the man who, early in 1870, had found a deposit of gold near Yulgibar, which he called 'Solferino gold diggings'." (13)

We find Italians everywhere in this vast colony, amongst the farmers and the squatters. In particular they were present in the districts of Bathurst, Orange and Young. An examination of the 1881 edition of the *Country Directory of New South Wales* revealed almost 200 Italian names of which the majority was engaged in farming.

James McClelland, in his *Convict and Pioneer History*, under the title of "Squatters", also mentions Italian names such as Giacomo Ronda, Leopoldo De Salis, Carlo Marina and Felice Favretti. (14) Of Giacomo Ronda we know only that he had a big property at Mount Arthur Montefiore. We know that Favretti was born in Venice, migrated to Australia and settled on a farm in the district of Dubbo. Count Leopoldo De Salis of Florence was born on 16 April 1816 and arrived in Sydney on 18 November 1840, on the ship *Royal George*; he had also studied sheep farming in Scotland.

Without wasting any time De Salis, full of hope, bought, in partnership, a big property renowned for its horses, at Dalbalara, near Yass, to the South of the colony. But because of a long and severe drought they had to sell out a short time later – horses and property. People say that the day after the signing of the contract of sale rain fell, in such quantities that two partners, with a little patience could have saved both property and horses but, by that time, it was too late.

On that occasion De Salis wrote, "Despite my despair, I have made up my mind to settle here and be happy." Indeed, in 1844 he married Charlotte, George McDonald's daughter, and the following year he bought another farm, and by 1854 he had added two more large properties. In 1855 he sold everything, determining once more to go back definitely to Europe. However, a little later, he bought the property of Cappacumbalong, renowned for its sheep and its valuable wool. He built a park with many English trees, an avenue of poplars from Lombardy and carried out irrigation works. He began to take an interest in meteorology also.

In 1864 Count De Salis, a magistrate since 1844, was elected a member of the Legislative Assembly of the colony for the Constituency of Queanbeyan. He was a friend and supporter of Henry Parkes. He supported the introduction of a tax as an insurance against natural disasters. In 1869 he was defeated in his constituency by William Forster, but in 1872 he succeeded in having his son elected. (15)

Another Italian, worthy of mention, is Charles Marina, native of the Duchy of Parma. Because of his patriotic ups and downs he could be considered a victim of the Italian Risorgimento, that is, of Italy's great national revival in the mid-19th century. The son of an agricultural businessman, he obtained a degree in engineering and studied music at the Conservatory of Milan. He then joined the Piedmontese army and took part in the battle of Novara in 1849, when he was taken prisoner. He managed to escape and joined the Garibaldini soldiers, but during the siege of Rome was again taken prisoner. Having regained his freedom, he wandered between Malta, Italy and England. In 1856 he decided to migrate to Australia.

Having landed in Melbourne, he immediately moved to the Burrangong gold fields in the New South Wales colony, where he opened a butcher's shop. In 1861 he married a young widow, Elsa Tout. The following year he rented a sheep station near the town of Young and later bought a property of 11,255 acres. Although known as a vine-grower, horticulturist and exhibitor of cattle, Marina distinguished himself in a special way because of his passion for sheep breeding. He started with sheep belonging to the breed introduced into the colony by MacArthur, but then bettered their quality artificially. He won various prizes and medals with them at the annual Sydney Show, where he exhibited regularly. Between 1880 and 1890 he never had fewer than 12,000 sheep. Marina was also an expert breeder of horses. In 1880 he won first prize at the show at Young with a pure bred stallion and two years later bought the famous *Stratagem*, step-brother of the champion, *Cremorne*. Unfortunately, two years later,

Stratagem was killed with a rifle shot. The culprit for this crime was never found, despite a large reward offered by Marina.

A pioneer and a charitable man, Marina was well known and appreciated in Young. His property became a show place and attracted constant visitors. In front of the main gates he had written with flowers, "Welcome-Benvenuto". He died on the 30 September, 1909. His property was valued at £17,544. (16)

Another Italian of note was a certain Nicola Jasprizza, 1835-1901. Born in Dalmatia, he arrived in Sydney in 1864. From there he moved to the gold fields of Lambing Flat. Instead of digging for gold he started growing vegetables, then vines and fruit trees. By 1884 he had put 900 acres under cultivation. He was the first to introduce the growing of cherries to the district of Young. In 1901 he was mysteriously killed by a shot in his house. The crime was never resolved. (17)

In that triangle which extends between Bathurst, Lithgow and Young, other Italians settled, in the years 1860-70. Although unlucky as gold diggers, they became successful farmers because of their persevering hard work. For example, the Florentine family, Lazzarini, settled in Young in 1860, while the Lucchetti family was one of the first to settle in Lithgow and Bathurst. (18)

In the little town of Boremore, eight miles from Orange, on the list of those residents who asked for a school to be established, the names of Italians appear. Also, on a copy of the class register of students present at the official opening of the school, the names of Luciano, Leno and Steven Mastronardi appear. The three brothers are also found in a school photograph. (19)

When, in 1881, the government of the colony of New South Wales decided - as we will see - to scatter the survivors of the unlucky expedition of Marquis de Rays, Carlo Marina took an interest in having some of them moved to the Young district. As soon as he heard of their arrival, Marina went to Sydney to help and to offer them work on his property. Without any names, this is how the news was conveyed:

- two couples, one bachelor and four children - labourers; £40 a year for one couple, one bachelor and four children; £26 for the second couple.
- one couple, two children four years old, an infant and a bachelor - labourers; £40 a year.
- one couple, two spinisters, two bachelors, two children two and four years old - labourers; £48 a year and three allowances.
- two couples, a widow with a child - labourers; £40 a year.
- one couple, three sons, 11, nine and seven years old and an 18 year old daughter - labourers; £40 a year. (20)

THE CITY OF SYDNEY

We have to wait until 1881 in order to have some precise documentation on the Italians who settled in the city of Sydney itself. However, we have collected some information from various sources which, though fragmentary, is useful to reconstruct certain aspects of the Italian community in this city in the second half of the last century.

For example, General Bartolomeo Galletti, secretary to the great actress, A. Ristori, wrote in his book, "A trip around the world with Ristori", about the trip and about meetings with a certain number of Italians residing in Sydney. "The Italians of this city are small in number," he wrote on 22 July, 1875. "We met Abbot Coletti, the secretary to the Archbishop of Sydney, Bishop B. Polding. Coletti is a fine and pleasant young Roman, the nephew of the famous baritone, Coletti, and a friend of my early youth.

"Near Villa Maria the Milanese, Mr Tornaghi lives with his family in his own house. He too, has been in Australia for many years and is a successful mechanic, indeed he has done a lot of work for the government in Sydney. Among other works he designed and supervised the installation of the great clock at the Sydney Post Office, which bears his name."

"Among the members of the Italian community in Sydney Mr Modini stands out. Though he originally came from Canton Ticino, he is considered an Italian and that he is, in his heart and feelings. In his well-stocked shop, a kind of bazaar, he sells everything, especially Italian goods, which he imports not so much for the money, but for the commendable intention of making them known here in the interests of commerce. He has managed very successfully to market hunting rifles which come from the factories of Brescia. On my part, I nominate this fine man to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Knight's Cross of the Crown of Italy."

Moving then to the two Roman artists and sculptors, Jannevitte and Simonetti, Galletti says of the latter, "He was a rough Trasteverine who in 20 words could fit in 10 'damns', but he is fairly well endowed with talent and artistic feeling. His busts in marble, especially that of the Governor, conveyed strong likenesses to the subject and were highly praised. This naturally gave his work a certain acceptance and his fortune, one could say, was assured. I say this with pleasure because I know Simonetti's father who, at my request, made a little monument to my beloved father in the Church of St. Lawrence of Damaso in Rome."

"I also met a former Captain in the Italian army who had two brothers, one a Colonel and the other a General in Italy. This former Captain is now with a cook in a restaurant and earns £20 a month. I say this not in derision, but in praise, because he who earns his living with his work has the right to esteem and respect."

"Again in Sydney, I had the unexpected pleasure of meeting a 'dead man returned from the grave'. One day my old and good friend Mr

Spagni of Modena, whom I had thought to be among the 'number of the majority' for at least 20 years, turned up in front of me, alive and kicking, and he embraced me. His handshake calmed me and reassured me that I wasn't dealing with a ghost.

The small Italian community experienced days of celebrations during the visit of 'la Ristori', and one evening, after the third act of 'Pia', a deputation of Italians led by Mr Modini, read a patriotic address and presented the singer with a beautiful crown complete with the Italian colours. At the conclusion of the performance came the most extraordinary moment of the evening. A four horse carriage welcomed 'la Ristori' who was coming out of the theatre and, escorted by horse guards, and a huge crowd of applauding people playing musical instruments and holding torches, she was accompanied to her hotel, not by the shortest route, but by the long route through the main city streets. One has to give credit to the small Italian community who were able to instil the sacred Latin fire into those people imbued with the typical English reserve. Having arrived at the hotel, 'la Ristori' had to reappear several times on the balcony, at the request of the public. At last the celebrations ended with the usual champagne flowing freely to all those in the deputation, their friends and the Italians who filled the rooms of our apartment. 'La Ristori' had given about 40 performances in Sydney alone, to a great number of people."

Galletti was keen to stress that he had the pleasure of seeing several friends, among them, Mr Montefiori. "Montefiori was a rich banker, related to the Montefiori in London. He was also a distinguished amateur painter. He painted beautiful landscapes and presented 'la Ristori' with a splendid work, because of its originality and perfect finish - a pack of French cards." (21)

THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1879-80 IN SYDNEY

The participation of Italy at the International Exhibition in Sydney was mainly the work of the Florentine, Oscar Meyer. Meyer managed the Italian pavilion at the International Exhibition in Paris in 1878, and met, by chance, Mr Coombs, the representative for the exhibition of New South Wales. On that occasion Mr Coombs urged Meyer to make enquiries with the Italian authorities in Rome about the possibility of Italian participation at the Exhibition in Sydney. Meyer immediately set about organising the Italian pavilion with the participation of 50 Italian firms. (22)

Numerous magnificent works of art, sculptures in marble and in wood, oil paintings, mosaics and marbles of exceptional beauty were displayed in the Italian pavilion. There were the famous hats from Livorno and well finished straw hats and baskets, jewels from Florence and Rome, cameos and their appropriate tools. Machinery to roll dough was displayed, also fountain-pen inks and printing inks, wax matches, salt, pork, ham, corn and cereals, vegetables and preserved fruits, wines and liqueurs, etc. The Italians won several prizes. Mariotti and Fantoni won first prize for their tables made of mosaics

and A. Tomei for a collection of various types of marbles used in Florentine works. Other Italians who won first prizes were the Robertson brothers from Livorno for the manufacture of macaroni and vermicelli, M. Arrighetti from Florence for macaroni and olive oil, A. Giuli and O. Cesare for olive oil and G. Amoroso for the machinery to produce oil. (23)

One must add that the Italian exhibitors found themselves at home in Sydney. Indeed it was Maestro Cav. Giorza who composed the opening hymn of the exhibition. The people present roared their applause and demanded an encore, which was given only at the Governor's consent. Too, at the closing ceremony of the exhibition they sang the hymn, "Australia", another composition by Giorza, and then the National Anthem.

One has to mention here another artist, Mr Ercole Ortori, director of the instrumental section of the Sydney orchestra who, with his violin, made himself popular all over Australia. (24)

Finally we must mention that the organiser of the Italian pavilion, Oscar Meyer, stayed and settled in Australia. A pioneer of industry and Italian trade in Australia, he was the founder of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Sydney. In 1882 he co-ordinated the Australian participation in the Third International Geography Congress in Venice, at the Royal Palace under the chairmanship of the Prince of Teano. Even though he was carrying out important tasks in commercial fields for the government of New South Wales, which he also represented overseas, Oscar Meyer was, all his life, closely connected with Italy and the interests of Italians in Australia. It was this sentimental attachment to Italy which moved him to organise a public appeal for the earthquake victims of Messina in 1908. The fund reached £4,812. (25)

Meyer was certainly not the only one to try a new life in this country or to encourage others to follow his example, but one could say that with him, the initial phase of our migratory flow to New South Wales ended. With the arrival in Sydney of the survivors of the unfortunate expedition of the Marquis de Rays a more systematic and numerous migration began.

NOTE

- 1 - Royal Australian Historical Society Journal, *St. Malo of Hunter's Hill*, Vol. 31, pt. 2, pp. 95-96.
- 2 - *ibid.*
- 3 - G. Nesta Giffiths, *Some Houses and People of New South Wales - A Uren Publication* - Sydney, p. 186.
- 4 - Cf. *The Old Buildings of Hunter's Hill by the Hunter's Hill Trust*, 1969.
- 5 - *ibid.*
- 6 - Sand's *Sydney Directory*, 1880.
- 7 - From the Baptism and Marriage registers at the Church at Hunter's Hill.
- 8 - Sands & Kenny *Sydney Directory*, 1860.
- 9 - P. Serle, *Dictionary of Australian Biography, 1851-1890* - Melbourne University Press, p. 40.
- 10 - Isidore Brodsky, *Sydney Looks Back* - Angus & Robertson - Sydney, p. 9.
- 11 - Charles Swancott, *Dee Why to Burrenjoey and Pittwater*, Sydney, p. 14.
- 12 - Cf. Francesco Sceusa, *Carte in tavola* - Sydney, *passim*.
- 13 - Robert L. Dawson, *Bowenfels & Kirkconnel in the sixties*, in Royal Historical Society Journal, 1925.
- 14 - James McClelland, *Convict and Pioneer History - Silverdale, NSW*, 1978, p. 72.
- 15 - P. Serle, *op. cit.*
- 16 - *ibid.*
- 17 - *ibid.*
- 18 - Cf. *La Fiamma*, Supplemento 24-9-1967, p. 114.
- 19 - P. Alfonso, M. Pancirolli, *Almanacco Cappuccino, 1979, Guida per gli Italiani in Australia*, p. 130.
- 20 - Report of J. Milbourne Marsh and George F. Wise, *Italian Immigrants Enquiry Board*, Sydney, 1881, p. 18.
- 21 - Bartolomeo Galletti, *Il Giro del Mondo colla Ristori* - Note di viaggio - Roma 1876, pp. 310-15-16-17-333.
- 22 - N. Randazzo, *Italiani in Australia*, in *Ricordo del Santuario di S. Antonio* Melbourne, 1969, p. 71.
- 23 - Sydney International Exhibition: 1879-80, pp. 77-100.
- 24 - F. Gagliardi, *Lettere alla Gazzetta d'Italia*, p. 313.
- 25 - N. Randazzo, *op. cit.*, p. 71.



Some of the survivors of de Rays expedition. Top left: G. Battistuzzi; top right: Vincent Bazzo; bottom left: S. Martinuzzi; bottom right: Mrs Lucy Nardi

8 — A TRAGIC EPISODE

This must be the saddest of all events in the history of Italian emigration to Australia. Because of its sequence of tragic and extraordinary events and, above all because of the tenacity and courage with which a group of Italian migrants faced up to their desperate situation, it deserves to be treated in some detail in a chapter of its own.

We intend, therefore, to tell the reader about the sad odyssey of some hundreds of human beings who, notwithstanding the tragic setbacks they met, still had the courage, the stamina and the strength to transform barren, stony ground which was "looked down on by the English as useless", into splendid gardens and vineyards. (1)

The Italian, at least in those days, was a farmer who knew the land and knew how to make it flourish. It is particularly evident that Italians could turn naturally barren land into productive soil. What might have happened if better land, which is so plentiful in Australia, had been made available to our countrymen? We are sure they would have turned into gardens "the boundless countryside where savages, the kangaroo and the emu still wander". (2)

Today, a century later, we have our proof of it — it is enough to mention just a few areas, North Queensland, the Riverina, the Goulburn Valley and Sunraysia, to be convinced.

On 4 April, 1879, a French aristocrat, Charles De Breil, Marquis de Rays, a Breton nationalist, traveller and scholar, a man of action with an interest in social problems, launched the idea of founding a colony in the south seas. He had already found the setting — that part of New Guinea which was unoccupied by the Dutch, together with the surrounding islands from New Ireland to the Solomons. It was a territory where no-one had ever raised a European flag, at least, not with the clear intention of settling there.

According to the first plans, the colonisation was to begin on New Ireland, rechristened "New France". The island of 517 square kilometres was little known at the time of our story and the Marquis de Rays had chosen it with the help of maps and tales of discovery by famous explorers. He had never visited the place personally, but relied, above all, on the evidence compiled in 1823 by the French commander, Duperrey, who had described it as a veritable Eden. That was enough for de Rays to decide to occupy it and turn it into a French colony. However, in reality the island proved to be very different from the description of Duperrey.

The coastal waters were, for the most part, shallow and marshy. A chain of high mountains, rising to 2,000 metres, ran through the interior and the whole island was covered with steamy tropical forests. The climate was tropical, unhealthy and favourable, at best, to growing coconuts and other tropical fruits.

On 26 July of that year, 1879, the Marquis launched his project by inserting an advertisement in the *Petit Journal* and afterwards in many other French newspapers and magazines. "Colony of Port Breton. Land at five francs a hectare. Rapid, secure fortune without leaving the protection of your own country. For information contact the Marquis Du Breil de Rays, Chateau De Quimark en Banebec." (3)

This first notice had no great success. De Rays, not at all deterred, launched a second advertisement which, "on payment of 1,800 gold francs," promised the families of future colonists "20 hectares of land, a four-roomed house, board and lodgings for the eight months following disembarkation, a third class ticket to Port Breton and the carriage of 100 kilos of luggage per person."

For those unable to pay such an amount and who were prepared to be employed as labourers for at least five years, the reward would have been "a 20 hectare block of land and a house, the payment of 250 francs for a single man or woman, 125 francs for children and 1,000 francs for families with at least five members. The voyage, provisions and board for the five year engagement would also be provided. All married women, likewise children under 12, were not excused from the obligation to work", (4)

Following the newspaper advertisements, de Rays opened offices at Bordeaux, Quimpere, Paris and Brussels, piling promise upon promise. He kept repeating in the newspapers and at meetings which were held in the main French cities, "I intend to found a free settlement of the English kind, which aims to establish a vast market in colonial goods. Whoever wishes to emigrate there will be free from all worry and will come to know what it means to work in peace and faith." (5)

As well, de Rays described the island as a "place characterised by great fertility, with a climate equal to that of southern France, perennially cooled by a Pacific breeze, rich in springs and water-courses, able to be cultivated easily and ideal for produce of either tropical or temperate climes." (6)

Even more numerous applications began coming in. On 14 September, 1879, the first 100 colonists set sail for New Ireland aboard the *Chandernagore*, a solid sailing ship of 900 tons. They arrived at their destination four months later on 16 January, 1880. The rude awakening for those first colonists was immediate once they came into contact with the grim reality so different from what they had been led to expect. Some wanted to turn back at once, without even landing, but the Captain, after circumnavigating the island offloaded them at Liki-Liki Cove. The poor unfortunates found themselves on a strip of beach flanked by tropical jungle and surrounded

by high mountains. The forest was impenetrable and inhabited by fierce cannibal tribes, known as headhunters.

Leaving them huddled together on the beach to face their destiny, the ship set sail for Sydney and supplies. (7)

In December of the same year, de Rays, still not at all deterred, sent out the *Genil* with 40 more colonists, nearly all Spaniards. A few newspapers, which had already raised the alarm after what had happened to the *Chandernagore*, forcefully warned of the dangers of similar undertakings being launched into the unknown. But the news had hardly arrived that Baron de la Croix, the colonial Lieutenant, had taken possession of the island, when the *Genil* put to sea.

Meanwhile, another 46 Italian families were getting ready to take the great step of selling what little they owned, their house, if they had one, land and household goods. The Milanese agent, a certain Schenini, attended to passports and all other formalities. It was 14 March, 1880. (8)

On 4 April, 1880, 246 people, some from Udine and Pordenone, but mostly from Treviso and Vicenza, set out by train for Milan and from there to Marseilles. At Marseilles the formalities were quickly taken care of by the colonial officials, after which they reached Barcelona by sea. There they stayed for three months while waiting for the *India*, their intended means of transport, to be prepared and equipped for the voyage. (9)

The Italian Consul-General in Spain sought to warn and dissuade them, to the extent of threatening to revoke their passports, but it was all a waste of breath. The colonists did not want to listen to reason; no-one could deprive them of their corner of paradise. (10)

On 10 July, the *India* of 1,100 tons was ready to set sail with its sad cargo of deluded passengers. No known chronicle, nor any written recollection of that dark odyssey remains, but by 20 July, the *India* docked at Port Said with its first victim. The young woman's name was Lucia Roder. She was 28 years old. (11) During the next eight days which the *India* took to pass down the Suez Canal, little Giovanni Nardi, who was one year old, died of the heat. But the real tragedy took place when engine failure forced the *India* to lay up at Aden for a fortnight. During that dreadful interlude, in the relentless heat, the carnage began. Between 4 and 12 August, Giovanni Antonioli, six months old, Genoveffa Martinuzzi, Agata Roder, Francesco Mellare, Carlo Tomè, all one year old, and Lodovico Lorenzini, born on board and only 17 days old, all died. (12)

Back at sea, during the crossing of the Indian Ocean, there were two more bereavements. It was the turn of Nicodemo Bertolo and Cristina Roder, both just two years old.

Three weeks of unloading at Singapore restored some strength and trust to those unfortunate, physically exhausted people. During their stay in that city, unsettling rumours began to circulate among the passengers on the *India*, about the unlucky fate of the pioneers of the

two earlier expeditions. But for those who were living in a profound dream, rumours were insufficient to call them back to the grim facts of reality. The *India*, with its human cargo, put out to sea once more. At a speed of four or five knots, the 3,000 miles that separate Singapore from the New Ireland coast were negotiated under a relentless equatorial sun.

On this last seaway, another heavy blow struck the already precarious position of the passengers. Just a few days after sailing, the *India* once again, became a great coffin, this time for 58 year old Angelo Bertolo.

When, at last, the ship's Captain announced that beyond the promontory they could see, lay Port Breton, the coveted goal, the passengers experienced an awakening from deathly lassitude. Hope was rekindled in each of them; once their long calvary was over they would recover their strength quite quickly. In their fantasy world, they were already imagining a fertile land which would respond to their labours. They were imagining that they would find the first houses, the first roads and blocks of land already cleared and ready for crops and they deluded themselves that when they landed on the beach they would find those who had gone before them, waiting to give them a merry welcome. It was 11 October, 1880. (13)

In Port Breton's little bay there was only the small sailing vessel, *Genil*, rocking there without any sign of life under a leaden sky, which seemed to touch its shrouds. Not a living soul could be seen. There was no movement on land, no houses, no sign of civilisation.

The first nagging suspicions, the first tears of bewilderment began. Had it all been, indeed, a delusion, a monstrous confidence trick? Was this the reward for so many sacrifices, so much sorrow, the loss of so many human lives?

The Captain of the *Genil*, who had taken cover with some Spanish militiamen told, in frightful detail, what had happened to the 150 who had gone ashore the previous year. After a desperate attempt to survive in the climate and in that inhospitable equatorial land, the majority had died of fever and dysentery. Some had been picked up by passing ships, while others had tried to escape in small canoes, only to end up in the hands of cannibals. The tale was told by one of the two survivors, a native of Genoa, called Boero.

With five companions he had tried to get away to nearby York Island by canoe, where there were some English missionaries. However, because they had no supplies and were battered by the monsoon, they could not reach the safety of the island. Instead, they had to seek shelter on Bouka-Bouka Island, where they were taken prisoner by savages, who, to make matters worse, ate human flesh.

Boero saw his companions, one after another, turned into steaks for the fierce cannibals. At the sight, driven mad by fear, he began to weep and laugh convulsively - a novel spectacle for those tribes, who were not accustomed to such conduct. The tribal chief promised to save his life, provided he continued to amuse them with his desperate



5.

6.



5. Marquis de Rays, Carlo du Breil

6. Some Italians of New Italy with their first vintage of wine



7.

FAMILY NAMES OF IMMIGRANTS

NUMBER OF FAMILIES IMMIGRATED

MURANDY	
E MDRANDINI	
E NARDI	2
NICOLIA	
PALIS	
PEDRINI	
E PELLIZER	
E PEZZUTTI	2
E PICCOLI	2
E RODER	5
E ROSOLEN	3
SANOTTI	
E SCARRABELOTTI	
SERONE	
E SPINAZE	3
TEDESCO	
E TOME	

8.



9

7/8 The monument dedicated to the Italians who founded "New Italy"

9 One of the luxuriant banana plantations near Lismore

sorrow. And so, between tears and hysterical laughter, Boero saw the sun rise for a few more days, until the Captain of the *Genil*, who was patrolling the area, became aware of what was happening. He landed on the island and arranged the return of Boero and one of his companions in exchange for some mirrors, glass necklaces and other trinkets. (14)

Now, on board the *India*, the new colonists, overcome with panic, refused to leave the ship for two weeks, but finally allowed themselves to be persuaded to go ashore. They unloaded equipment, built a shed, marked out the first paths and made an attempt at the first cultivation. Between 30 October and 22 November, Giuseppe Battistuzzi (24), Marco Tomè (44), Domenico Gava (4), Agostino Pellizzer (3), Maddalena Roder (73) and Matteo Bordat (79), the oldest member of the community, all died. (15)

The *Genil* had sailed off in search of supplies, but several months had already passed and there was no sign of her return. In the meantime, several more unfortunates were struck down by malaria. They were Giovanni Gava (17), Vincenzo Bertolo (4), Maria Pellizzer (1), Maria Zaza (8 months), Maria Melare (22), Emilio Bertolo (36), and a newborn child, Antonio Spinaze. (16)

Nine more died between 1 January and 20 February, 1881, Giovanni Roder (76), Maria Antonioli (32), Antonia Pellizzer (35), Caterina Bazza (9), Francesco Barberetto (60), Lucia Spinaze (58), Angeli Julian (34), Pio Bellotto (35) and Giacomo Roder (20). Altogether the dead now numbered 33, 11 in full adulthood, 18 children and four elderly people.

On 10 February, 1881, seeing that the Captain had made up his mind to go ahead with the absurd idea of colonisation, even at the cost of sacrificing everyone, the little community of country people from the Veneto, wrote him the following letter.

"To the Captain of the vessel *India*,
Commanding Officer of the Colony.

Dear Sir,

We wretched Italians have always obeyed the orders of the Administration and have borne every misery and burden. We are now in a critical condition through lack of provisions and we see victims fall every day, so we appeal to your humanity and beseech you to take us to Sydney where the other ships have gone and where the head of the Colony, Mr Jules Provost, resides.

We are sure you will not refuse to hear us and will favor us with a reply." (17)

On 20 February, the vessel, *India*, put to sea, bound for Sydney, but because of a lack of fuel and provisions as well as having to contend with monsoons and angry seas, the ship had to take refuge in the port of Noumea in New Caledonia. Almost all who arrived there on 12 March were sick; many, by now, were desperately ill. Meanwhile, the list of the dead had grown - Antonia Mazzer (11), Girolamo Tome' (39), Emilia Bertolo (3), Maria Jabretti (48), Giuseppe Brican (33), Battista Baffari (61) and Santo Bertolo (52) were all added to the list.

The French authorities offered to allow the survivors of the tragic expedition to settle there, but the Italians refused because New Caledonia was a French penal colony.

In correspondence from Noumea *The Sydney Morning Herald*, dated 20 March, 1881, described the passengers aboard the *India* as a "pitiful group of helpless victims, children exhausted by fever, emaciated mothers, dejected and worn-out men unable by now even to weep over the death, despite all care, of eight other companions, which took place during the stop at Noumea". (18) These last victims were Giovanna Moras (57), Luigi Bertolo (60), Bartolomeo Maffoni (5), Andrea Maffoni (2), Rosa Bertolo (56), Caterina Cappellini (37), Albina Uneda (2) and Ludovico Bertolo (14 months).

The survivors then applied to the English authorities to be transferred to Sydney. The English consul immediately contacted the Chief Minister of the Colony of New South Wales, Sir Henry Parkes, who at once sent the ship, *James Patterson*, to take them to Sydney where, on 8 April, 1881, for the survivors of the wretched expedition, their calvary was finally over.

Of the 246 passengers who had set out on the ill-fated *India*, plus two new-born infants, there were only 200 left.

The Marquis de Rays, still deaf to official rebukes and to the tragic news he had received from his envoys, organised another expedition. He obtained another ship, the *Nouvelle Bretagne* and sent it off on 7 April, 1881, with 180 more colonists. So, after the disastrous expeditions of the *Chandernagore*, the *Genil* and the *India*, it was the *Nouvelle Bretagne's* turn. Its passengers, too, after a short time, found themselves without provisions and with no hope of providing for themselves. They became ill with malaria and so put an end to the incredible voyage by abandoning their destination of Port Breton, on 13 February, 1882. Among them were also some Italians. Later, some disembarked at Cairns, others at Maryborough and the rest at Sydney.

We have little interest in the final stages of such a terrible debacle, nor in the final stages of the Marquis de Rays and his henchmen, but what does interest us is to follow the victims of that mad, criminal enterprise on the *India*.

SYDNEY SYMPATHISES - BUT NOT WITHOUT THE USUAL DISCORDANT NOTE

The survivors, who arrived at Sydney on the morning of 8 April 1881, were warmly welcomed. A large crowd, already moved by articles in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, had gathered on the pier, anxious to bring some relief and human warmth to the poor passengers. The authorities, consisting of the Harbour Police, the Immigration Agent and Dr. Marano, were the first to witness the sad spectacle when they went on board ship.

"The ship," they later testified, "was in a state of utter confusion and all the decks were crowded with some 200 men, women and children, Italians, unable to speak any language but their own and all anxious to make themselves heard at the same time." (19)

That same morning the city's daily newspaper, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, published a long and moving article on the survivors.

"Between the decks of the ship, which is a wreck, various women are lying near to death, devoured by fever; two of them are still very young, between 18 and 20. One of the Italian mothers showed me a child in baby clothes, a tiny living skeleton, on the point of stiffening in death. On another deck, where another woman was wheezing in agony, a bundle was thrust into my arms. To judge from its dimension and shape, arms and legs bandaged like a mummy, I thought I was dealing with a typical Italian doll made of wood and rags. But an unexpected movement of the head gave me a jolt and my heart jumped into my mouth when I realised that this was a living creature, perhaps born just a few days before.

"When I supported the bundle on my bent right arm, with the little head on my elbow, the feet didn't even reach my fingertips. Its weight, clothes and all, was no more than five pounds. I asked his age and was told that he was seven months old. The mother, pointing to her emaciated body, made me realise that she had been unable to feed the child.

"Every day these unfortunate people are being cut down by death. To behold, on this cursed ship, the forest of hands stretched out for a piece of bread or a cake, which was given to the littlest ones, to see the parents' look of gratitude, to hear resounding everywhere, 'Thank you, sir', in the gentle Italian accent, to feel your hand grasped by a trembling old man when you offer a gift, to feel your hand kissed because you give a packet of tea to a woman abandoned on a stretcher infested with bedbugs and fleas, to see the wan faces of Italian children who have been given a few biscuits shine with joy, to leave the ship accompanied by a chorus of 'Thank you's and 'Goodbyes', all creates an awesome impression that I shall never be able to erase from my memory for the rest of my life, a scene that breaks your heart." (20)

Before disembarking at Sydney, the passengers were asked to sign the following document. Its meaning was explained to them by the Italian consular agent to Sydney, Dr. Marano.

"We, the undersigned Italian migrants, who set out under the patronage of the Marquis de Rays, and having just arrived in Sydney from Noumea, New Caledonia, aboard the *James Patterson*, without lodgings and means of support, request the government to protect and clothe us for a short time and to help us to find work. We pledge ourselves to abide by the laws of the State of New South Wales and the norms arranged by the government." (21)

All, except the children and three sick people, immediately signed the document. The signatures were witnessed by the consular agent,

Dr V. Marano, "I witness the signatures of the above-named persons, to whom I have read the conditions on which the government of New South Wales has agreed to provide provisions, lodging and clothing for some days and they have given their consent." The signature of the Italian consular agent followed. Then in a post script was added, "There are two women and a man, who were not able to sign the document because of sickness." (22)

Having dispensed with the formalities, long lines of carts began crossing the centre of the city towards evening, transporting the 200 survivors and their humble belongings into a large shed. The shed belonged to the Agricultural Ministry and was situated in the Domain, where emergency lodgings had been prepared. The place, even if rough, had been well divided into sections - for married couples with children, for single women and for single men. One part was used as a warehouse for wood and charcoal, food supplies, water, cooking necessities, beds, blankets, etc. Notices had been fixed to the walls, written in English and Italian, with rules and instructions to be followed. (23)

On Sunday, 10 April, Fr C. Colledge celebrated a Mass for the new migrants and an Italian priest, Fr Coletti, secretary to Archbishop Polding, spoke to them in their own language. (24)

An Italian merchant from Sydney, Gianbattista Modini, brought 10 boxes of spaghetti. Dr Day and Dr Marano, health officers, cared constantly for the sick. Mr Orlando Stevens, an Englishman who spoke fluent Italian, was their storekeeper. (25)

The migrants, who were anxious to observe the instructions they had received, conducted themselves in an orderly and dignified fashion.

On 12 April, Dr Marano had an announcement published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* which read, "All Italians resident in city of Sydney are invited to a meeting which will be held on 24 April at 7.30 p.m. in the Agricultural Hotel situated at the corner of Pitt and Campbell Streets, to do something for the unfortunate Italians of the Marquis de Rays' expedition." (26)

Three days after their arrival, on 11 April, 1881, the Sydney daily newspaper suggested to the government to give them a piece of land to cultivate, or if this was not possible or practical, to launch a public appeal to buy the land.

But the Government had other ideas. Indeed, it considered it both urgent and essential that the little community should blend as quickly as possible with prevailing ways and customs, learn English and lose all traces of its national origins. And the quickest means of achieving that goal was to disperse the migrants geographically. In other words, as it was said at the time, they did not want to establish "a Colony within a Colony".

The Italians announced their displeasure and disagreement with such a policy and once again, on 22 April, the daily newspaper suggested that, "given the extraordinary situation of these Italian colonists, an exception should be made to the just policy of dispersal,

because, unlike the English, Irish and Scots, they do not speak our language".

But the Government decided it was officially in favor of their dispersal in order not to create precedents, or pockets of ghettos in the community which was, and had to remain, English only. All those who came to this country to be part of this national community, it was said, had to agree to be assimilated without any resistance. If the Italians insisted in having their own way, "they could not expect further assistance from the Government". (27)

No-one had considered the strength of the bonds which those poor beings, reduced as they were to human flotsam, had for each other, after having suffered so much together. However, it must be acknowledged that the unlucky Italians behaved themselves very correctly, to the point of being described as "industrious, hard working and honest people".

Giving in to the assimilationist pressures of the day, the Italians allowed themselves to be scattered to places which, in many cases, were far apart. But they never gave up the idea of establishing themselves, one day, on their own piece of land, nor of sharing that day with their companions in misfortune.

"It was something more than friendship," writes Eric da Pin, "which bound those souls together in compassion. It was almost the sense, certainly unconscious, but nevertheless compelling, of a still incomplete destiny which had to be achieved together." (28)

And in the mysterious plan of Providence it certainly was to be. That obstinate will of collective survival, that shiny piece of a great mosaic in the great human experience which is Australia, yesterday and today, that troop of persistent people from the Veneto presented the first example on Australian soil of a communitarian instinct, a call to togetherness. Later, their fellow countrymen would set foot in their thousands in every corner of the world and always find protection, comfort, a guarantee that they knew who they were, a motive, not for isolation, but rather a reservoir of energy and leaven from which to draw, for a fruitful and lasting new life.

NEW ITALY - THE REALISATION OF A DREAM

In April, 1882, 12 months after the dispersion, a certain Rocco Caminitti, who knew the survivors' story and of their wishes and who had made a reasonable amount of money working on a cargo boat along the Richmond River, was impressed by the fertility of the land at the river mouth. He bought 40 acres of it and, on his return to Sydney, told his story of good lands to the north where there was abundant water, full-grown trees and room for all. The word reached the 200 Italians too, for though they were far apart, they had kept in touch and eight families decided to move straight away.

They were Giuseppe and Luigia Martinuzzi with their three children aged 11, nine and seven (little Genoveffa had died on the voyage), Vincenzo and Caterina Nardi and their four children (their youngest, too died during the voyage), Pietro and Luigia Mazzer, Antonio and Giovanna Melare with six children aged between 19 and five (one-year-old Francesco had died during the voyage and 22-year-old Maria at Port Breton), Giovanni and Rosa Rosalen with six children aged between 20 and five, Domenico and Elizabetta Spinazè with three children, including a new-born baby (the infant, Antonio, who was born at Port Breton, lived only a few hours) and Antonio and Caterina Nardi. Then there was Arcangelo Roder, the senior member of the Roder clan, which was made up of six families numbering 18 people. During the heart-rending expedition they had lost the greatest number of members. Two children had died during the voyage, two elderly people died at Port Breton and 42-year-old Giacomo died on the day of the flight to Noumea. (29)

Rocco Camminitti set out with this first contingent. They embarked with their families by steamer, but after having navigated along the coast-line, they were swamped in the river estuaries. The group disembarked at Woodburn and covered another 6 or 7 miles on foot, until they reached the place where they intended to establish the new settlement.

"It is impossible," writes F. Volpato, "to describe or to fully appreciate the thoughts, the sensations and the vital experiences of those heroic Italians who, armed only with good will, courage, independence and their physical strength, fearlessly faced the gigantic forests in the hope of making those barren, virgin, unexplored lands bear fruit." (30)

In 1883 the following arrived – Luigi and Antonio Antonioli, Maria Felicietti, Giovanni and Domenico Battistuzzi, Antonio Bazzo, Angelo Nardi, Agostino Pellizzer, Francesco, Giovanni, Luisa and Lorenzo Roder, Andrea, Antonio and Giacomo Piccoli, Nicola Pezzutti, Lorenzo and Giovanni Spinazè, Michele Scarabellotti, Natale Fava, Santa and Maria Gava, Lorenzo Capelin, Bertolo Bertoli, Domenico Marandini and Pietro Rosolen. All these colonists were part of the expedition of the Marquis de Rays and all of them had arrived on the *India*.

After 1883 they were joined by Antonio Felicietti, Giuseppe Tedesco, Antonio Morandi, Pietro Sanotti, Giovanni Guareschi, Romano Bramante, Vincenzo and Franco Nicolai, Filippo Pedirini and Candido Roder. Not all the colonists of the third expedition settled in New Italy. Among them are recorded – Geronomo, Giovanni and Marco Tomè and the families of Feletti, Zia, Pivetta, Carabino, Corocare, Bellotti, Ros, Zanoni, Scala and Oneda.

As soon as they arrived they built cabins out of logs, foliage and pieces of bark. Then they got to work – clearing, ploughing and sowing the land. In the course of five or six years, the thick bush gave way to luxuriant vineyards, orchards and well-tilled paddocks, almost

magically transforming, to many people's astonishment, that land which the English colonists had refused to have anything to do with, because they believed it to be barren and unproductive. This, indeed, was the result of the spirit of sacrifice, independence, initiative and perseverance of those Italian pioneers.

It endures as a practical demonstration of the way that they, the forerunners of other Italian pioneers, managed, without friends, without any outside help and without knowing the local language. They were able to overcome normally insurmountable obstacles and to transform miles of thick bushland and native scrub into abundant, fertile oases.

For a start, their presence was hardly noticed, until one day they turned up in the nearby towns with wagons full of fresh fruit, a variety of green vegetables and barrels of good wine, which they themselves had produced by sheer, hard work. And while their crops were flourishing, they replaced their huts with comfortable houses, which were further improved by vases of flowers inside and surrounding flower gardens outside. In five or six years they had cleared 3030 acres of bushland and had achieved prosperity.

In 1887, the population of their colony was divided thus - married adults (34 men, 35 women), unmarried adults (22 men, eight women), children under 16 (50 boys, 53 girls).

Before concluding the unbelievable saga of these courageous pioneers, we would like to give the last word to a journalist for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, who had last met the Italians when he had gone aboard the *James Patterson* after it had berthed in Sydney.

"Last Tuesday I left Woodburn at nine in the morning to see for myself how things were going in 'New Italy'. I was aware that it would be a long trip, but I reasoned that the Italians could get there and back on foot, so therefore, I too, should be able to get there and back by walking.

"So, with a friend, I set out for New Italy. On the way we came across two young women, 18 or 19 years old. They seemed strong and healthy, two fine examples of Australian womanhood, well-scrubbed and nicely dressed and they were on their way to Woodburn. When they replied to my greeting, I thought I recognised something foreign in their reply. Moved by curiosity, I asked them some questions and they told me that they were only nine or ten years old when they and their parents arrived in Sydney aboard the *James Patterson*. But no one, unless they took it into their heads to question them, would have taken those young women for foreigners. It was amazing.

"At the first place we stopped for a talk after arriving in New Italy, we found the woman of the house was unable to speak English. And since there was no-one else there, we set out for another of the cottages we could see. As we left that first cottage I was pleasantly surprised to observe the cleanliness and neatness of its well-tended garden, the large area under the vines and its fenced yard, which seemed no different from those properties so well known in the Sydney suburbs.

The next cottage we visited belonged to Mr Battistuzzi who, with his wife and daughter gave us a warm welcome. There we found ample hospitality and unending courtesy and our host offered to show us through the village, the purpose of my visit — a visit I shall never forget.

"I cannot give you the exact statistics of how many and which paddocks were under cultivation, but on every farm I entered and as far as I could ascertain by looking around, I saw crops waving in the breeze and rows of vines coming into leaf and for acre upon acre, the land organised for man's use. In one cottage I visited, I spoke to a sturdy and attractive woman, saying 'You have some well-ploughed land out there!' To which she replied spiritedly and with a glint of happiness in her eyes, 'Yes, and it was I who ploughed it!' 'What, you did all that?' 'Certainly, I can plow as well as a man!' My young friend spoke very good English, and I could not help thinking that, should she decide to make the request, she well deserved the right to vote. From another cottage out came two Italian-Australian girls with sparkling eyes and dark tresses. 'I see you have some pretty cottages up here,' I said, 'especially considering the short time that you've been settled here.' 'Cottages?' replied one determined lass, 'I call them huts, but we will have houses here before too long!' I felt proud to have such people for fellow-countrymen...such self-assurance, such steadfastness in building themselves comfortable farm-houses by dint of hard and constant work! They certainly were a proud boast for the whole of Australia.

"At the Nardi place, I sat in an armchair which had been made there in the house. It had a rush-bottomed seat, made from rushes gathered nearby. When I offered my congratulations to my host on this example of household industry, he brought out three more similar chairs to let me see that there was no shortage of home-made furniture. This farmer had begun to plant vines four years ago, and ever since he had planted more each year. A neighbour told me that this year the Nardi vines would yield a harvest of four tons.

"At New Italy a person gave me to understand that there was a proposal afoot to demonstrate at home and abroad that Australia was now a wine-producing country. This man spoke English with some difficulty. Rubbing his chin with his hand he said to me, 'Australian wines, too much spirit. They give pain here. We make wines without pain, without spirits, good to drink.'

"When I think back on the scene I witnessed aboard the *James Patterson*, anchored alongside the old warehouses of the Australian Steam Navigation Company on the west side of Circular Quay just eight years ago, and then recall the friendly, manly, intelligent faces of these foreigners, whom I saw once again on this tour of mine, so different from those other faces, so degraded and drawn with suffering, I am moved to conclude, 'In the secret plan of God, it would seem that He worked with us as He did with old English in centuries gone by, by sending us cuttings from another race. This ensured that the future of Australia would be established on an even broader and

more grandiose scale than that in which our fore-fathers grew up, in the shade of the Rose, the Shamrock and the Thistle.

"Finally, it is good to hear that everyone praises these new colonists. They pay their own way in ready cash earned by hard work, finishing what they begin and making it clear that they possess the most estimable qualities of a good colonist. Those who were caught in the folly of the Marquis de Rays have proved to be honest and suitable to found a new nation. They have made their own good fortune and they have shown that putting the land in order, in cooperative villages, is the hope of the future and the solution to the problem of how to deal with big cities and how to establish people on the land." (31)

New Italy, which had a population of 250 people in 1888, reached 350 by 1889 and 10 years later reached 1,000.

F.C. Clifford, the first to write the story of New Italy, wrote, "When we consider that just seven years ago these people had nothing, that they were homeless, strangers in a strange land and that without assistance they established a settlement in a place the English colonists had rejected, one can only say that they are indeed worthy colonists. This is not just to sing their praises, but to give practical recognition on behalf of their adopted country." (32)

The decline of New Italy began in the early years of the twentieth century. That same spirit of adventure and that same wish to better themselves urged those pioneers to look for richer and more fertile country. Most of them remained in the district, but every year, even if they were far apart, they all returned to New Italy in early April for the "back-to" which was held to commemorate their landing.

The decline of the colony did not occur all at once. It was gradual but relentless and there were various causes. As the young people grew to adulthood and started families of their own, they began to make their futures elsewhere. The mechanisation of transport favoured mobility and a number of people moved away. At the same time phylloxera and other parasites spread alarmingly and damaged the crops. Consequently, the land was no longer regarded as particularly fertile. Indeed, it came to be regarded as one of the most barren areas. Finally, the spirit of adventure which had animated the pioneers in the first place, was rekindled and urged them to seek better pastures in other places.

Only Giacomo Piccoli did not want to leave that land to which he felt bound by such profound sentiments. Nothing could budge him from his New Italy, where he lived alone for many years remembering the good times gone by, until his death in 1955. (33)

Later, after 1920, the first group of a new migration arrived from Italy. Members of this group included Battista Conté, Luigi and Giovanni Carniel, Moretti and the three Sandrin brothers. They were put on a train at Sydney and, without knowing where they were being taken, arrived at Lismore. They related the story that as soon as they arrived at Lismore they were taken to the local cattle sale, and after

they had seen the animals sold, they were made to get up on a stand and were offered to the highest bidder. Carniel worked at clearing lantana for 10 years without receiving any monetary pay. In exchange for the work he received only board and lodgings. When his fiancée came out he had only debts. It was then that a local farmer offered him a piece of land for banana crops. Then, while leasing other land as well, Carniel and the others began to establish their independence and even if they did not make a fortune, they made a comfortable living.

With the arrival of other Italian migrants, they began, little by little, to transform the difficult, steep hillsides for a radius of 10 miles around Lismore, into luxuriant banana plantations.

They built their first huts out of wood and earth and struggled against Nature, day after day, without taking a break. The gloomy bush gradually gave way to the soft green of banana plants, which multiplied after a few years and gave rise to an industry which today is amongst the best-known in the State.

Banana production plays a most important role in the North Coast economy and Italians have been its mainstay. (34)

NOTES

- 1 - G. Capra, *L'Australia nei suoi rapporti con l'Italia*, Tipografia Manuzio, Roma, 1910.
- 2 - *Ibid.*
- 3 - Dal Pin Eric, *La strana Colonia del Marchese de Rays ovvero dell'Emigrazione male assistita*, p. 8.
- 4 - F.C. Clifford, *New Italy: a brief sketch of a New and Thriving Colony*, Sydney, 1889, p. 2.
- 5 - *Ibid.*
- 6 - Cf. N. Randazzo, *Gli Italiani in Australia in Ricordo del Santuario di S. Antonio*, Melbourne, 1969, p. 72.
- 7 - Anne-Gabrielle Thompson, *Turmoil, Tragedy, to Triumph, The story of New Italy (ICP)*, Stanthorpe, Qld., 1980.
- 8 - E. Dal Pin, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
- 9 - *Ibid.*, p. 28.
- 10 - *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- 11 - *Ibid.*, p. 37.
- 12 - *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- 13 - *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- 14 - J.H. Nieu, *The Phantom Paradise, The story of the Expedition of the Marquis de Rays*, Sydney, 1936.
- 15 - Anne-Gabrielle Thompson, *op. cit.*
- 16 - *Ibid.*
- 17 - E. Dal Pin, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
- 18 - Sydney Morning Herald, 7-4-1881.
- 19 - E. Dal Pin, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
- 20 - Sydney Morning Herald, 7-4-1881.

- 21 - Report of J. Milbourne Marsh: *Italian Immigrants Inquiry Board, NSW, 1881*, p.3.
- 22 - *ibid.*, p. 3.
- 23 - *ibid.*, p. 4.
- 24 - *ibid.*, p. 4.
- 25 - *ibid.*, p. 4.
- 26 - Sydney Morning Herald, 12-4-1881.
- 27 - Anne-Gabrielle Thompson, *op. cit.*
- 28 - E. Dal Pin, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
- 29 - *ibid.*, p. 61-62.
- 30 - Floriano Volpato, *I pionieri di New Italy nel nuovissimo continente*, Published in "La Fiamma", 1980.
- 31 - Sydney Morning Herald.
- 32 - F.C. Clifford, *op. cit.*
- 33 - F. Volpato, *op. cit.*
- 34 - *ibid.*, p. 35, ss.



Labbe's String band - musicians from Viggiaro, Southern Italy

9 - FROM 1881 TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR

It is only in the last two decades of the nineteenth century that one can truly talk in terms of an Italian community in Australia, however small. During this time, Italians continued to arrive in this country in growing numbers, but there was no corresponding increase in the size of the community because many either returned home, after anything from five to eight years of toil, or migrated to other countries.

However, this was also the period during which Italians began to play a more visible and active role in Australian society. In some cases, as with the "New Italy" experiment, this almost went against the wishes of the colonial authorities who had not allowed for it in their plans.

Tentative attempts were made to establish the first industries and commercial firms, grocery stores, restaurants, hotels and large farms, of which "New Italy" was an important example.

We have been left extensive, detailed and sometimes complimentary accounts of the Italian community in Australia from the 1880s to the First World War. For example, while passing through Sydney in the early 1880s, C. De Amezaga, commander of the royal corvette *Caracciolo*, wrote the following about the Italian community:

"Our countrymen in New South Wales warmly greeted the *Caracciolo* on our arrival, showing generous hospitality towards us, arranging banquets and holding gatherings in our honour... As is the case with all our other expatriate communities, the Italian community in Australia is worthy of our greatest admiration for its qualities of hard work, intelligence, sobriety and respect for the laws of the land that hosts it... Currently, it consists of a bishop, two or three priests, some music teachers and craftsmen, a squatter, a land surveyor, several government functionaries, farmers, bricklayers, labourers and sailors... The community has, on the whole, an air of respectability which causes it to be held in high esteem by all, and which would be greater if it did not count among its number some of those eternal vagabonds such as organ-grinders and other wandering minstrels who play the violin or the harp. All of New South Wales may be considered appropriate for the colonisation by Italian farmers. However, the best areas are the New England, the Richmond River and Clarence River districts, the Cumberland, Orange and Bathurst counties.

"One thing can never be stressed enough when speaking of overseas markets for our goods, particularly in distant lands, and that is the importance of choosing products carefully, preserving them properly and ensuring that they are truly representative of what is advertised to the buyer.

"Regrettably, we must say that in Australia several of our honest traders complained about not being able to supply their customers with the Italian merchandise promised. Among the Italian goods already being sold in Sydney without difficulty of any kind are oil and wine, potatoes, sulphate and other sulphur salts and alabaster statues. Good oleographs, mosaics, wooden tiles for parquets, coral, lava rock and tortoise-shell art-work, felt hats and umbrellas are in great demand. These goods are being sold by our fellow countrymen, prominent among whom are the Pisoni brothers from Milan who, thanks to their resourcefulness, have been able to establish a good reputation for themselves during their short time in Australia. Furthermore, our community's merchant class lists among its members Messrs Tornaghi and Modini, two worthy individuals noted for their enterprising spirit and famous for their acts of philanthropy towards needy settlers.

"And since we are speaking of those who bring honour to the Italian community, let us not forget that learned and charitable gentleman, Dr Fiaschi, nor that rich, philanthropic landowner, the 'squatter' C. Marina, nor the painter Ferrarini, nor the sculptor Simonetti. Let it be noted that our silence regarding those others who make up the Italian confraternity in New South Wales, is in no way meant to diminish their personal worth..." (1)

An interesting event which helps to throw light on the Italian community in Sydney was the general strike of 1890, during which Australian employers threatened the unions with the introduction of large numbers of workers from Italy to replace local labour. (2) In its bitter response to this proposal, the union newspaper, *The Workman*, as already noted, crudely insulted all Italians by calling them: "brigands, vagabonds and slackers, corrupt in body and soul..." (3)

The Italians living in Sydney felt justifiably hurt, all the more so because, as they said, it was not the first time they had been offended as an ethnic group. A certain Francesco Sceusa, together with other representatives of the community, organised a protest meeting attended by 300 of their countrymen. However, it appears that in order to avoid inflaming the whole situation further, a small group headed by Dr Fiaschi tried at first to prevent the meeting from being held and later to disrupt it. The disagreement, which initially was only about which tactics to adopt to deal with the situation, degenerated into open conflict between two individuals: Sceusa and Fiaschi.

Sceusa was accused of being a socialist, an anarchist, an atheist, a bandit, and an ignorant and ambitious individual. Fiaschi, on the other hand, was accused of being a "Special Constable" and of suffering from paranoid fear of crowds. In his own defence, Sceusa took the initiative and prepared a booklet attacking Dr Fiaschi entitled

Carte In Tavola ("All our Cards on the Table"). (4) Dr Fiaschi replied with a pamphlet called *A Viso Aperto* ("In all Honesty"). (5) Leaving aside these family squabbles, such documents are important because they offer an insight into the life of the Italian community in the 1880s.

To begin with, in these documents we come across familiar names such as Gagliardi, Modini, Fariola De Rozzoli, Tornaghi and Priora, and discover other Italian identities such as Pavesi, Pagani, Baldacci and Carpena. (6) We also find that P. Coppola and Luigi Degratia were survey officers, that during the strike P. Pisoni was the consular agent in Sydney and that Guazzini was a prominent employer and chairman of the protest meeting. (7)

Furthermore, the Italians in Sydney had already created the "*Società italiana di beneficenza*" (Italian Benevolent Society) and the "*Circolo democratico italiano*" (Italian Democratic Club), and were planning to establish the "*Società generale italiana*" (General Italian Society) with the aim of looking after their interests. "Until now, an individual has always looked after the interests of Italians; well, the time is right for a society to take over the work of that individual". (8)

In his booklet Sceusa refers to several letters from Italians, congratulating him for tirelessly defending their good name. But the most important item of information to be found in the booklet is a reference to a newspaper, *L'Italo-Australiano*, which was already being published in 1885. When the paper ran into financial difficulties an appeal was made to its readers. Among the letters received we read: "Dear Sceusa, It saddens me to think that *L'Italo-Australiano* may fold and I have proposed to Carpena that a meeting of Italians be held to raise funds. I am ready to contribute in my own small way...P. Pisoni, Acting Consular Agent." (9)

Several weeks later Pisoni wrote again: "If your paper should survive through your efforts and those of Carpena I shall always do my utmost to help, recognising as I do its value to the Italian community...However, even if the majority is in favour of *L'Italo's* continued publication, there are few who could help it financially...No Italian, I must confess, has your energy or burning passion to undertake such a venture...(25/9/1885)." (10) It is not known for how long this newspaper was published, nor what its format was, since no copies appear to have survived.

During the same period, the Italian Consul, Squitti, had this to say about the Italian community in New South Wales:

"Some Italians run small fruit shops in the cities, while others are travelling musicians or fishermen. Then there are music teachers, doctors, engineers and government employees. There is a difference in the way these two classes of Italians adapt to life in Australian society. The first group lives in the one neighbourhood, preserving as far as possible the mother tongue and the old habits and customs, while the second group mixes with the local population and is obliged to speak the English language for business reasons." (11)

The most authoritative source of information on Italians in Australia during this period is Federico Gagliardi, himself a migrant and successful merchant and owner of the "largest importing company in the southern hemisphere". It is Gagliardi, as a resident of the colonies of some years standing, who gives us, in a series of quick, deft strokes, a detailed picture of the large variety of occupations taken up by Italians:

"Throughout the length and breadth of this vast territory of the colony of New South Wales," he writes, "there is no shortage of 'squatters' (sheep farmers and cattlemen) or of ordinary farmers and wine-growers. Many work on the goldfields and in the coal-mines. Wine inspectors are usually Italian. Other Italians are employed in the office of public works and in the railways. In the arts there are admirable sculptors, painters and musicians, among whom Mr De Beaupuis stands out. Quite a number, such as Mr Pullè, work in the fruit and canned meat industry. The manager of one of the main kilns is a Mr Andina. Among the professionals we must not forget the Italian knight Dr Fiaschi, a 'cavaliere' and one of the best surgeons in Australia. He also owns a vineyard which, because of the system he has introduced and the methods he uses for wine-making, is considered a model. The four Priora brothers are very good jewellers and watchmakers, experts at chiselling and cutting precious stones, while others are good engravers. Many Italians hold important positions in banks, law firms and private schools. A substantial number of our countrymen is involved in the retail selling of fruit around Australia and has a virtual monopoly of the market. This has meant increased financial returns to the producer. At the same time these countrymen of ours have turned fruit into a popular item of consumption by lowering the price for the buyer. Other Italians have had success in the machinery business and among these we ought to mention 'cavaliere' A. Tornaghi, maker of scientific instruments, inventor and government watch and clockmaker.

Few have dedicated themselves to major enterprise, perhaps because of a lack of capital and credit from Italy. Of these few the outstanding one is the firm of F. Gagliardi & Co., which has many representatives and branches that handle numerous Italian products and which over many years of tireless work has made substantial sacrifices in order to open up the most important markets in these colonies. It imports a large and growing quantity of goods which will further increase when a direct shipping route is established between Italy and Australia." (12)

In 1898 on the occasion of the Turin Exhibition, the Italian Foreign Affairs Minister invited Pasquale Corte, a barrister and solicitor and the then Consul-General in Melbourne, "to use his position to encourage Italians living in the British colony of Australia to participate". Despite the great distance and the many inconveniences, the Consul managed to set up a display at the exhibition called "Italia all'estero" (Italy overseas). The large number of exhibitors and the variety of agricultural, mineral, commercial and industrial products on

show, made it one of the best displays by any group of expatriate Italians.

For the occasion, Corte also wrote a book called *Il Continente Nuovissimo ossia l'Australia Britannica* ('The Newest Continent or the British Colony of Australia'), which contained a wealth of information. (13)

In describing the various Italian communities in New South Wales, Corte writes: "According to the census of 1893, the number of Italians residing in that colony was 1,450, but I have reason to believe it may be in excess of 2,000. There are Italian commercial firms of good standing that can obtain credit readily; there are government employees who draw praise from their superiors; there are music teachers who are universally acclaimed and the same can be said of sculptors and painters; there are landowners (called 'squatters') with large properties, whose cattle and sheep number in the thousands; there are several famous doctors of medicine and engineers. Commerce in fruit and fish, furthermore, is almost exclusively under our control. This does not take into account the presence of an agricultural community on the banks of the Clarence River known as "New Italy", which is made up entirely of Italians and is prospering, despite being located on essentially infertile soil. "New Italy" has a population of some 500 people who work profitably at timber-felling, growing grapes for wine, cutting sugar cane and breeding silk-worms. Quite a few other Italians can be found at Albury, between the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers, while others live in areas around Bathurst and Orange. Our countrymen can be found everywhere throughout New South Wales, but the majority resides in Sydney and its environs. They have two mutual aid societies with funds totalling several thousand pounds.

"Last September, at my initiative, the Italian community there established a branch of the 'Dante Alighieri Society'. In less than six months it has attracted hundreds of members and conducts very popular literary, musical and theatrical evenings.

"I think it opportune to mention the principal Italian importing companies operating in Sydney, as well those individuals who, deservedly, have been able to make a name for themselves: G. Tirelli & Co., wool and hide exporters; F. Gagliardi & Co., general exporters and importers; G. Arrigoni, general exporters and importers; Rossi & Villa, general exporters and importers; L. Modini, importers of fernet, vermouth and firearms; Ferrari, importer of oil and Italian foodstuffs; Cortese, importer of wine and various Italian foods; Pellegrini, wine exporter; Priora Bros., jewellery exporters; Drs Moggioli, Marano & Tommaso Fiaschi (this last doctor gave such proof of his patriotism and compassion during our African catastrophe that the government bestowed two honours on him within the space of a few months); 'cavaliere' Tornaghi, a distinguished engineer and inventor of clocks, watches and instruments for mining metals; Mr Carlo Marina and the aforementioned Mr Fiaschi, for their famous animal and agricultural produce; Messrs Scenza, Coppola and Foglietta, for

their topographical work and drawings; Messrs Roberto Hazon, Emanuele de Beaupuis and Podenzana for their compositions and the eminent place they hold in the world of music; the sculptors Simonetti, Sani and Fontana for their monuments; Mr Andina, for his ceramic work; and Mr Oscar Meyer who was several times chosen to represent these colonies at world fairs in various countries, because of his many talents and artistic taste..." (14)

At the beginning of the century Italian emigration still continued in the same spontaneous way, taking above all the form of chain migration. An agent would greet the migrants on their arrival in New South Wales, and bring them up to date on the local situation. If they had relatives or friends living in other parts of the colonies they could obtain a free ticket to reach them by steamship or rail. (15)

Family groups and single persons had the right to stay on board for four days after their arrival in Sydney. Single women were taken to a hostel at Hyde Park where they were looked after for eight days. (16) Apart from this, the migrant was not protected or helped in any way. He received neither financial help nor tools for his work, nor help of any kind. If he ran into difficult times he was forced to move at his own expense to one of the other colonies where economic conditions were better. (17)

In general, Italians gravitated towards established centres, swelling the numbers in the mining and rural areas or on the outskirts of towns. Many of those who poured into Sydney settled in the outlying areas where they could take up intensive farming, grape and fruit growing, or join those who worked in small businesses, like the large group from the Aeolian Islands.

"The centre of Italian commercial activity," wrote Professor G. Capra in 1908, "is in Sydney, New South Wales, where we have a dozen agents and representatives of Italian firms. A large group of Italians from Lipari (about 1000, including their families) conducts the selling of all fruit. Italian settlers are scattered everywhere. There are grape growers from Tuscany and the Valtellina in areas like Ryde around Sydney, and along the Hunter River valley and the Hawkesbury basin. There are wheat and cattle farmers at Wellington, Narromine, New England, Mirani, Tenterfield, Mount Victoria and elsewhere, even though these do not constitute communities as such." (18)

In addition to what we have said about the Richmond River district (Lismore), there is enough documentation about two other settlements for them to be dealt with in greater detail. We refer to the development of the Italian community in the Hunter Valley district, which we shall examine immediately and in the Riverina which will be studied in the next chapter.

THE HUNTER VALLEY

The Italian settlement in the Hunter Valley dates back to 1881, when some Italians from the Veneto region who were remnants of the de

Rays expedition, were forced by the government to disperse over a large area. (19) Among the Italians relocated to the Hunter Valley were Antonio Bazzo, his wife Teresa and children who were sent to Singleton, and the three Scala brothers who were sent to Minmi and Raymond Terrace. Angelo Scala's daughter, Adele, bought a farm at Yooralong not far from the Raymond Terrace settlement and shortly after married Faustino Chiarelli. The Chiarelli family lived at Wallsend (today a suburb of Newcastle) and worked in the coal-mines at Minmi. Later they moved to Cessnock when some mines were opened up there. Vito Loscocco, a sailor serving on a coastal vessel, and his family were already living in Newcastle. In 1883 he had met Virginia Ros in Sydney where he had gone to receive a gold medal for his part in a heroic rescue on the Clarence River. She was the daughter of Pietro and Angela Ros who had taken part in the de Rays expedition, and soon after marrying her Loscocco settled in Newcastle. He later became port pilot and in 1904 again took part in a rescue operation in Newcastle Harbour.

Innocente Talamini's story is altogether different. Although not part of the remnants of the De Rays expedition, he went to New Italy where he made his home and married Annetta, daughter of Nardi. When the New Italy settlers began to drift away, the Talamini family moved to Sydney. Soon after they bought the Hunter River Hotel in East Maitland and in December 1924 opened a wine shop at Boolaroo.

By the time of the First World War groups of Italians had settled permanently in the vast Hunter Valley. For example, the Filippuzzi, Pirona and Movigliatti families were established in the suburbs of Maryville and Mayfield, with the Morello family in Boolaroo, while the Pilatti, Tonegazzi and Negri families were involved in horticulture in the Warners Bay area. In Newcastle the Ruggero family ran a combined fruit and vegetable and wine shop, while the Bonomini, Ruggeri and Cardenza families had become successful hoteliers.

Giuseppe Marolli, a young doctor, established himself in Newcastle in 1906. He served in the Australian Army during the First World War. At the end of the war he opened a surgery in Denison Street, Hamilton. Bonofiglio built his own home at Kahibah from mudbricks which he made himself. The house was later enlarged and still remains in the Bonofiglio family three generations later.

The story of the Filippuzzi and Pirona families is interesting and a typical example of Italian chain migration. It demonstrates how, despite the fact that different members were forced by their work to live far apart, the family unit continued to exercise a unifying influence and provide support. This particular instance of chain migration began with Domenico Filippuzzi. Having emigrated as a very young man to South America, he returned home at the start of the Great War and joined the Italian army. He later decided to emigrate to Australia. On hearing that Domenico had left for Australia, a young man from a neighbouring town introduced himself to Domenico's wife who had stayed behind. He wanted information on how her

husband had emigrated, how much the trip had cost and how he was doing.

The following year, when Mrs Filippuzzi and her three children were reunited with her husband, she found the young Giobatta Pirona living in her husband's house in Maryville. Two years later, Pirona went guarantor for his brother Aldo to bring him to Australia. Both brothers then brought over a large number of friends and fellow villagers. Unfortunately, these villagers, together with Aldo Pirona, were forced to abandon Newcastle because of a lack of work and moved to the sugarcane plantations of northern Queensland. However, every year at Christmas they would return to the Filippuzzi house and stay there several weeks. These men gradually brought over their wives and children, or returned to marry in their home towns. Giobatta Pirona married one of Filippuzzi's daughters instead. After the Second World War Aldo Pirona returned to Italy to get married. The following year his wife returned with one of his sisters who ended up marrying a widower called Leonarduzzi who had four children. On the same ship was Angelo, another of Pirona's brothers. He went to live in Sydney with his brother Aldo who had found work with Melocco Bros., the well-known terrazzo and concrete firm; they too were from the Friuli region.

Carlo Narboni, who had been brought over by D. Filippuzzi, also arrived on the same ship. Narboni had been a prisoner of war at Port Scratchley in Australia from 1941 to 1945.

During that time, he had met the Filippuzzi and Pirona families. In 1950, after having married Caterina Filippuzzi, the youngest sister of Maria Pirona, Narboni settled at Raymond Terrace. Later, Narboni's daughter married the son of the Leonarduzzi. They too settled at Raymond Terrace and changed their name to Leonard. (20)

Again through the system of chain migration many other groups were formed such as those from Palena and Lettopalena in the Abruzzi, and others from the Giulia region. The history of these groups is bound up with the history of those earlier migrants who came from quite specific villages and regions. We shall see also how the Lismore and Griffith communities, and those in other states, developed in the same way.

From 1920 onwards Italians began migrating to Australia in substantial and sustained numbers, making, in the main, for New South Wales and Victoria. The Federal Government was alarmed at what effect this growing number of Italians might have on the Anglo-Saxon composition of the population. It forced the Italian government into an agreement through its representative, the Italian Consul-General Antonio Grossardi. The aim was to limit Italian immigration to those who were sponsored or had a considerable amount of money.

The Depression too became a factor in significantly aggravating the situation. It reduced immigration to a trickle. Between 1936 and 1940 there was a moderate revival, but the beginning of the Second World

War ground it to a halt. Indeed, Italians who had been allies and friends in the First World War, became dangerous enemies to be locked up in concentration camps.

It is estimated that 15,500 migrants arrived in New South Wales between 1920 and 1940. For obvious reasons many of the new arrivals joined existing communities, thereby swelling their numbers. The majority tended to settle in rural areas like Griffith and Lismore. Some 150 Calabrians and Sicilians took up tomato growing at Balranald. Another 100 or so Sicilians and Veneti started growing tomatoes and tobacco at Barham. (21)

Others headed for the mining areas. For example, some 200 men from the Veneto worked in the coal mines of the South Coast, while the Lithgow and Broken Hill mines employed 100 and 300 respectively. (22) Migrants had begun to arrive in the mining town of Broken Hill in small numbers even before the turn of the century. Usually they did not remain long in the mines and as soon as they could moved to other areas, among which Port Pirie and Griffith are important because of their subsequent development.

Many Italians worked in the railways during the Depression. For example, the majority of workers employed in the construction of the Balranald railway line between 1927 and 1928 were Italians. (23)

THE SOUTH COAST

Soon after the First World War, Sicilian fishermen established a fishing industry at Wollongong and then at Ulladulla. The discovery of Ulladulla, a small South Coast fishing village, by these fishermen who were mostly from the island of Lipari, had an enormous impact on the other fishermen there and on the economy of the whole South Coast. The one who pioneered the industry was Giuseppe Puglisi, who arrived in Australia in 1919 and settled in Wollongong with his father who had followed him two years later. Not long after they moved to Ulladulla and brought over the rest of the family. Thus began that same pattern of chain migration of friends, relatives and others from the one village. Italians experienced a time of great adversity because of the outbreak of the Second World War and their new status as enemies. The fishing boats of the Puglisi and other fishermen were impounded and handed over to the U.S. Navy.

After the cessation of hostilities the immigration of fellow countrymen began again, the fishing industry came to life and the district made giant strides forward. The fishermen bought new and better-equipped fishing boats and established an efficient cooperative. They started holding an annual festival, "the blessing of the fleet", which attracts tens of thousands of tourists and sightseers to Ulladulla each year. (24)

SYDNEY AND ENVIRONS

Italians settled in the Cabramatta, Canley Vale, Liverpool, Ryde and Sutherland municipalities in what is today metropolitan Sydney. It was still possible to find some land in these localities for intensive farming, for orchards and vineyards.

In 1940 there were 250 residents in the Cabramatta area holding Italian passports, about 150 in the Liverpool area, 153 in Sutherland, 150 in Eastwood and 100 in Fairfield. Almost all were market gardeners. (25)

These areas developed enormously after the Second World War. As a result of renewed migration at that time they are among the areas in Sydney which are most identifiably Italian. In the actual inner-city areas Italians settled in Glebe, Paddington, Chippendale, East Sydney, Woolloomooloo, Kings Cross and Darlinghurst. Some 1,000 to 1,500 Italians were already living in these areas, without counting their Australian-born children. They made up the middle-class of the Italian community, which consisted mainly of consular representatives and their staff, traders and shop-keepers, representatives of shipping companies and newspapers, the office staff and workers of the Cinzano company and of the hatmakers Moderna & Co. There were also hotel-owners, owners of restaurants and boarding-houses, of terrazzo companies like Melocco & Co., mechanics, carpenters and fishermen, as well as, in a more general sense, anyone who belonged to the Italian establishment. (26)

These people formed the backbone, as it were, of the Italian community. Although often at odds politically, or from different sides of the tracks, or business rivals, they tried for their own ends to exert an influence over a large proportion of the rest of the Italian community in order to peddle their own goods, ideas or political philosophies.

In 1935, in Sydney alone, there were more than 20 associations and meeting places for recreational, charitable, cultural and political activities. The most popular meeting-places were "Roma", Venezia, Savoia, Piemonte, La Rinascenza, Isole Eolie and Italia clubs. The oldest was the "Isole Eolie" founded in 1903 which only people from those islands could join. On the other hand the "Italia" club, founded in 1915, was popular among the doctors, company representatives, merchants and others of the wealthy Italian class.

Among the charities and welfare organizations were the "Croce Rossa Italia" and the St. Vincent de Paul Society; among the cultural organizations, the Dante Alighieri Society, the university's Italian Association and the "dopolavoro drammatico" (drama club); among the sporting clubs, the "dopolavoro sportivo" (sports club), the "Stella d'Italia" sports club, the "Balilla" and the "avanguardista" groups and the "giovani italiane" (young Italian women). (27) There were, in addition, the "Associazione del nastro azzurro", the "Associazione nazionale combattenti" (returned soldiers) and the "Associazione nazionale alpini" (mountain troops). Traders and business people in

general had their own association: the Italian Chamber of Commerce founded in 1922. Finally there was the "Luigi Platania" fascist association. Apart from meeting-places and certain groups there was also the Italian press that acted as a source of information about Italy and the local Italian community. (28)

THE ITALIAN PRESS

After an initial attempt to establish it in the 1880s the Italian press was born again and re-organized during this period. At the turn of the the century Italians began once more to feel the need to be united and have their own public voice to defend them and bind them together. Giuseppe Prampolini founded a weekly newspaper, in Sydney, appropriately named *Uniamoci*. In the first edition statement of ideals Prampolini argued that his was an independent newspaper, but right from the second and third editions it revealed itself to be anti-clerical and anarchist. The Italian community did not receive it well and in July 1904 the paper was forced to cease publication.

March 1905 saw the birth of the bilingual *L'Italo-Australiano* edited by Quinto Ercoli and Giovanni Pullè. For four years *L'Italo-Australiano* "fulfilled its early promise of holding high the Italian banner with dignity and resolve. It also demanded that the new colonies be shown the respect due to them". But *L'Italo-Australiano* did not last long either. After a while a new attempt was made, this time with *L'Oceania*, a weekly bilingual magazine. The initiative came once more from Giovanni Pullè, whose associates were Antonio Folli and A.P. Rinoldi. It folded because of the war and a lack of finance.

The first contingent of migrants in need of help arrived in Australia once peace had returned. So it was that the bilingual weekly *L'Italo-Australiano* was published again on 9 August 1922 in Sydney, at the initiative of Francesco Lubrano, a sea captain. In its first edition it made this promise: "If words are anything to go by, then given the great encouragement received by us both from fellow Italians and Australians, this re-issue of *L'Italo-Australiano* will be successful as no other paper in the annals of Italian journalism in Australia. The history of Italian journalism in Australia is recent and mostly limited to the activities of the late lamented Count Pullè whose *L'Italo-Australiano* first and *L'Oceania* later, were the most important milestones for journalism in our community. Many battles were fought and won by these two Italian periodicals, simple in design and without any literary or journalistic pretensions, but ever-vigilant custodians of the interests of Italians, always prepared to go where the battle was thickest... And today more than ever there is a need to be alert and protective of our interests, today when Italian migration to Australia has grown significantly and seems to be continually increasing; today when trade between Italy and Australia has reached substantial levels and in Italy public companies are being created to develop this trade further. In its first issue, *L'Italo-Australiano*, which speaks for all our

community, sends respectful greetings to Italy – that shining light of progress and civilisation – and assures it of the everlasting love of its sons and daughters in Australia.” The editors of the newspaper were, among others, Antonio Folli, for the first two years, then A.P. Rinoldi, Porfirio Scotto, Eustachio Del Pin, Francesco Battistessa and Fortunato La Rosa.

Despite the depression of the 1930s various associations and organisations sprang up testifying to the intense cultural and social life of the Italian community. The need to build up a strong press became imperative.

Two other weeklies also saw the light of day in Sydney: *Il Corriere degli Italiani in Australia* (1928), whose editors were Giovanni Boccartini; and *Il Giornale Italiano* with F.A. Burilli and Francesco Battistessa as editors and Pino Boggio as sub-editor. Further attempts at establishing newspapers were made in other states, for example in Queensland and Western Australia. These newspapers and magazines took an active part in the defence of the rights of Italian workers during a campaign of abuse and threats unleashed against foreign labour by the British Preference League and the unions. “Although I admit that Italy,” wrote Battistessa, “a country 27 times smaller than Australia and with a population nine times as large, may not have an Italian Preference League because it has never invited foreigners in with promises of a rosy future, nevertheless all foreigners, like all Italians, have the same right to live by the sweat of their brow.

“Fortunately for Australia and for mankind, not all Australians are so narrow-minded, so barbarically intolerant and short-sighted as one Australian shows himself to be. If this gentleman would like to voice his opinions publicly I shall give him a free copy of *Il Giornale Italiano*, of which I am honoured to be the editor and in which he can read a splendid article entitled “*F'accuse*” by a famous Australian writer against the British Preference League, denouncing it as bloody-minded beyond belief.”

Another publication was *Il Bollettino della Camera di Commercio di Sydney*. Before the First World War and in the 1930s and '40s Italo-Australian publications did not generally have a long life-span. Rather than flourish together, newspapers came and went one after the other, on each occasion leaving the defence of the Italian community to the ones that followed. Unfortunately, *L'Italo-Australiano*, *Il Corriere degli Italiani in Australia*, *La Stampa Italiana* and *L'Italiano*, to name but a few, disappeared without trace. The excellent public libraries have no record of their existence and the papers themselves are only remembered by interested individuals. (29)

ITALIANS IN POLITICS

Italian involvement in Australian political life has been significant, if sporadic. In the period we are concerned with it is interesting to note how all those Italians who were successful in the political arena were

members of, or supported by, the Labor Party. It is my belief that the reasons for this are basically to be found in the fact that, at the time, the Italians who were more inclined to pursue political careers were precisely those who had socialist and union backgrounds.

The first chronologically to enter parliament (if we exclude those already mentioned in relation to the nineteenth century) were two brothers, Camillo and Pietro Lazzarini, sons of a Florentine gentleman who had arrived in Australia in 1860 and had settled at Young in New South Wales where Carlo Camillo and Pietro were born, in 1880 and 1884 respectively. Camillo Lazzarini, who already as a young man had become involved in politics was elected in 1917 as member for the seat of Marrickville in the New South Wales parliament, a seat he held until 1952. He was Minister for State Works in 1921, was nominated Colonial Secretary in 1927 and made Deputy Minister in 1941.

His brother Pietro Lazzarini also proved to be a figure of considerable political stature. Once elected to Federal Parliament in 1919 as member for Werriwa he first held the seat for 12 years. Re-elected in 1934 he retired in 1952. He was Minister for Home Security in 1942 and Minister for Work and Housing in 1946. Camillo and Pietro died in 1952, two months apart.

Antonio Lucchetti was another distinguished parliamentarian. His great-grandfather was one of the first to settle in the Lithgow and Bathurst areas. Antonio was elected to Parliament as the member for Macquarie.

Giuseppe Lamaro was also for many years an important political figure. Born in Redfern of Italian parents, as a boy he won a scholarship to St. Patrick's College, Goulburn. After graduating from the Academy of Fine Arts he joined the Education Department in Sydney and during that time completed a law degree at the university. During the First World War he fought with distinction in France. On his return he was admitted to the bar in 1922. In 1927 he was elected to State Parliament as the member for Enmore. He was Minister of Justice from 1930 to 1932, when he resigned to stand for Federal Parliament. Defeated, he retired from politics. A magistrate of undoubted ability, he was appointed Crown Prosecutor in 1943 and District Court Judge in 1947. Giuseppe Lazzaro died in 1951 at just 56 years of age. (30)

NOTES

- 1 - G. De Amezaga, *Viaggio di Circumnavigazione della Regia Corvetta "Caracciolo" negli anni 1881-82-83-84*, Vol. IV, Forzani E.C., Tipografia del Senato, Rome, 1886, Capo VIII, pp. 328, 332.
- 2 - "Macaroni Rampant: a storm in a tea-cup" in *The Australian Workman*, Sydney, Wednesday, 1 October 1890.
- 3 - *ibid.*
- 4 - Francesco Sceusa, *Carte in Tavola*, Sydney, 1890.
- 5 - Tommaso Fiaschi, *A Viso Aperto - Risposta All'Opuscolo Carte in Tavola*, John Sand Printer, George Street, Sydney, 1890.
- 6 - F. Sceusa, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

- 7 - *ibid.*, op. cit.
- 8 - *ibid.*, op. cit.
- 9 - *ibid.*, op. cit.
- 10 - *ibid.*, op. cit.
- 11 - Cav. A.W.N. Squitti, "Rapporto 14-11-1891" in *Emigrazione e Colonie*, Rome, 1893, pp. 353-54.
- 12 - F. Gagliardi, *L'Australia: i suoi commerci ed i Suoi rapporti con l'Italia*, Tip. Commerciale, Florence, 1897.
- 13 - P. Corte, *Il Continente nuovissimo ossia L'Australasia britannica*, Roux Frassati & Co., Turin, 1898, pp. 227-30.
 From this work I have compiled a list of Italian exhibitors living in Australia:
 'Avvocato' P. Serte, Consul-General in Melbourne and his works - collections of statics and photographs of marsupials, Australian, agricultural and mineral products; 'Cavaliere' Ferdinando Gagliardi, Melbourne - letters about Australia, cocoons and silk, plans and photographs of Melbourne Library;
 'Cavaliere' Federico Gagliardi, Sydney - his book *Australia*, samples of agricultural and mineral products;
 G. Pullé, Sydney - samples of canned meat;
 S. Cecchi, Melbourne - Mallee irrigation project;
 G. Cattani, Melbourne - layouts of farming townships and topographical maps;
 Oronzo Presa, Melbourne - watercolours "Australian bird laughing" and "Shells from the Torres Islands";
 'Commendatore' Baracchi, Melbourne - photographs of instruments, scirruses, nebulae, and sundry booklets;
 C. Martorana, Melbourne - stuffed birds, tanned hides;
 S. Zacutti - oil painting of Australian native;
 'Cavaliere' Dr. Tommaso Fiaschi, Sydney - wines, photographs of vineyards;
 G. Arrigoni, Sydney - canned meat from The Queensland Meat Co.;
 Oscar Meyer, Sydney - a collection of Australian fish;
 A. Galli, Melbourne - report on the 'Società di M.S.';
 Prof. Michele Blunno, New South Wales wine expert - reports on wine-growing;
 R. Bragato, Victorian Government oenologist - photographs of New Zealand;
 Ferdinando Cantù - Papi, school inspector - report on education in Queensland;
 Dr. Natale Scisca - miner's disease, a recollection;
 Alberto Zelman, music teacher - musical compositions;
 Filippo Munari, *Un italiano in Australia*;
 Davide Thomatis, Cairns - agricultural produce from his own plantations; the 'New Italy' settlement - samples of timber and agricultural produce.
- 14 - P. Corte, op. cit., pp. 116-18.
- 15 - Nunzia Messina, "L'emigrazione italiana in Australia (1876-79)" in *Studi-Emigrazione*, 1978, n. 41, p. 107.
- 16 - *ibid.*
- 17 - *ibid.*, p. 113.
- 18 - G. Capra, *Gli emigrati italiani nell'Australia*, Italica Gens - Anni III, Nos. 6-9, pp. 284 ff.
- 19 - Cf. Maureen Strazzari, *A Preliminary of Italian Immigration to the Hunter Region*, 1980.
- 20 - *ibid.*
- 21 - G. Cresciani, *The Italian Community at the Outbreak of the War*, Sydney, 1980, p. 4.
- 22 - *ibid.*
- 23 - W. Lowenstein & M. Loh, *The Immigrants*, Penguin Books, Australia, Melbourne, 1977, p. 40.
- 24 - "Just a Sicilian Village Down Under" in *Radici*, Italo-Australian magazine, Winter 1983, no. 3, p. 19.
- 25 - G. Cresciani, op. cit., p. 4.
- 26 - *ibid.*, p. 9.
- 27 - The network of the Fascist organisation encompassed all age groups in society. There were the "lupetti" (small children), the "gruppo avanguardista", and the "giovani italiane" for the young women.
- 28 - G. Cresciani, op. cit., p. 11.





A group of emigrants arrive during the II World War

The Spinazè family



THE AGRICULTURAL MIRACLE OF

10 – THE RIVERINA

According to the explorer John Oxley who saw the Riverina for the first time in 1817 from the top of Mt. Binya, it was an immensely sterile and desolate plain. While passing by to the south of this same immense plain 12 years later in 1829, another famous explorer, Charles Sturt, wrote in his diary: "...It is impossible to describe these places we are crossing or the desolation of the scene before our eyes. The plain is flat all the way to the horizon with some gum trees scattered about here and there and a sombre cypress tree seems to have been planted by nature as a melancholy sign of that isolated plain. Neither bird nor animal inhabits this solitary and inhospitable region over which there seems to reign a deathly silence..." (1)

And so it was thought until another pioneer, Sir Samuel McCaughey, bought a large property towards the end of the century at North Yanco, one of the most arid areas in the State. In 1902, the year of a disastrous drought, McCaughey began the construction of some 300 miles of canals to irrigate his 40,000 acres of which 5,000 were sown with alfalfa and 2,500 with sorghum, while 10,000 were set aside for pasture. He had 16,000 sheep as well. (2)

In 1906 the State Government approved plans for irrigation using the waters of the Murrumbidgee and its tributary, the Goodradigbee. The following year work was begun on an artificial lake, 'The Burrinjuck Dam' and its inlets, which went on until the First World War. By 1913, 500 farms had been established, 273 colonial homes built, 80 miles of road laid, with 6,500 acres of land under irrigation and 15,000 cultivated in all. The press publicised the project extensively.

(3) In 1912, before the official opening of the first section at Yanco, the Irrigation Trust had sent a representative to Broken Hill to find buyers. Many miners in poor physical health bought farms. A certain number of them became successful farmers, but the majority failed.

At the end of the war it was decided to set that land aside for returned soldiers and their families. In 1919, 826 returned soldiers were set up in the district of Mirool with their families. This was in the northern part of the land under irrigation, whose main town Griffith was then only in the planning stages. 650 of these families took up fruit-growing, 142 raised dairy cattle and 21 bred stock. 320 other families took possession of properties elsewhere in the Yanco district, with 176 involved in fruit-growing, 118 in dairying and 26 in cattle-breeding. (4)

But the authorities' haste – undoubtedly politically motivated – in settling the veterans almost anywhere on the land, together with the general inexperience and an inability to cope on the part of many of them, accelerated the inevitable failure and abandonment of the venture.

In 1924 W.J. Allen calculated that only 27% of the farms be considered of high, or at least adequate standard, while 2% comprised land that had never been cultivated. The crops of 49% of the remaining farms were second-rate, and 22% were third-rate, that is, unsatisfactory or totally neglected. (5)

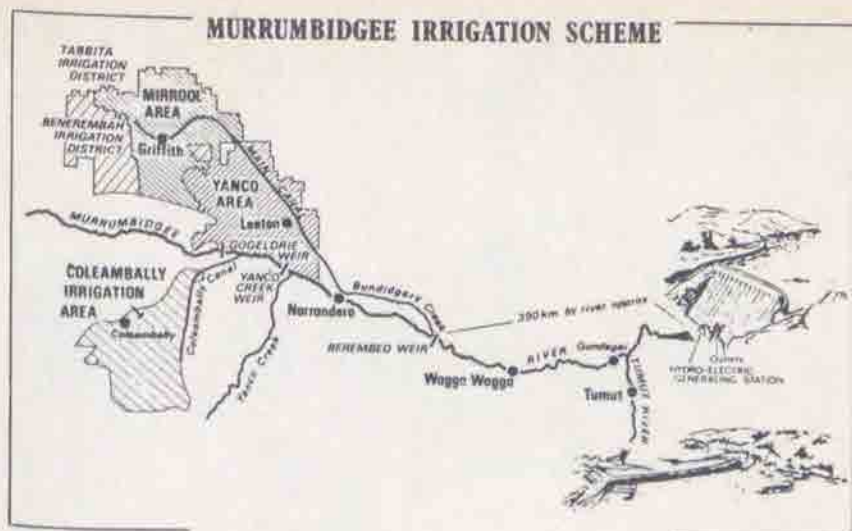
In the decade after 1919 the number of war veterans declined rapidly while the Italian community continued to grow steadily. In the official settlement blueprint no provision had ever been made to use Italian farmers and yet they were almost the only ones left to develop the farming land set aside for Australian war veterans and civilians.

The very first Italians settled there after having worked on building the artificial lake and some irrigation canals. Three of these Italians, Francesco Bicego and Luigi Guglielmini from Rovere in the province of Verona, and Enrico Lucco from Colamonte in Piedmont had left the mines at Broken Hill because of continual worker unrest. (6)

During the First World War the Broken Hill mines, where quite a few Italians worked, were partly closed down as the principal market for many of the minerals – Germany – had been lost because of the conflict. As a consequence, a certain number of miners moved to the Riverina and among these were some Italians: Camillo Baltieri from Badia Calavena (Verona), Marco and Luigi Bonomi who settled at Mirool in 1915. Cesare Augusto Bonomi, son of Luigi, remembers the long trip from Broken Hill to Griffith very well; he was 12 years old and the only one who spoke a little English, which meant he became the spokesman and interpreter for the group. They took the train to Adelaide and then to Melbourne where they were put up by friends until the next day, when they caught another train to Albury where they had to change again. They arrived at Junee at three o'clock on a freezing cold morning. They warmed themselves by a small fire in the station waiting room until the train for Hay arrived at half past eight later that morning. They got to Willbriggie at two o'clock in the afternoon where Cesare's father Luigi was waiting for them in a gig. The road was so rough and full of pot-holes that they kept having to get off because the horse could not go on. Finally, at five o'clock in the afternoon, they arrived exhausted at farm 664. The two-roomed house had a corrugated iron roof, hessian walls, beds made of sack-cloth and sheepskins for mattresses. These conditions did not change until their few pieces of furniture arrived by rail from Broken Hill.

Luigi Bonomi had already cultivated part of the land and had planted corn, potatoes, pumpkins and beans. Later they built a chicken coop, a stable and a pig-sty and began to grow tomatoes, apricot and peach trees, and wine and sultana grapes. (7)

It seems though that the first Italian to settle in the Yanco district



A map of the extensive irrigation scheme for the Riverina.



A pioneer family in the Riverina.

(Photo by W.R.C.)



*The first Italian pioneers in the Rivenna
Francesco and Rachilde Bicego.*



Giuditta Baltieri.



Guemino Baltieri.



Their four children: Mary, Rino, Aldo and Giulio.

was Battista Governa who had spent several years at Nagambie in Victoria where he had become very well known. Even in the Leeton district many still remember him as a very strange character and the stories they tell are certainly not flattering. He is known to have had a farm at Stanbridge and to have been a wine-grower. He built the first dance-hall in Leeton and in its basement set up a cellar where he sold wine over the counter.

At 36 years of age he married a Turkish woman from Constantinople but they had no children. He died of a heart attack at the age of 82 at Leeton in 1933, having been in Australia 49 years. (8)

In 1917 Antonio Fantoni and Giuseppe Fois who were from the same town in Italy, and Erminio Cappello, arrived from Burrinjuck. In 1914 Fantoni and Fois, who were both Sardinians, had landed in Sydney where they set up home in a corrugated iron shack until one day they were evicted and sent to work on the construction of the Burrinjuck dam. There they met Erminio Cappello who had recently arrived from Cavaso (Treviso) and for about three months they lived in a sort of tent. Life was hard and they had to make many sacrifices. After three years, even work at the dam became scarce and so the three men moved to the Yanco area in search of other employment. Cappello left almost immediately for the Griffith district. Fois, on the other hand, returned to the Canberra area while Fantoni, after wandering around fruitlessly for many days, found a dairy farmer who offered him work as a milker in the Stanbridge area.

Towards the end of 1917, when he had put aside some money, Fantoni tried to purchase a small property but he was prevented from doing so because he was not an Australian citizen. By the time he did obtain his citizenship there was a rural recession and poor Fantoni found himself unemployed. He packed his bags again, returning to Queanbeyan where he met Carlo Sagagio from Piedmont, and together they founded the Zenith Works construction company. In order to keep their prices down they used sheets of fibrous plaster and mosaic tiles. They replaced a dilapidated wooden construction near the Queanbeyan post office with an elegant two-storey commercial complex and later built another on the post office site itself. The depression of the 1930s brought all construction work to a halt and Fantoni returned to the Riverina, where, for several years, he worked for the Fox family who, among other things, raised horses. Then in 1939 he bought a small farm of 15 acres with a farm-house that had been the local maternity hospital, becoming a poultry wholesaler and turning the farm into a citrus orchard. He was called the Gentleman of the Riverina because of his education and good manners and was always ready to help and advise his fellow countrymen. (9)

In 1916 Ernesto Ceccato arrived at Mirool with his family and in 1917 he bought uncultivated land from a certain Mr Silvester. In that same year Angelo Pastega moved there, as did the following year Erminio Cappello, who had arrived in the Riverina with Fantoni. From Northern Italy came Girolamo Vardanega and Angelo Muraro and from Naples Edoardo D'Ambrosio who had spent a lot of time wandering

between South Australia and Victoria after having emigrated to Australia in 1870. In 1921 Giuseppe Cunial also arrived. (10)

Valerio Ricetti, a 17-year-old youth, landed in Australia in 1915. He too, had wandered through South Australia and Victoria in search of employment after having worked a little in the mines at Broken Hill. Having had nothing but bad luck he worked for a while on a Murray River paddle-steamer until finally he set off to walk all the way to Griffith. On arriving in the Griffith area during a storm and without seeing any of the few modest houses that made up the new town, he sought refuge in one of the many natural caves to the north. He chose one and decided to stay there. Without any tools to work with he made the cave liveable and on the slope of the hill he created a tiny vegetable garden. Believing himself to be the only Italian in the area, Ricetti remained isolated from everyone, working on his garden at night, living like a hermit and becoming known as such. During the Second World War the authorities placed him in a concentration camp believing him to be a spy. On his release at the end of the war he returned to Griffith. This time he worked for the Ceccato family until 1952, when he returned to Italy. He died six months later. (11)

"During this period the arrival of ever-increasing numbers of Italians in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area," writes George Pich, "was to be attributed to a combination of interrelated factors; worker unrest in the mines at Broken Hill which kept interrupting the work there, the restrictions on Italian emigration to the United States and the rise of Fascism in Italy." (12)

In fact from 1909 to 1920 industrial relations at the mines in Broken Hill were among the most turbulent in the country, culminating in the long strike of 1920. For these reasons quite a number of Italians, especially the Veneti, preferred to join their fellow countrymen in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. During the depression of the 1930s still more Italians arrived from Caldegno, Caltrano, Conco, Marano, Monte di Malo, Raccaro, Sandrigo, Schio and Vastagna. (13) The number of families from the Veneto region rose to 280, from Calabria to 98, from the Friuli to 46 and from the Abruzzi to 18. Several other families arrived from Piedmont, Lombardy, Campania and Sicily. (14)

Without the economic recovery Italian immigration to the Riverina also underwent a dramatic increase. About 200 men arrived, some with their families, others alone. From 1933 to 1947 the number of Italians in the Riverina went from 747 to approximately 2,000. True mass migration, however, began after 1947 and by 1954 the Italian contingent had already risen to 4,185. (15)

From its humble beginnings in 1915 the Italian involvement in horticulture and fruit-growing, in areas irrigated by the Murrumbidgee, grew steadily. They initially farmed uncultivated land and later took over those properties abandoned by ex-servicemen. Soon the authorities were forced to accept that the Italians were really determined to make the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area their permanent home, even if the possibility of the involvement of Italian labour had never been considered, even remotely, in the official plans for the



L. Bonumi, his wife and son.



Maria, Elia and Marcello Corradi, surrounded by relatives and friends from their home town on their arrival in Australia on 10 September 1932.



Mr Balestrin during the wheat harvest.



*Celebrating a rare visit by the Italian Jesuit missionary
Fr. Ugo Modotti.*



*Another Riverina pioneer,
Girolamo Vardanega from
Passagno.*

settlement of those vast virgin areas.

At first the Italians had to be content with finding casual work as ordinary labourers or farm-hands. Yet they knew what had to be done if they were to own their own land. Often the first to arrive was the head of the family who emigrated alone or with his eldest son, and only after having worked and saved enough money did he bring over his family. Once reunited, these people would use their savings to establish small farms of one to five acres in size to grow fruit and vegetables in cooperation with other Italians, or with their own relatives; otherwise they bought existing farms, or if they did not have sufficient money, leased plots of land or entered into crop-sharing agreements. (16) Between 1920 and 1930 the growth in the number of Italians in the horticultural and fruit-growing industries must be attributed to the will to succeed of these families. If unlike the ex-servicemen-cum-farmers the Italians made a success of horticulture and fruit-growing, it was due to their general abilities, tenacity and close family support.

From 1920 to 1925 Italians owned and worked only some 20 farms. During the Depression this number increased considerably partly because the Italians had the necessary capital and partly because the price of land had plummeted. In 1933 52 orchards and 15 market gardens out of a total of 600 were owned by Italians. During the period from 1933 to the Second World War the number rose from 63 to 163 and continued to grow. Italians from the Veneto owned 126 of these properties, 17 were owned by Calabrians, eight by Friulians, seven by Piedmontese, three by Italians from the Abruzzi, and two by Sicilians.

Throughout the Second World War the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area became an important centre for the production of fresh vegetables for consignment to Australian servicemen in the south-eastern Pacific theatre. The first consignment in 1942 came to 10,000 tons, that is five times the normal annual production. In the space of two years this was raised incredibly to 32,000 tons, that is 16 times the annual production.

Some 600 farmers, of whom 90% were Italians, signed a contract with the government to grow certain vegetables and to deliver them to local cooperatives. As there was a lack of seed the government made 150 acres of land available to the Riverina Welfare Farm at Yanco to produce it. In 1945, 760 Italian POWs from Northern Africa were transferred there with the task of cultivating 200 acres of land for seed production. (17)

"The history of the first pioneers of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area," writes Sue Chessbough, "would be incomplete without paying tribute to the Italians. They played a major part in the development and the improvement of the area and all worked extremely hard, either in lowly farm jobs, or in road construction gangs, or as share-farmers so that they could save enough to buy their own farms." (18)

The Riverina flourished largely due to their hard work. "In fact they saved the area in the 1920s when many bankrupt farmers abandoned

their properties in desperation..." (19)

The introduction of the art of wine-making is also due to the Italians. Since they were accustomed to producing wine for their own use back home, they found it natural to keep up this old tradition in their new homeland.

Soon they began to exhibit their wines at local shows around the Riverina and competed intensely with each other. For example, Samuele Paganini won many prizes at various Griffith shows, while other Italians, such as Vittorio De Bortoli, started making wine for commercial consumption. After working for five years in the Jones winery at Beelbanger, De Bortoli planted some vines on a small property he bought at Bilbul, and in 1928 produced his first wine. It was not easy to sell wine to the itinerant workers and the Italians living in the district, though it did not take long before the quantity and quality of his wine was such that the De Bortoli winery became one of the most important in the Riverina.

Many other individuals and companies followed De Bortoli's example and there are now 18 wineries and two distilleries in the area. At least ten of these 18 wineries are Italian. (20)

*ENMITIES LINGER ON

Everything went smoothly throughout this initial period of settlement. Everyone was so preoccupied with cultivating and planting their properties that they had not been too concerned about the ethnic make-up of the area. However, when Australian ex-servicemen started joining the powerful R.S.L. the tribal mentality was reawakened. They noticed the presence of foreigners and considered it harmful; their fear of competition stirred up the usual prejudices and discrimination. Italians were accused of being dirty and ragged because, to pay off their properties, they led a frugal existence. "It was very rare," writes Pino Bosi, "to find a dirty or untidy Italian farm-house; indeed it was less likely among the Italians than the Australians." (21) (Today the most beautiful houses in Griffith and Leeton belong to Italians.) Some Italians were also accused of cheating fellow countrymen out of their properties. And if prices went up it was the Italians' fault because these "bloody dagoes" bought derelict properties at grossly inflated prices. Finally, Italians were not accepted by the general Australian community, nor into the local organisations; they could not join cultural, sporting, welfare or charitable associations. (22)

This was the kind of discrimination that often manifested itself, but there was an even worse example.

All Italian farmers in the Riverina and, naturally, their children, were Australian citizens, even though - because of the agreement of 1883 between Italy and Britain - it was not strictly necessary to be naturalised in order to own property in Australia. (23) On one occasion the Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission refused to allow the transfer of ownership of a farm to a group of Australian citizens of Italian origin. The matter ended up in court. The

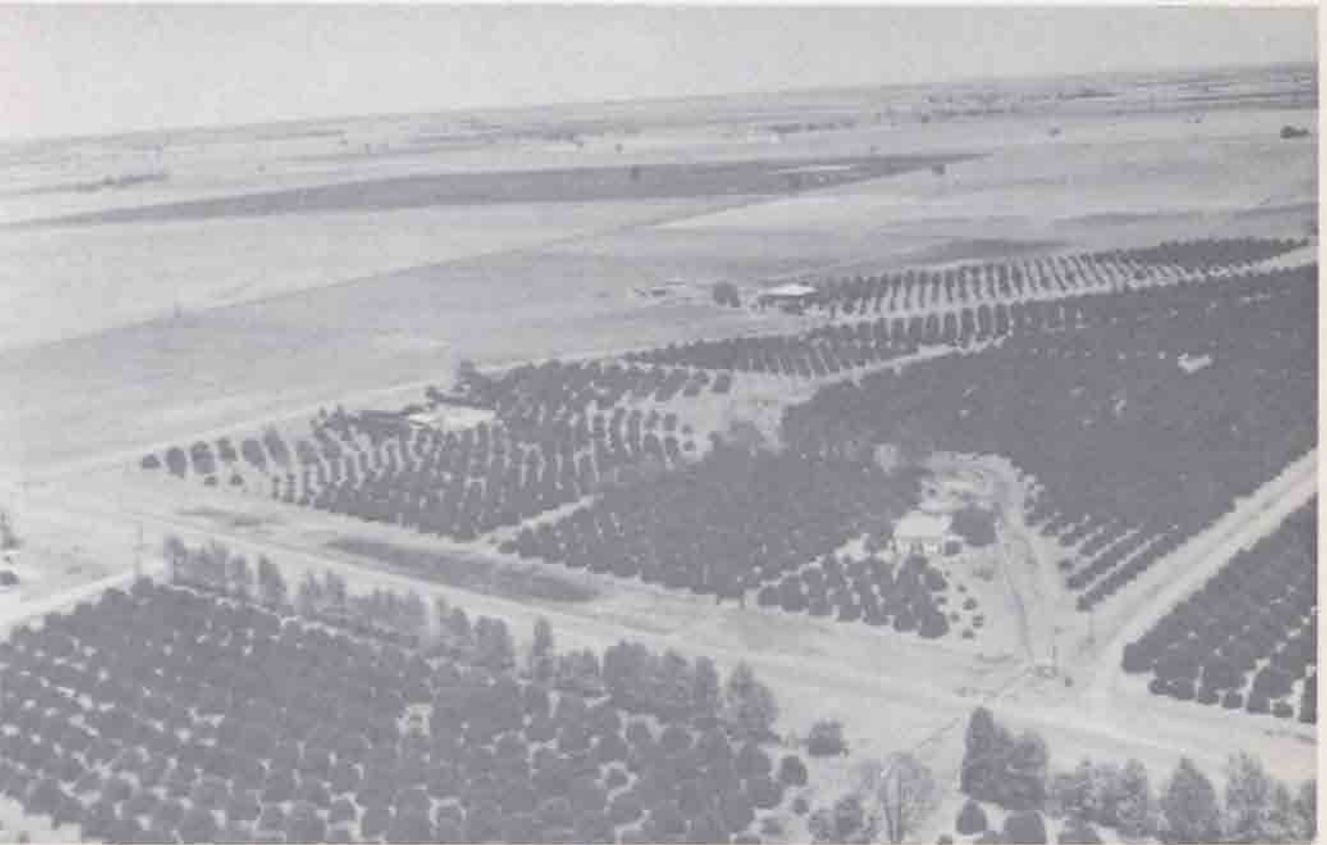


The first ever theatre in Leeton, built by Giovanni Battista Governa

Governa's house at Stanbridge.



The abandoned cellar where Governa made his wine which he would sell later in a large room beneath the theatre.



Aerial view of the Scapp family's orange grove.

Commission defended its refusal by maintaining that irrigated properties should be reserved for Australians, especially ex-servicemen, claiming that Italians were not good farmers and that it was not desirable to have a concentration of Italians in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. (24) Many of the prejudices were fomented by the local press and by newspapers in other parts of Australia. (25) The local papers, particularly the *Murrumbidgee Irrigator*, often spoke of Italians in an unkind, uninformed, discriminatory and contradictory way. When writing about the presence of Italians in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area, the papers did not refer to Italian settlement but rather to the "Italian problem", and to the desirability or otherwise of Italian settlement in the areas under irrigation.

In January 1925 the *Irrigator* published an article entitled "Ill-Regulated Immigration" which picked up the theme of an article in the *Melbourne Age*. The reporter said in no uncertain manner: "Each of us has his own particular dislikes with regard to other nationalities...Italians are obsessed by a burning desire that drives them.

Later in 1927 the same newspaper in another article painted a rather flattering picture of Italian settlers, even though underneath it all it maintained a tone of racial superiority.

In referring to the Italians in "New Italy", it affirmed that they were a hard-working community which as a consequence became stronger and richer and brought prosperity to the State, showing at the same time how so much land previously considered infertile could be made productive. The article continued its praise pointing out that "produce from 'New Italy' are many and varied, even though the settlement is small. The main ones in any case are railway sleepers, firewood, all sorts of fruit, grapes, vegetables...and children. This last product is very important to the settlement's economy because the girls, who are attractive and clean, can become good maids and nurses, while the boys learn early on to become good market gardeners and farmers. Their understanding of how vines grow, their knowledge of which land is suitable for such cultivation and their capacity for work are to be admired". (26)

But the following week, another item appeared in the same columns entitled "Foreign Invasion", with the sub-title of "Peaceful Entry from the Mediterranean: the United States shifts its problems to Australia". Lumping everyone together, the author of the article stated unambiguously that "everybody knows that Italians are not settlers; they do not blaze trails. Their particular trick is to join well-established communities where settlement and colonisation have already taken place through the efforts of others. Therefore, we today, have all the evidence of a gradual movement towards the antipodes by the Latin race, which will, with time become an exodus as it did in America. Something is happening here now and there is no doubt that certain groups are trying to get rid of Australians and Britons wherever it is possible to convince the original owners to sell, by using agents spread throughout Australia as well as those means

foreigners know best...

"Italians love to have their own piece of land. For them, owning a piece of land is the be all and end all of their lives. The reason why Italians went to Queensland was to buy farms, which, at that time was not difficult...Thus they advanced and surrounded the English-speaking races. The intrusion of different races and customs pushed the English-speakers into selling to the greedy people from Piedmont and Sicily.

"For 70 years, Garibaldi's brothers have been in contact with the people of the United States and yet they have retained their old customs and ideas up to the third and fourth generations. We have met two generations of these people in Northern Queensland and in them, certain things, like a love for Australia, are practically non-existent. They marry very young and multiply quickly, and they do not teach their children English unless they are not first fluent in the sweet Latin tongue. This country, furthermore, is seen as a good place to make money, but Italy is always their spiritual home." (27) On other occasions, it was said Italians "drink wine the way we drink tea"; or, that some of them exploited relatives and countrymen whom they kept virtually like slaves; or, that in any disagreements among themselves or with Australians, they used razor-blades and knives, unlike the Australians who used their fists.

Those Australians who knew Italians well, or who employed them, considered them to be industrious and loyal workers. Others still, considered the supposed vices and virtues of Italians to be of secondary importance to the actual growth of the communities in the irrigation areas.

Before concluding this sad part of our account we must mention *Smith's Weekly*, also called "The Soldier's Advocate". It is no exaggeration to say that from 1919 to 1950 this paper felt only hatred towards the Italians. It was a case of overt hatred and denigration at every opportunity, of the paper choosing emotionalism over reason. (28)

In its 32-year history it always defended the cause of the war veterans, calling them "gentlemen, the cream of the country's young men, our saviours". On the other hand, Italians were people who lived in a state of indescribable degradation and filth. *Smith's Weekly* maintained that it was proper and necessary to keep the population of the Commonwealth of Australia 98% British...and to reduce foreign immigration to a minimum. (29)

With Italy's entry into the war in 1940 the arrival of Italians in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area practically ceased, and what began instead, was a long period of suffering for those already living there.

The Australian authorities did not delay in legislating against those residents whose country of origin was at war with the Commonwealth of Australia, imposing restrictions on their movements and work.

On 24 July 1940 the government proclaimed the "National Security (Land Transfer) Regulations" which divided the Italians of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area into two categories: "enemy aliens" and

"naturalised persons of enemy origin". (30) Those in the first category were prohibited from buying any farms (no person was to sign a contract or enter into an agreement to sell land to an "enemy alien"). Those in the second category were allowed to buy or sell land, but only with the written permission of the Attorney-General's Department. (31)

Suffice to say that during the whole of the war few contracts of sale involving naturalised Italians were approved. To those that were approved the Irrigation Commission added two further restrictions: no lease or share-farming agreement was allowed to exceed a period of 12 months; and under no circumstances could a permanent title of ownership be granted while the "National Security (Land Transfer) Regulations" were in force.

The provisions of the "Regulations" which allowed the confiscation of weapons and forbade the possession and use of radio transmitters and receivers, were often applied arbitrarily, affecting even Italians who had been naturalised. Many had their household wirelasses taken away.

The "Regulations" prescribed that an "alien" could not be in possession of more than four gallons of petrol, diesel or benzol, or of other inflammable liquids used on farms. The use of cars, motorcycles and other motor vehicles was forbidden without the permission of the local police.

Considering the circumstances, Italians in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area tried to put on a brave face and accepted the government's measures without complaint. What they resented was having to report each week to the police; they quite correctly considered it humiliating and a waste of time. They endured the pain of not being able to speak their mother tongue in public and on the telephone, of having their only meeting-place closed down and of being prohibited from travelling outside the district without written authorisation. (32) Then came the "Enemy Aliens Internment Policy 1941" which sanctioned the internment of all foreigners considered a threat to national security. (33)

In the enforcement of the law the national interest took precedence over individual rights, so once again the police were able to do as they liked. Several Italians were deprived of their freedom for the simple reason of having, before the war, talked in glowing terms about Italian life and culture. The detention of (supposed) community leaders had the desired effect; those who remained free were careful to watch what they said. The local press gave prominence to the internment of 60 or 70 Italians in the Griffith district, several of whom were Australian citizens. Many more would have been interned had it not been for the intervention of some influential Australians who convinced the Federal authorities that the majority of Italians posed no threat to national security; indeed, they would prove to be more useful if left free because they kept up the production of fruit and vegetables, so vital to the Australian armed forces. (34)

Once more the R.S.L. assumed the role of watchdog throughout this distressing period. It stubbornly and persistently demanded that restrictions be imposed on Italians. It continually warned the population to remain wary and to keep an eye on the Italians because they represented a danger, that of subversion and sabotage. Finally, it asked the government to prevent anyone naturalised after 1939 becoming a landowner for at least 15 years from the end of hostilities.

Despite this racial intolerance, nowadays an harmonious society exists in this area. Half the population of the Griffith district is of Italian origin and is valued and respected.

NOTES

- 1 - C.C. Byfield, *Let's Look at the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area*, Marcol Publications, Hughes, ACT 1983, p. 3
- 2 - *ibid.*, p. 4
- 3 - *ibid.*, p. 6
- 4 - George Pich, *Italian Land Settlement in the Murrumbidgee Areas, 1915-1972*, thesis, ANU, 1975, p. 30.
- 5 - W.J. Allen, *Report on Inspection of Farms held by Returned Soldiers*, (1924), Leeton, NSW, W.C. & I.C. (mimeographed).
- 6 - Charles Price, *Italian Population at Griffith*, unpublished confidential report, ANU, 1955.
- 7 - Sue Chessbough, *A Spread of Green: Griffith - its People and Past Events*, Kalora Public, Sydney, 1982, p. 83ff.
- 8 - Information collected on site by the author.
- 9 - Written information provided by Mrs Rina Scanu.
- 10 - Charles Price, *op. cit.*, pgs. 6-9.
- 11 - Sue Chessbough, *op. cit.*, p. 136ff.
- 12 - G. Pich, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.
- 13 - Charles Price, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
- 14 - *ibid.*
- 15 - *ibid.*
- 16 - G. Pich, *op. cit.*, 49, 69ff.
- 17 - G. Pich, *ibid.*, p. 252ff.
- 18 - Sue Chessbough, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
- 19 - G. Pich, *op. cit.*
- 20 - John Higgins, *The New Vignerons - A Guide to the Riverina Wines*, produced by the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Pty. Ltd., Leeton.
- 21 - P. Bosi, *Sweat, Blood & Guts*, - Sydney, 1980, p. 51.
- 22 - *ibid.*
- 23 - G. Pich, *op. cit.*, p. 78.
- 24 - P. Bosi, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
- 25 - G. Pich, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-96.
- 26 - *The Irrigator*, 17/6/1927.
- 27 - *The Irrigator*, 24/6/1927.
- 28 - *Smith's Weekly*, 2/1/1926.
- 29 - *Smith's Weekly*, 10/11/1928.
- 30 - "Alien Control Regulations (1940-1946)" in *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette*. Cf. George Pich, *op. cit.*, p. 240ff.
- 31 - "National Security (Land Transfer) Regulations (1940-1946)" in *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette*.
- 32 - G. Pich, *op. cit.*, p. 241ff.
- 33 - "Enemy Aliens Internment Policy, 1939-1941" in Prime Minister's Department, correspondence file - C.A.O. Canberra, 21st May, 1941.
- 34 - *Irrigator and Area News*, (various, 1940 & 1942).



BRIEF GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF VICTORIA

The State of Victoria is situated in the southern part of the continent, between 141st and 150th degrees longitude east. To the north it shares a border with New South Wales, to the west with South Australia; the rest is washed by the sea. It is the smallest State in the Australian continent; it has an area of 227,530 square miles, that is about 3% of the total area of Australia.

However, it is one of the richest States because of its resources of coal, gold, petroleum and natural gas. (1)

On 11 November 1850, the colony of Port Phillip (Victoria), obtained its independence from the "tyranny" of the mother colony, New South Wales. (2)

In February 1802, deputy, J. Grant, piloted the vessel, Lady Nelson, into Port Phillip bay for the first time. He was looking for a suitable place to establish a colony. But his choice soon proved to be a mis-

take because the soil was too sandy and drinking water was scarce. The few colonists had to be transported to the island of Tasmania to avoid dying from hunger or thirst. (3)

30 years later, in 1834, the Henty family, who dedicated themselves to hunting whales, tried again, but this time in the extreme west of the colony at Portland Bay, in an area already well known by whale hunters. (4)

They found excellent pastures and also established a cattle raising farm. The following year, attracted by the success of the Henty experiment, another person who subsequently became famous, John Batman, arrived in the colony. Batman acquired 600,000 acres of land from the Aborigines for an annual tax of £200 worth of goods. (5)

John Batman was followed by another great pioneer, John P. Fawkner, and then by others.

In 1837 the white population numbered 500 in all, who settled mainly along the estuary of the Yarra River in Port Phillip Bay.

In the following years more and more colonists arrived and settled in various areas along the 1,580 miles of the Victorian coast and also in the interior. In 1838 Governor Bourke visited the group of houses built along the banks of the Yarra River and called it Melbourne.

Great numbers of migrants started to flow in from England and from the neighbouring colonies and the cost of living and of housing went through the roof. In 1842, when the first Mayor was elected, Melbourne had 4,479 inhabitants.

Right from the start the residents of Port Phillip developed a strong feeling of separatism from the mother colony. Faith in the natural resources of the area instilled a great enthusiasm in the colonists.

Moreover, the colonists did not want to have anything to do with the convicts and on two occasions they forced two ships laden with convicts to leave the port without having off-loaded a single convict. (6)

In the month following the approval of the constitution of the new colony, the first gold deposits were discovered at Ballarat. In 1852, between March and December, the population of Melbourne climbed to 39,000 and the population of the colony rose from 77,000 to 168,000 in all.

In 1853, 364,324 persons arrived.

On 23 November, 1855, the new constitution was proclaimed and with it the system of two houses was instituted. Two years later the universal vote for the election of members to the Legislative Assembly was introduced.

The State of Victoria has been declared the garden of the South because of the sweetness of its climate, the fertility of its soil and the beauty of its natural scenery.

11 — THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD

The discovery of gold saved not only the colony of Victoria, but all the Australian colonies from remaining unpopulated. Many of the migrants, who had arrived in the colonies during the crisis of 1840, had returned to their homelands. Many others had ventured forth in a new wave of migration, headed in particular, towards California, where in 1848-49 gold had been discovered. Consequently the population of Australia started to decrease rapidly. The government became worried and offered big sums of money to anyone who discovered gold deposits. (1)

Before then it had been severely forbidden not only to publicise, but even to reveal gold discoveries to others. The government was afraid of losing control of the convicts. Besides, agricultural and pastoral holdings needed all the labour forces available. Finally, however, gold was seen as the only practical means of bringing back to this continent, and in particular to Victoria, the various thousands of gold diggers who had left for California and to attract other hundreds of thousands from every corner of the globe.

On 3 April, 1851, Hargreaves, a veteran of the American goldfields, discovered the first Australian gold beyond the Blue Mountains in the Bathurst district and so received £10,000 from the New South Wales government and £2,381 from the Victorian Parliament.

Two months later, on 29 January, 1851, James William Esmond, another veteran gold digger, who had decided to return from California to look for gold in Australia, discovered gold deposits at Clunes, near Ballarat in the colony of Victoria. (2)

Esmond himself, remembers the incident in a letter to the *Ballaarat Courier*. "On 29 June, 1851, I discovered gold in quartz and alluvial gold at Clunes and I brought it to Geelong where I showed it to Mr William Patterson, then a clock-maker, and then to an analyst at the Bank of Australia. This analyst checked the content in the presence of Mr Alfred Clarke of the *Geelong Advertiser*, who reported my discovery the following Monday, 8 July. Before the discovery of gold in California it was rumoured that a shepherd from the farm of McNeil and Hall in Pirenei had discovered a nugget of gold, which he sold to a person by the name of Brentani, a jeweller in Melbourne." (3)

The shepherd, who had discovered two big nuggets of pure gold (95%), of 24 oz. and one of 14 oz., in the Pyrenees near Ballarat,

was called Thomas Chapman. Carlo Brentani, who had bought one of the two nuggets in 1849 for five shirts, a pair of trousers, a hat and £20, was an Italian jeweller, the owner of a business in Collins Street, Melbourne. According to some, Brentani and his helpers drew up a pact with Chapman to extract the gold secretly. They went to the place indicated, but because of their inexperience, they did not find anything and Chapman disappeared.

According to others, in a more probable version, Brentani, not content with having bought the nugget, tried, by promises and threats, to make the shepherd show him the place where he had found the nuggets. Chapman, however, through fear of falling into the hands of the law, embarked on a vessel headed for Sydney. Brentani never found out where the shepherd had discovered the gold.

A supporter of this version was a certain Mr. Bacchus, who had a letter published in the Melbourne newspaper, *The Argus*, on 1 July, 1851, declaring, "Chapman is an old servant of mine and I don't have any reason to disbelieve his story. In fact he insists that he never took Brentani near the place where he found the gold." (4)

Brentani sold 12 oz. of the famous nugget bought from Chapman, to Captain J. White, Commander of the ship, *Berkshire*, who sailed from Melbourne for London on 17 February, 1949, "whence to demonstrate that this province truly deserves the regal title of Victoria". (5)

Brentani was also known for having presented a thermometer to the public which remained the official guide of the compilers of the Melbourne weather meteorological reports for many years. (6)

Within a very short time the news of the discovery of rich gold deposits in Australia spread round the world, leading to the famous "gold rush" of the 50s, which changed the social and economic history of the country.

At the beginning of May, 1851, the first public diggings began, in the colony of New South Wales, 30 miles from Bathurst. Within a few weeks thousands of people crossed the Blue Mountains and Sydney became almost depopulated. (7)

After some months, the earlier scenes of Sydney were repeated with even more intensity in the colony of Victoria. New migrants arrived continually and a long procession passed through Melbourne for days and weeks on end, leading out from the capital to the gold fields - lawyers, doctors, shop keepers and even ministers of religion were rushing to make their fortune. Bathurst, Ballarat, Bendigo, Beechworth, Rushworth and hundreds of other places were invaded by Europeans, Canadians, Americans, Chinese, Filipinos, Malaysians, etc. (8)

Forests, bushland, mountains, water courses were sifted from one end to the other of the colony. Tent villages and rudimentary huts sprang up everywhere. "A dozen other camping settlements, similar to those at Ballarat, had been erected along the roads outside the towns and all had the same crowd, made up of gold diggers - English, Scotch,

544 *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 26(3)

THE
EUREKA STOCKADE.

THE CONSEQUENCE OF SOME PIRATES WANTING
ON QUARTER DECK A REBELLION

CARRONI RAFFAELLO

“我们非常清楚，在2008年，我们曾向你们保证，我们将为你们提供最好的服务。但是，我们并没有做到。我们非常抱歉，我们非常希望，你们能够原谅我们的过失。我们非常希望，你们能够原谅我们的过失。我们非常希望，你们能够原谅我们的过失。”

COPYRIGHT
MELBOURNE

Il *frangipani* della prima edizione della *Minerva* Stockholm venduta da Catoni a Ballard nel primo stabilimento della società.

The front cover of the first edition of the "Eureka Stockade" sold on the first anniversary of the rebellion

^a"Gold Digger's" license of Ralph Carboni.

NOT TRANSFERABLE

£2



£2

GOLD LICENSE.—THREE MONTHS.

No. 194

17th October, 1854.

The Bearer, *Carlotti Raffaello*, having paid the Sum of **TWO Pounds** on account of the General Revenue of the Colony, I hereby License him to mine or dig for Gold, residue of, or carry on, or follow any trade or calling, except that of Storekeeper, on such Crown Lands within the Colony of Victoria as shall be assigned to him for these purposes by any one duly authorised in that behalf.

This License to be in force for **THREE Months** ending 16th January, and no longer.

L. A. Ames,

Commissioner

REGULATIONS TO BE OBSERVED BY THE PERSONS DIGGING FOR GOLD OR OTHERWISE
EMPLOYED AT THE GOLD FIELDS

1. This License is to be carried on the person, to be produced whenever demanded by any Commissioner, Peace Officer, or other duly authorized person.
2. It is especially to be observed that this License is not transferable, and that the holder of a transferred License is liable to the penalty for a misdemeanor.
3. No Mining will be permitted where it would be destructive of any line of road which it is necessary to maintain, and which shall be determined by any Commissioner, nor within such distance around any store as it may be necessary to reserve for access to it.
4. It is enjoined that all persons on the Gold Fields maintain a due and proper observance of Sundays.
5. The extent of claim allowed to each Licensed Miner is (twelve feet square, or 144 square feet. R.S., Sec. 42).

Irish, Italian, who were swarming over the mud, shovelling dirt and working the noisy and rudimentary winches..." (9)

That heterogeneous crowd was composed of professionals and adventurers, migrants and local people, white and black, and all working side by side, like an immense ant-hill.

As we have already pointed out in the first section of this book, the discovery of gold in Australia, also attracted many Italians, formerly resident within the borders and along the valleys of Piedmont and Lombardy, near Switzerland, to migrate. They embarked on a new wave of migration which was even further away than that to California. For some time already they had found themselves attracted to the same dream.

But, perhaps, more than from gold fever, which in general left the peasants, who were accustomed to see things in a more practical sense, somewhat sceptical, the determining factors were the battery of publicity and the personal contact by the agents of the big shipping companies, who were deceiving the people with visions of easy prosperity, with the promise of liberal salaries, of assured work and of land for everyone.

The brains behind this widespread propaganda, which spread through Germany and Switzerland and arrived in Piedmont and Lombardy, as we have already seen, were the German navigation companies of Hamburg.

The fact was, that once having come in contact with the cruel reality, very few gold diggers were capable of enduring that inhuman work or of accumulating a fortune quickly.

Some, therefore, packed up and returned to the city; others, perhaps the majority, found work connected with the mines; others, again, returned to work on the fields.

The history books of many towns in Victoria, frequently mention the presence of Italians, particularly in mining areas. However, they do not help us to establish the date of their arrival or their total number. Consequently, given the lack of definite historical dates and the inexactness of the secondary sources in this regard, in order to arrive at a precise historical exactness, long, meticulous and costly research would be necessary, which is beyond our possibilities and our means.

However, the references made by local historians, although of a general nature, can help to give us an idea of the Italian presence in the Colony of Victoria in this period. (10)

For example, "Already in June, 1855," writes J. Flett in his history of the discovery of gold, "not far from the *Sailors' Gully Mine*, one of the richest gold mines in the area was opened and, in the following month, 200 Italians came to work at *Italian Gully*, one of the main mines of Deep Creek, near Egan." (11)

At any rate, it is in the districts of Ballarat and Bendigo that we find the greatest number of Italians. Another nucleus was established in the North-East of the colony. Towards the end of the century a

further important group was formed at Walhalla in the Latrobe Valley. We will now seek to reconstruct the Italian presence in these places and to evaluate their role in local history.

ITALIANS IN CENTRAL VICTORIA

During the time of the discovery of gold, innumerable little towns such as Daylesford, Hepburn, Castlemaine, Clunes, Egan, New Trento and Italian Gully were established around the two cities of Ballarat and Bendigo. Already we have found some Italians in these places in the last century.

A.J. Williams, recalling the origins of Maldon and Tarrangower, two small towns which, like many others, were born during the invasion of the gold diggers, writes, "...The Italians, who have settled in great numbers in the district, have played a prominent part in the birth and development of Maldon." (12)

As we will see later, most of these Italians dedicated themselves more to agriculture than to looking for gold. But a certain number did work in the mines or dedicated themselves to related work.

The evidence is varied. For example, in 1864, in the mines at Porcupine, still in the Maldon district, various clashes between Italians and Chinese are verified. (13)

In another situation, a certain Novello knifed a German. The local newspaper reported that Novello was a respectable person, but that he apparently had little liking for certain foreign names that were difficult to pronounce. It is not known whether he committed the act because of prejudice or for some other reason. But the German did not appear at the trial and the accused was acquitted. (14)

With regard to the Bendigo district, "the golden city of Victoria", Italians are mentioned by Frank Cusak in his book, *Bendigo: A History*. "Many Italians, especially those coming from Ticino", the historian writes, "stayed in the districts of Epsom, Huntly, Meyers Creek and Whipstick. Of an evening they would gather at Epsom in the restaurant or the local hotel, *Bella Italia*, owned by Mr Gariboldi, and in the years following they used to meet in Mr Maggetti's hotel at Millers Flat." (15)

Their presence in the gold fields was also verified by the names given to towns, such as "New Trento" and "Italian Gully" and to mines like "Italia Lead", "Garibaldi Reef", "Montebello Reef", "Magnet Reef", and "Italian Company" of Crooked River, etc. "Ordinarily, such names," recalls James Vallins, President of the Miners' Association, "were chosen from the titles of the mines or from other miners to indicate their city of origin, or, as in the following case, the trade they practised before becoming gold diggers".

"Towards the middle of 1853," writes J. Vallins, "I and seven other companions, commenced to explore the area looking for gold bearing layers. Of the eight of us, six were sailors, in fact, we were known as 'the sailors'. The gully where we were digging in search of the yellow metal, was called 'Sailors' Gully'". (16)

One of the most numerous and most fortunate groups were the Canadians. The place where they were digging was known as "The Canadian Gully". If this was the origin of the names of the mining zones, one must conclude that in the Ballarat district, and in the gold fields in general, a considerable number of Italians were working. One exception could be made for the mines or places which bear the name, "Garibaldi". Garibaldi, the hero of two worlds, was in fact, also well known by gold diggers of other nationalities. At least half a dozen mines bear his name, but not all had been given by Italian miners.

Finally we know that the gold diggers were working in groups with three, six or more companions. They worked in this way, not only because the very conditions of work demanded it, but also because, for most, only in this way could they obtain the loan necessary to start the work.

In 1854, a certain Giovanni Tartaglia, with other companions, discovered a modest gold deposit near Jim Crow, which he called "*Deep Creek Diggings*". Another gold miner, a certain Scarpi, opened the successful mine, "*The Italian Reef*" on 15 May, 1856, the east of the town New Chum, known today by the name of Steiglitz. (17) Various Italians worked in the mine, "*Italian Hill Lead*", opened in 1857 near Daylesford. In that district many Italians from Piedmont, Lombardy and Ticino established themselves, because, as the chronicles report, the area was rich in water and the countryside was very similar to that which they had left in Lombardy.

"At Hepburn," writes the Consul Biagi in a report to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1869, "a Lombard has found a rich gold bearing vein in the quartz, that has rendered 50 to 100 grams of gold per ton." (18)

Again in August 1860, Giorgio Antagnini discovered a gold bearing deposit that he called "*Italian Diggings*" on the eastern bank of the Campaspe River, about one mile north of Piper's Creek. The discovery immediately provoked a new gold rush to the area, which became known as "*Falls Diggings Rush*". (19)

In March of 1982 a certain Ross Hercott of Wedderburn obtained a licence to dig for gold in land situated opposite his own house. He was convinced of the existence of a vein of gold bearing quartz, already discovered for the first time in the fifties of the previous century by a certain Teodoro Cerchi. Convinced that the thread contained still more gold, Hercott bought the two properties from the Cerchis next to his own house situated in Wilson Street. (20)

Actually the name of Cerchi is not new in the history of the gold fields. It is not known, however, if there were one or two persons. At times Teo Cerchi is mentioned, at others, Vittorio Cerchi, and yet again we read of T.V. Cerchi.

In 1872 a certain Vittorio Cerchi found some gold dust in waste material thrown away by one of J.R. Gray's workers. Together with a friend, Richard Ball, he bought the claim from Gray and commenced to work the quartz, extracting 360 grams of gold per ton. In 1888, Cerchi and Ball, helped by the "Sandhurst Syndicate", opened a mine which they called "*The Champion Reef*". It was near the place in which another Italian, Umberto De Marchi, had started a mine together with a Mr Hall. They, Cerchi and Ball, were repaid with a good quantity of gold.

In 1889 they opened yet another mine to the north, called "*The Come-age Reef*", but they were not successful. (21)

We meet De Marchi again in 1864, when, together with two companions he bought "*Tinpot Gully*". At a depth of 23 feet they found a good vein of quartz which produced 216 grams of gold per ton. In 1875 De Marchi came into contact with a certain Dickman and started excavations on "*Peep-O'Day Reef*". They pushed ahead to a depth of 135 feet, but the result was very modest. (22)

We could continue to cite names and events, but we want to conclude with two statements made recently by direct descendants of these first Italians in the gold fields.

A. Ferrari, in a typescript prepared for the "Historical Society" of Hepburn, said, "Among the miners it is said there are about 15,000 Italians and Ticinesi, some of whom still live in the district of Hepburn, like Messrs Boff, Pozzi, Ferrari and Rossi." (23)

Joseph Andreallo, nephew of Giacomo Lucini, takes the figure up to 20,000 of the numbers of Italians who lived in the district of Hepburn Springs, but it seems neither of the two can manage to prove the veracity of such figures. (24)

In conclusion, as Cusak affirms, "Few of these became rich from the light gold dust of Whipstick, even adding the success of gold diggings in the layers of quartz. Many of them dedicated themselves to wood cutting and making vegetable charcoal for the mines. Gold digging required, in fact, a major input of human resources and equipment." (25)

EUREKA STOCKADE

At this point we cannot permit to pass unnoticed the event and the personage involved in the most extraordinarily famous incident in the history of the discovery of gold. We refer to the miners' rebellion at Ballarat and to Raffaello Carboni, the Italian considered the most popular in the history of Australia. (26)

Raffaello Carboni was an educated person, good at languages, a fervent patriot and impetuous. He was born at Urbino in 1817 into an old Roman family; he attended the University of his city and in 1837 he entered the seminary of the Holy Trinity in Rome. He wanted to

become a priest, but, attracted by revolutionary movements, he joined the Young Italy movement and fought alongside Garibaldi in the Roman campaign of 1848/49, during which he was wounded three times.

In 1850 he had to go into exile, first in Berlin, then in Paris and finally in London, where he taught languages.

When, in 1852, the news of the discovery of gold in Australia reached Great Britain, Carboni set out for Melbourne, together with tens of thousands of Englishmen.

In the beginning he worked in the mines at Ballarat, then in those of Bendigo. He also became a shepherd and lived with the natives for a short time. But for the Easter of 1854 he returned to Ballarat, where he became involved in the tragic revolt at the Eureka Stockade.

Overall the gold miners were a peaceful and law abiding people, but factors which brought their hearts and minds to breaking point were the chaotic conditions that governed the miners, the inept administration, the abuses and the arbitrary methods adopted in the case of wrong doers, the heavy taxes for licences, the continual inspections and the oppression and corruption of the police.

In 1853, when the Governor of the colony, Sir Charles Latrobe, tried, with the aim of covering his administration expenses, to double the amount of the tax for a licence to dig for gold, the violent demonstrations by the miners forced him to revoke such a regulation. Besides, alarmed by the general discontent that abounded among the gold diggers, the Governor suggested to the Legislative Assembly of the colony to substitute the tax on a licence, for one on the exporting of gold. But the Committee of Enquiry, created especially to study in detail the question, recommended simply to reduce the tax. In fact, at the end of 1853, the tax on the licence was reduced slightly, but no action was taken on all the other causes of discontent.

The situation became worse with the arrival of the new Governor, Charles Hotham, a naval official, trained in the tradition of strict discipline and in undisputed obedience.

In fact, after a visit to Bendigo and Ballarat, Hotham ordered that the inspection of licences be stepped up. The first to suffer the consequences was a crippled Armenian, John Gregory, who spoke several languages. The Catholic priest, Fr Patrick Smythe, used to take him along on his rounds in order to communicate with the Catholics of different nationalities. Gregory was badly treated by the authorities and fined £5 for not being able to produce the necessary licence.

Only two months later, another grave incident happened at Ballarat. A miner by the name of Scobie was killed near the Eureka Hotel. The owner of the hotel, an ex-convict and a sinister figure, was taken in custody but released after several days, despite the heavy evidence against him.

Immediately a protest meeting was organised. One group of miners set fire to the hotel, razing it to the ground. As a reprisal three

miners, taken at random, were put in prison. When it was demanded that they be released, the Governor not only refused to listen to such requests, but ordered the police to carry out checks on licences every week.

At this point let us see how Raffaello Carbone reconstructed the facts of those tragic days in his book, *The Eureka Stockade*, written after the trial to which he was subjected, having been accused of treason. "Wednesday, 29 November 1854, was the day of the mass meeting to hear the report of the delegation sent to Governor Hotham. All the diggings on the gold fields were deserted. The miners were taking part in the most important assembly of people that had ever been seen in the colony. At two o'clock in the afternoon not fewer than 10,000 people were gathered. The report of the delegation, which had met with the Governor seeking the release of the three prisoners, was listened to in silence but with growing unrest." Raffaello himself, when asked to speak to the assembly, invited all his miner companions, "to salute the Southern Cross, refuge of all the oppressed of all the nations of the land..." Then a resolution was approved to burn all the licences and to free, with force if necessary, those who may be imprisoned as a result of this action. "A controlled volley of revolver shots took place and then there was a fine bonfire of licences."

On Saturday evening, 2 December, Raffaello Carboni tried to see Peter Lalor, but this was not possible as Lalor was exhausted and was resting for a couple of hours. So Carboni went to his tent and threw himself down on his stretcher and slept. "I awoke at dawn on the Sunday of 3 December. The light was still pale. A volley of muskets, the sound of a bugle, a loud command of 'Forward' and then another volley of shots reached my ears in the space of two minutes. I perceived then that about 300 red jackets were advancing along the valley on the west side of the barricade. The shots were whistling all around my tent. I leapt from my camp bed and sheltered behind a stack of bricks that overlooked the barricade and through a gap I was able to observe the scene. I estimated that the armed miners could not total more than 150 at that moment." (27)

"I think," writes the American author, Mark Twain, "that it could be called the most beautiful event in the history of Australia. It was a revolution, very small in size, but big politically. It was a struggle for freedom; it was a fight for a principle, a stand against injustice and oppression." (28)

Henry Lawson sums up the revolution at the Eureka Stockade in the following manner. "Our companions died for a cause that was won by the battle they lost." (29)

Licences were abolished and a tax on the exportation of gold was introduced. A new regulation was adopted, called the "Miner's right", that not only gave the miner the right to dig for gold but also gave him the electoral vote.

Raffaello Carboni was exonerated from the charge of treason and freed from prison.

Geoffrey Serle, of Monash University, presenting Carboni's book writes, "*The Eureka Stockade* constitutes an object of curiosity among historical Australian documents. There is no question of its importance. It is a most complete account by a participant at a dramatic event, important and tragic, in the history of Victoria and of Australia, and it was written by a man who had just been acquitted of the charge of treason." (30)

Carboni returned to Italy and died in Rome in 1875.

THE ITALIANS IN NORTH-EAST VICTORIA

Several Italians from the first intake of migrants established themselves in localities to the North-East of the colony, including, between the Murray and Owens rivers, towns like Beechworth, Bright, Chiltern, Rutherglen, etc.

The chronicles of the time relate how, even in those areas, the first alluvial gold was found in February, 1852. It was discovered by a certain James Meldrum, a young lad who was caring for the flocks of sheep belonging to a pioneer of the place, David Reid. (31)

By November of the same year there were already 1,200 gold diggers in the area. They continued to arrive every day in their hundreds, in an uninterrupted procession. They were "Irish, Scotch, English, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Polish and even Chinese". (32)

The first group of Italians, from what we have been able to ascertain, was mainly composed of Valtellinesi from Tirano and Piedmontese from Grosotto. During the 1800's others were added, having arrived through the usual slow but continuous chain of migration which attracted relatives and fellow townfolk. Some of these took up the search for the yellow metal, others preferred to find work with the mining companies, still others dedicated themselves to wood cutting and to the production of charcoal. There was a pressing demand for charcoal as it was used for the purifying of gold and for the making of various utensils used by the gold miners.

The majority, however, as soon as they possibly could, as we will see in more detail later on, acquired large plots of bushland and transformed these into flourishing agricultural holdings.

A journalist, a certain John Stanley James, correspondent for *The Argus*, when roaming through the more remote places in the Colony, met some of these Italians and described them thus, "When I arrived at Harrietville, near Bright, I met three Italians, Giacomo, Bernardo and Battista. They were splendid examples of men, like the Piedmontese from the lower Alps, robust mountaineers, with robust skills, with broad chests, clear and flashing eyes, real pictures of health, of strength and perseverance. From the snows of the Pennine Alps they have inherited their fortitude to bear with difficult climates and it is this quality that makes them laugh at the winter of Cobungra and Harrietville, which chases away many Englishmen, with chattering

teeth. These Italians are faithful and steadfast in their principles. We ought to welcome them as colonists. Leave them be so that they may settle down and unite themselves in marriage with the daughters of our land and they will bring a new element of strength to the future of Australia. Above all they are patient workers here, as in their native villages, where they worked for a "franc" a day.

"Giacomo and Battista do not look back to their homes with regret. They are happy here and are not interested in the politics of their Italy. They think that Australia is the land of all lands. Everyone, they say, is so kind to them; an Italian is considered the equal of any man.

"When the snow is too deep to be able to work the mines of Cobungra, some of them descend to the valley below and take on any available work. They always satisfy their employers, who often testify to their ability and industriousness and praise the steadfast qualities of the peoples of Northern Italy." (33)

THE ITALIANS OF WALHALLA

In January, 1863, a small group of prospectors, led by Edward Stringer, found alluvial gold on the bed of a river, in a mountainous and inaccessible area to the South-East of Melbourne, which they christened "Stringer Creek". Very soon, along the narrow valley and on the slopes of the mountains a new town was born - Walhalla.

In its 50 years of mining activity, the town came to have a population of about 4,000 overall. We find the first indication of the presence of Italians in the report of the first Italian Consul in Melbourne, Comendatore Biagi, and also reported by Dr. Giglioli, "...and so a Livornese was manager and shareholder of various mines at Walhalla in Gippsland." (34)

We do not know of any more but it is almost certain there were other Italians in the area. In the last decade of the century the news of their presence becomes plentiful and, at times, detailed. We must remember first of all Lou De Prada, son of one of the Italian Walhalla pioneer families, who wrote a pamphlet, *My Walhalla*, for the promoters of the historic museum at Walhalla, where documents, photographs, utensils used by the miners and dozens of other small items of great historic value are collected.

In a register with the title, *Pioneers, early residents; approx. 1860-1920*, among the home owners we find the following Italian families listed, with the profession exercised by the head of the family specified, "Stefano Armanasco, wood cutter, North Tram; Bertini senior, Left Town Hill; Boserini senior, wood contractor, Left Hand Branch; Boserini, wood contractor, North End; Giovanni Cabassi, wood cutter, North Tram; Campagnola senior, brewer and carrier, Left Hand Branch; C. Della Torre, wood contractor, Left Hand Branch; Pietro De Bondi, wood cutter, North Tram; Giovanni De

Prada, splitter, Mormon Town, Black Diamond; Giovanni Guatta, wine saloon and wood contractor; Luigi Paravicini, wood cutter, North Tram; Bernardo Plozza, wood cutter, North Tram; Giovanni Raffaele, miner, Left Hand Branch; Giacomo Rinoldi, miner, Left Hand Branch; Campagnola, wagons, Left Hand Branch; Pietro Pianta, wood cutter; Pietro De Campo; Rev Panelli, minister." (35)

In another register, dated 1908, we find once again, names of the residents of Walhalla and the trade they exercised. Among the Italians we find new names, while some of those that we have already met are missing. We see that, at that time, some had already left the mining district to dedicate themselves to other activities, and at the same time newcomers had arrived. We report here the further list of names we have collected, "Guatta, Giovanni, contractor; De Luis, contractor; Danesi, Domenico, splitter; Ferrari Bartolomeo, labourer; Molinari, Pietro, miner; Fantalini, Giovanni, splitter; Fermio, Filippo, labourer; Plozza, Bernardo, contractor; De Prada, Giovanni, splitter; Bertozzi, Luigi, splitter; Armanasco, Stefano, splitter; Ferrari, Andrea, splitter; Amedi, Giuseppe, splitter; Iseppi, Giuseppe, farmer; Bertino, Lidio, farmer; Merlo, Antonio, contractor; Rinaldi, Domenico, splitter; Battaglia, Roberto, splitter; Canali, Matteo, publican Hotel."

Finally, to complete the list, we find the following Italian names at the cemetery at Walhalla, with the date of death, "Guatta, B., 11/6/1905; Guatta, G., 12/2/1912; Guatta, G., 25/10/1912; Guatta, G., 25/6/1913; Guatta, Jack, 4/6/1940; Bonazzi, John, 1/2/1900; De Prada, Maddalena, 1/2/1900; Fermio, 16/12/1902; Fermio, 18/12/1902; Mastri, Robert, 5/7/1897; Plozza, Antonio, 20/2/1905; Pelassi, C., 1/2/1910."

There were also six who drowned in the Thomson River, 28 January 1900, Novali, Pietro (36 years); Ferrari, Giovanni (34); De Moroni, Giorgio (3); Pelusi, Giuseppe (27); Bonazzi, Luisa (13); Bonazzi Luigi (11).

The drowning of these six Italians was a tragedy that moved everyone in Walhalla and which is still remembered today. It happened in the late afternoon of 28 January, 1900. Four Italians were enjoying a boat trip along the Thomson River, when they saw Luisa and Luigi Bonazzi on the river bank. They invited them aboard and Luisa and Luigi accepted with the hesitation of those who have never climbed into a small boat. Unfortunately, after some minutes the overladen craft, which had quite low sides, sank in 17 feet of water. No-one could swim. Their bodies were recovered during the night and were taken to the home of Giovanni De Prada.

The following Tuesday the six coffins, followed by a long cortege, were taken in procession through the streets of the town, to arrive finally at the cemetery, which was situated on the steep slopes of the mountain where they were buried. During the inquiry that followed, the following persons were questioned, Giacomo Menghini, Roberto Geneoli, Bernardo Ferrari, and Carlo Pelusi. Domenico Maratti, leader of the Italian community, acted as interpreter. (36)

The Italians stayed at Walhalla, still in considerable numbers, until

1914, when the work in the mines came to a definite halt. After this time, some stayed in the area to look after their affairs, or because they had acquired some property on the surrounding tablelands. The majority, however, became scattered throughout Gippsland, from Warragul to Sale and from Morwell to Bairnsdale.

Even if many Italians in Victoria, like those in other colonies, poured into the gold fields struck by gold fever, we must bear in mind that, for most, this was a compulsory decision. On their arrival they were able to find work only in the mines, mostly as wood cutters and dealers in charcoal. In fact, for more than a century, it is precisely in the cutting of wood and the production of charcoal that we find many of them employed.

Before the discovery of mineral coal and gas, everything depended on wood. Therefore, throughout Australia in the last century, the wood industry has been not only important, but indispensable. Because of distance and the lack of means of communication, wood continued to be used, even after the discovery of mineral coal, because it was the most accessible and economic fuel.

"The Italians," writes De Prada, "came from Northern Italy, where many of them had worked as wood cutters. It could be that many of them were recruited by the owners of the mines precisely because they were woodsmen. Very probably they came to Australia of their own initiative, with the aim of making a better life in a new and rich country." (37)

John Adams, in his book, *Mountain gold: a history of Baw Baw and Walhalla country*, endeavours to throw a bit of light on the lives the Italians lead. Because of the constant and pressing need for wood, the mine authorities first had a railway line constructed to transport the wood. By 1890 this railway line was wending its way for several miles through the heart of the mountains to reach the bushland situated far from the town.

At the same time the mine owners engaged many Italians as wood cutters. "The sound of their singing," writes Adams, "was often deadened by the explosions at the mines. Moreover, they took part in the social life of the town. They were well respected and usually very industrious. For the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, in 1897, a great picnic was organised at Walhalla, with the traditional parade, in which a large group of Italians, with their own band, took part. In this town they were well respected and popular too, because they were providing the population not only with wood, but also with vegetables and other products." (38)

Even at the start of this century some Italians continued to work in the mines. However, quite a large number dedicated themselves to the hard work of cutting wood, to provide wood for the mines, for domestic purposes, and in particular, for the construction of the growing railway network.

Between the two wars, therefore, the wood cutters played a major role in preparing the vast lands for agricultural use, after having freed them from the grip of the forests.

NOTES

- 1 - Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age - A History of the Colony of Victoria, 1851-1861* - Melbourne University Press, 1968, p. 9.
- 2 - William B. Withers, *The History of Ballarat*, F.W. Niven, 1887, pp. 18-20.
- 3 - *ibid.*, p. 21.
- 4 - *ibid.*, p. 21.
- 5 - Nino Randazzo, *Breve Storia degli Italiani in Australia*, (Ricordo del Santuario di S. Antonio e dei Fondatori, Melbourne, 1969), p. 65.
- 6 - *ibid.*, p. 65.
- 7 - E. Giglioli, *Viaggio intorno al mondo della pirocorvetta*, Magenta, Milano, 1875, p. 67.
- 8 - Jay Monaghan, *Australians and the Gold Rush* - University of California Press, 1966.
- 9 - *ibid.*, p. 218.
- 10 - D.R.G. Packer, *Italian Immigration into Australia* - (Thesis) University of Melbourne, 1947.
Note: The historians rarely report numbers, they use words like "many", "a large number of Italians", "a large Italian community", "groups of Italian migrants", "several Italians".
- 11 - James Flett, *The History of Gold Discovery in Victoria*, Melbourne, 1870, p. 403.
- 12 - A.J. Williams, *Maldon and the Tarrangower Diggers* - Ballarat, 1953, p. 55.
- 13 - *ibid.*, p. 56.
- 14 - *ibid.*
- 15 - Frank Cusak, *Bendigo: A History - 1873*.
- 16 - William B. Withers, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
- 17 - James Flett, *op. cit.*, pp. 204, 385.
- 18 - Enrico Giglioli, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
- 19 - James Flett, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
- 20 - *The Age*, 17-3-1983, Gold dig in the nature strip.
- 21 - J.R. Gray, *History of the Wedderburn Goldfields* - Edited by Frank Cusak, 1981, pp. 33, 53.
- 22 - *ibid.*, pp. 21, 52-3, 66.
- 23 - *History of Hepburn* - Typed paper, prepared by A. Ferrari and presented to Miss Riva Pozzi of the Historical Society of Hepburn.
- 24 - *The Age* 15-4-1982: Margaret Jones, interview with Joseph Andreallo.
- 25 - Frank Cusak, *op. cit.*
- 26 - K.N.M. Adams, *Australia: Colonies to Commonwealth, 1850-1900*, Melbourne, pp. 17-24.
Raffaello Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*, Melbourne Univ. Press, 1969.
Frank Cayley, *Beneath the Southern Cross*, Sydney, 1966.
- 27 - *ibid.*
- 28 - A.J. Grassby, *Eureka: Saga of Australian History*, p. 11.
- 29 - *ibid.*
- 30 - G. Serle: introduction to "The Eureka Stockade", p. IX.
- 31 - Fr. Leo Lane, *The History of the Parish of Beechworth 1854-1978*, Armadale, Vic., 1978, p. 14.
- 32 - *ibid.*, pp. 14, 21.
- 33 - John Stanley James, *Vagabond Country*, Melbourne, 1981, pp. 18-19.
- 34 - Enrico Giglioli, *op. cit.*, p. 798.
- 35 - *Walhalla: Pioneers and Early residents approx. early 1860-1920*, as at May 1964 - Recorded by Walhalla Improv. League.
- 36 - Lou De Prada, *My Walhalla*, Morwell, 1978, p. 16.
- 37 - *ibid.*, p. 7.
- 38 - *ibid.*

THE ITALIAN RURAL COMMUNITIES OF 12 – VICTORIA

In the preceding chapter we told the story of the Italians in the gold fields and also of their contribution as workers under the authority of the mining companies, or as employees in independent works which were connected with the mines.

In this chapter we want to trace the history of other Italian communities who settled in the agricultural districts of the colony, during and after the period of the gold rushes.

We wish to state at the outset and emphasise the fact, that the rural migrant played an important role, economically and culturally, in this country. In the dismal solitude of the inland, in a land apparently inhospitable, the first colonists, using the materials at hand – trees, clay, rocks – were able to produce a veritable richness of functional and useful articles, either made by hand or with simple tools and all devised to improve living conditions and to colonise for the first time, the land of this new continent.

At that time, rural life in Australia depended largely on the creative ability of the man and on his capacity to resolve immediate and practical problems. In a short time these pioneers became experts at improvisation. Not one of them would have hesitated to make himself a gate or a door, an enclosure or anything whatsoever in wood, or to devise a mechanism for opening or shutting a door, to carry water where it was most needed, or to make a wooden plough to till the soil. They were able to do everything themselves, to make ropes, to transform tree-trunks into drinking vessels and into water troughs for domestic animals, to construct rudimentary windmills to extract water from wells, to make utensils and even "bocce" for the ever popular game of bowls of a Sunday afternoon. (1)

Faced with the stark reality of the sterile diggings and with the hard work that, after long months, left them with little or no profit, many Italians left the mines. Some went on to cut wood in the bush or to produce charcoal, while others dedicated themselves to the building trade or to small commercial ventures. Most returned to agricultural pursuits. Many did not leave their present places, "that with their water courses, were so reminiscent of those left behind in Italy and Switzerland", but several moved from one place to another, because they were unable to find the well-being they were seeking. (2)

In the Ballarat area, around Daylesford, Yandoit, Hepburn, Maldon, Castlemaine, up to Bendigo and Ararat, much evidence is found of their presence. Still today, one can find evidence of their skills and even meet their descendants. "Near Daylesford," wrote Andrew Garran in 1886, "in a place known as Hepburn Springs, there are some houses inhabited by Italian migrants, coming from Lombardy, Lake Maggiore and from Canton Ticino." (3)

"This town of Daylesford," writes Oscar White, "was founded in the days of the gold rush and there are still some traces of the architecture favoured by the miners and Italian colonists and by those from Canton Ticino." (4)

Already the first Italian Consul to Melbourne, Comm. George Biagi, in his first report to the Italian government in 1896, when writing on the conditions of the Italians in Australia, wrote, "... there is also among the agriculturalists whom I've met at Yandoit in the centre of Victoria, a family from Bergamo who have built a colonial house in this distant land clearly in the Lombardy style." (5)

Also, some years later, on 10 April, 1877, Ferdinando Gagliardi, in one of several letters he wrote to the *Gazzetta d'Italia* said, "I was treated splendidly by Mr Fabrizio Crippa who has property and a beautiful vineyard at Hepburn, a town two miles from Daylesford. Here you see many houses of Italians who have been here for a long time. I knew many of them in that area and they used to besiege me with many questions. They never tired of seeking news of their dear, distant, homeland." (6)

"These pioneers from Piedmont and Lombardy," added Andrew Garran, "still kept dear the memory of their land of citrus and bilberries and their hearts warmed to the stranger who spoke to them in their own language, of their Lombardy plains and of the beautiful shores of Lake Maggiore." (7)

The family of which the Consul George Biagi spoke, was that of Carlo Gervasoni of Yandoit, a town which remains as a monument to the capacity for work and to the adaptability of those pioneers of ours. Yandoit is an aboriginal word which means, "where the parrot makes his nest".

One of the first Italians to settle at Yandoit, as reported in a leaflet for tourists by the "Spa centre: Tourist Development Association", was the Italian, Carlo Gervasoni. After having resided for a certain time at Hepburn, Carlo transferred to Yandoit, because the countryside resembled Italy more. Here he built a grand house, of two floors, in the European style. This house is still standing and can be visited today.

Then Carlo was joined by his brother, Luigi. Luigi built his house directly opposite his brother's. Today his grandson Vincenzo lives there with his sister. The house was called "Bergamo" from the name of the city from which they had migrated. The Gervasoni family was not interested in gold. They were agriculturists and they had rendered their farm self-sufficient. They produced their own brand of butter,



The colonial house of Gervasoni, a reminiscent style of Lombardy

Their pastime: the traditional match of bowls





Daylesford: the main street

A group of Italians, north-east of Victoria



which they marketed under the name of "Acorn", their own honey and various other products that they sold to the residents of the place. In fact, almost all the Italians in those places had created for themselves their own little world and had made themselves independent in almost everything. They cultivated grain, vegetables, vines and fruit trees; they made their own bread, wine, butter and cheese. Vincenzo Gervasoni's property consisted of 700 acres of land with several houses, which had belonged to the first colonists of the area. The production of wine was a great affair for those colonists and for the town of Yandoit. Every farm had its vines and every colonist bottled his own wine. In the area about 2,750 gallons of good wine were produced and about the same of brandy, most of which was exported to Ireland.

In 1901 the taxation officers swept through the area and confiscated everything that related to the production of brandy and also the brandy itself! But the news of their coming travelled ahead of the officers, so that the colonists had time to stow away almost all the machinery and products in a safe place. Vincenzo Gervasoni relates, too, the story of that terrible day when 45 gallons (about 180 litres) of good brandy had to be thrown away. "Tears of blood were shed that day," recalls Vincenzo, "especially because the brandy was 75.1% alcohol."

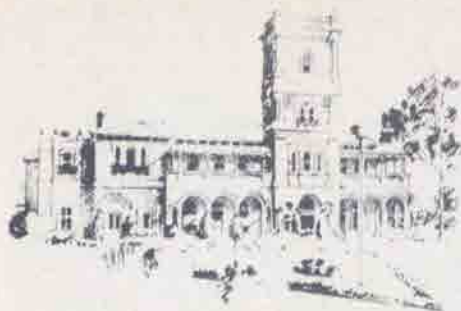
A favorite pastime of those first Italian colonists at Yandoit consisted of the traditional game of "bocce". Vincenzo Gervasoni still keeps a small private museum, in which he has collected many relics of the past. In it can be seen objects that range from the rudimentary machinery for the distilling of brandy to the lamps; from the bottles to the "bocce" and many other primitive utensils for work and for cooking. (8)

The mobility of these migrants was extraordinary. Before establishing themselves definitely in a place, they would move from one place to another in the colony, perhaps driven by the needs of their particular trade or by news and rumours promising easy earnings elsewhere.

Early in 1860 the three brothers, Giuseppe, Pietro and Stefano Saligari arrived from Tirano (Sondrio). Stefano died soon after his arrival in Australia, at the young age of 17 or 18 years. Pietro moved to North-East Victoria, to Mudgegonga, near Stanley and bought some land from a certain De Piazza. On this land the first little school at Mudgegonga was built. Giuseppe, instead, stayed in the district of Castlemaine, where in 1870, at 23 years of age, he married Mary Kane. After that he bought a large farm in the district of Cavendish, 16 miles north of Hamilton, where today his descendants still raise numerous breeds of cattle and sheep.

It appears from the shipping list of that year, that three of their cousins, Giuseppe, Martino and Pietro Pianta arrived in 1860 on the ship, *Red Jacket*, and that they also were from Tirano.

According to the grand-daughter, however, such data would render the grandfather too old. It would be that, in reality, they had arrived



The castle constructed by an Italian craftsman in 1876



The Plozza family at Waltham

The Cavicchiolo family: Fiorenzo and Maria with their five children



when they were much younger, returning after some years for a visit to their homeland. Then in 1874 they set out on the *Northumberland* for Australia. Once in Australia they didn't settle in the same district. Like many others, they too, passed from one job to another and from one place to another.

Martino headed towards the western part of Victoria. He worked near Stanwell, where he married. He bought his first farm at Rietella and then a second at Concongella, where he also built a house. These properties are still managed today by Martino's grandchildren, all resident in the same house built by the grandfather. Martino died in St. John of God hospital at Ballarat on 29 April, 1943.

Giuseppe was the one who moved most often from one part to another part of Victoria. He spent two years at Spring Hill, two years at Bullarook, one and a half years at Walhalla, 25 years at Goldsborough and eight years at St. Arnaud. He died in 1917 at the age of 72. From his marriage to Anna Fraser he had four daughters and two sons, who are scattered in Western Australia, Queensland and Victoria. (9)

Another mobile migrant was Andrea Della Vedova and he too, was from Tirano where he was born on 28 March, 1848. He was the first of the family to leave for Australia. Later on his sister, Caterina, arrived, married to Pietro Omodei and mother of two children. She came to join her husband who had migrated seven years earlier in 1885. In Australia another five children were born. Today their descendants still live around Newcastle, N.S.W., and in various parts of Queensland.

Andrea had embarked from England on the S.S. *Somersetshire* on 30 March, 1870. Of the 193 passengers, 28 were Italians. On his departure Andrea, then a 21 year old, had declared his profession to be a "gold digger". The ship arrived at Port Melbourne on 30 June, 1870, after 90 days of sailing.

From Melbourne Andrea took himself to Ballarat and then to Creswick. As his first job he made charcoal in the bush at Bullarook, at eight shillings a week. From Bullarook he went to Chinaman's Flat, near Maryborough and then to Alma where he cut wood in the bush for two years. When he heard of the discovery of gold in Queensland, he left that job and embarked on the first ship headed north.

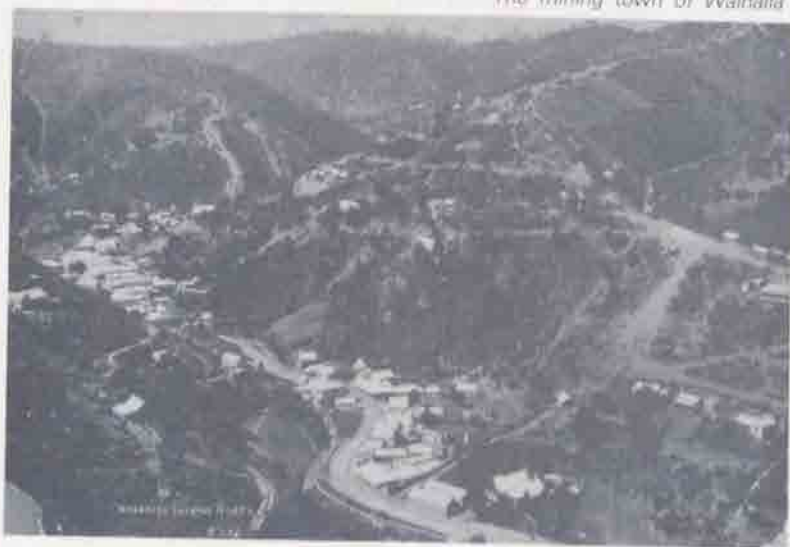
When he arrived at Sydney he heard bad news of the gold diggings in the north, so, without pausing to think twice he re-embarked on the first ship headed back to Melbourne and returned to cutting wood at Maryborough. On 14 February he married Catherine Saig Wilson in the Catholic Church at Carisbrook. The two witnesses were Pietro Togni and Angelina Canale. Soon after the wedding he moved to Goldborough where he commenced to supply the *Queen's Birthday* and other mines with wood.

Then because his lease for cutting wood at Homebush and Avoca had run out, he returned to Alma, where he too, tried his luck at gold digging, working on a mine 300 feet deep, but with little success. He



An Italian tobacco cultivator of Myrtleford plains

The mining town of Walhalla



then moved with his family to St. Arnaud, where he commenced to supply wood to the local saw-mill, and, having won the lease, also to the famous *Lord Nelson* mine. Finally he bought a farm at Millet, two miles from St. Arnaud, where on 1 April, 1937, Catherine died at 76 years of age and on 17 July, of the same year Andrea died too, at the age of 89. Their 16 children, 11 girls and five boys survived them. (10)

Another nucleus of Italians settled in the district of Maldon. Convinced that the place offered good possibilities for establishing a flourishing wine industry, they started energetically to plough the land and to plant several thousand vines. Unfortunately, a prolonged drought frustrated their initiative. However, they did not leave the district. On the contrary, they took an active part in the local community, taking part in musical groups or entertaining as wandering musicians and harpists. (11)

One of these Italians, a certain Les Merlo, the son of a miner, was born at Maldon in 1906. He was one of 10 brothers. His grandfather had been a "brave Italian who had come to the colony to try, among other things, life as an agriculturist". (12)

A traditional pride of Maldon is its brass band. Les Merlo took part in it and for more than 50 years played first the cornet and then the euphony or bass trumpet.

Another, a certain Giovanni Merlo, from Turin, perhaps from the same family, arrived in Australia in 1861. He successfully tried his luck in the mines at Ballarat and then married an Englishwoman, Mary Tuddenham, in 1867. He then moved to Alexandra in North-East Victoria. Here he opened a mine at Puzzle Ranges. With the takings from the mine he bought 350 acres of land, which he cleared, transforming part of it into pasture and part into a vineyard. He also built his house from tree trunks and bark. Giovanni Merlo died, after a long illness, in 1912. His property was sold in 1924 and later flooded by the waters of the artificial lake Eildon. In the drought seasons his house appears still solid, even if it has lost its bark roof. (13)

At Sandy Creek, in 1860, a certain Antonio D'Orsa bought a large piece of land and built a beautiful stone house on it. In 1864 he bought a second plot of land and in 1871 he added a third.

The experience of the Italians at Ararat, or more precisely at Rhymey, was somewhat different. The brothers, Pietro and Giovanni Pola, established themselves in this area, commencing by ploughing the land and cultivating grain, planting orchards and vines. Within a period of 10 years their vineyards were amongst the best known in the district and in full production. (15)

A curious thing happened to one of the Pola brothers in 1886. During the night he heard someone in his fowlyard. He rose and through the glass of his window, saw two Chinese stealing his fowls. He crept out very stealthily and managed to seize one of them, tied him up, locked him in the cellar and returned to bed. In the morning when he went to fetch the fellow and hand him over to the police, he saw that not

only had the Chinese disappeared, but also his collection of bottles of wine and spirits was gone. The Chinese had been freed through a tunnel that his companions had dug during the night. (16)

John Stanley James, the "roving English journalist", as he liked to call himself, recalls having met at Ararat, among other Italians, an "old revolutionary, a certain Jaco Marocco from Piedmont, who had fought with Garibaldi in the days of the Roman Triumvirate". (17)

MERCHANTS AND ARTISANS

The presence of hundreds of thousands of gold diggers in Australia brought a building boom not only to Melbourne and Sydney, but also to the provincial cities, giving rise to numerous building firms.

One of the first to be formed in the gold-mining areas was that of the "Stambuco and Fortuna Co.", of which two works are remembered in particular – the construction of a church at Bendigo in 1857 and of another at Ballarat. When the chronicles speak of Stambuco they always refer to him as "Signor Stambuco". Afterwards, together with Spadacini, Stambuco became the building appointee of the Catholic Bishop of Goulburn in New South Wales.

Another two builders of houses were Battista Righetti and Sartori. While Sartori was known as a bricklayer, Righetti was renowned as a versatile architect, an entrepreneur and also as a chief builder.

Righetti made a gift of 90 acres of land on which the first Catholic Church at Yandoit was built, "the littlest church in the Colony of Victoria, built on the largest piece of land". (18) Righetti was also the treasurer of the committee for the construction of the church. (19)

Also, when it was decided to build a new church at Daylesford, the treasurer of the committee for the church was another Italian, a certain Lavezzolo.

Another well-known Italian family, most probably of Milanese extraction, who had pushed towards the west in the Ararat district, was that of Giorgio Grano. Even Grano had preferred, when faced with the uncertainty of finding gold, to dedicate himself to the more secure and continuous work of the building trade. Because of his varied interests, his name appears often in the local newspapers of the time.

In 1858 the local priest, Fr Barret, called a meeting of the Catholics of his vast Parish for the constitution of a committee for the construction of a new church. The following were elected – G. Grano, D. Murphy and M. O'Callaghan. The church, dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, was consecrated by Bishop Goold on 7 February, 1864.

Grano also built the first school at Ararat and the hotel of the town. Today the place is still marked by a vine that Grano planted. Giorgio

Grano had two sons, Teodoro Giorgio who, in 1867, became a lawyer and practised as a barrister and solicitor in his city for more than 40 years, and Tommaso, a hotel proprietor. Tommaso is remembered because, in the long dispute about the closing times of hotels, he along with others, refused to close his hotel on Saturdays. (20)

Another builder in the area was Antonio Davico, remembered for having built Antonio Gervasoni's house, which is still in existence today. (21)

Towards the second half of the 1850s, Alfredo Mantegnani appeared for a short time on the scene at Ballarat. He had arrived in Adelaide in 1849 from Mandrisio (Canton Ticino), where his family had moved from Lombardy. This was after the popular insurrection in Milan on 10 April, 1814, during which the Minister for Finance, Prina, was assassinated. On 25 June, 1855, Alfredo married the youngest daughter of Robert and Mary Thomas, founders and owners of *The Observer*, the first newspaper of the Colony of South Australia.

In Melbourne, meanwhile, an American firm called Cobb commenced to import light-weight carriages, very different from those then in use in Australia, which offered a very rapid means of transport.

Alfredo Mantegnani was appointed general agent for Cobb. He left Adelaide and moved with his wife and two children to Melbourne and then to Ballarat. Towards the end of 1859 he became ill and his illness was deemed incurable. He left everything and returned to Adelaide where he died in 1861 at the age of 32.

Some of the Italians and Ticinesi, when the opportunity arose, dedicated themselves to commercial activities. It is interesting, leafing through the *Almanac of Daylesford* of 1889, to find in the yellow advertising pages, various Italian names, which not only testify once again to the Italian presence in the district, but also demonstrate how they had established themselves successfully, in the space of a few years. Let us look at some of them:-

A certain P. Foletti is the proprietor of the Jockey Club Hotel, where the "best wines and spirits" are sold. The hotel is even provided with stables for horses. Maurizio Sartori is the incumbent of an hotel, of a general store, including a butcher's shop where the "best meats," foods of every type, oils and preserved goods are sold.

Giacomo Monico is the baker and pastry cook of the town and his bread is of the "best quality". Moreover, he supplies bread and cakes for special functions, trips and "tea meetings".

B. Quarti sells shoes and work boots of every size, type and quality. As well, he has renewed his stock with new styles of shoes for women, children and young people. Luigi Togno is the owner of the hotel, "Star".

Finally, in the list of Italian names, inserted in the yellow pages of the *Almanac*, there is also the name of an accountant, a certain Giacomo Menotti, who works on a commission basis and is the debt collector for debts in the districts of Daylesford, Hepburn and Benerdin. (22)

THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY IN NORTH-EAST VICTORIA

With the discovery of the first gold nuggets in the north-east of the Colony in February, 1852, the usual "gold rush" broke out. Gold diggers of 12 different nationalities were noted on the gold fields. Among them several Italians were also mentioned.

Very probably, Gaetano Pastorelli was among the first to arrive in the area. As reported in *The Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, on 20 July, 1857, he married Catherine Boylan in the Catholic church at Beechworth. Two years later another Italian, a certain Giacomo Bertane from Mondovì Breo (Cuneo) married Margaret McMahon of Newmarket, County Clare, Ireland, in St. Joseph's Church. (23)

Leafing through the *Register of Baptisms of the Parish of Beechworth*, which at that time was quite vast, numerous other Italian names are found. Such documents are important because they demonstrate first of all how the Italians, having arrived as bachelors, married local girls and settled permanently in the district. Moreover, they show us how the Italians, as they gradually established themselves, moved towards the best localities. For example, the first son of the Pastorellis was born at Nine Mile Creek on 6 July, 1858. Maryanne was born at Stanley on 9 April, 1863 and James was born at Frenchman's Creek on 28 March, 1868. The first-born of Antonio Dominici (or Dominici) and Mary Gallagher, named Salvatore Giuseppe, was born at Buckland on 18 October, 1864. James, instead, was born at Moses Creek on 19 August, 1866, while Mary and Margaret were born respectively at Crowler Creek on 16 June, 1869 and at Crowler on 28 February, 1871. (24)

Other Italian names that are encountered often in the Beechworth area are those of Giuseppe and Bernardo Costa, Giacomo Zanotto (or Zanetti), Robustelli, Stella, Cunio, Battista Donchi, Pini, Trinca, De Piazza, De Campo, Garrone and Cramerì. Many of these came from Grosotto (Sondrio) and from Tirano and they were inter-related by marriages. (25)

It is exciting when a piece of information is found, to be able to reconstruct with a certain exactness the life of those pioneers of ours, and through their changes of abode and their various jobs, to appreciate their courage.

We see a splendid example of this in Battista De Piazza. Having left Grosotto at only 21 years of age, he embarked at Genoa in 1863 with two cousins, Trinca and Robustelli, on the *S.M. Vittorio*. The voyage lasted three months, during which time they received food rations. Battista did not drink tea and so saved his rations and when he disembarked in Australia he sold them in Melbourne. They were the first few shillings he earned in Australia. Not finding work in Melbourne, Battista, his two cousins and a fellow from his home town who had travelled on the same ship, walked from Melbourne to Wandiligong, a distance of 170 miles, where they found work in a gold mine.

After a little while Battista became a carter and was put to transporting quartz from the mine to the crusher, on account of a certain Wallace. As soon as he could afford it he bought a horse and cart and worked for himself. When he left the mines at Wandiligong he went to work in a saw-mill at Ovens. From Ovens he moved to Beechworth, where, with another two Italians he bought a vineyard. Having put aside enough money, he sold his share of the vineyard and bought a saw-mill, in partnership with Trinca, his cousin.

The saw-mill, situated in Stanley, turned out to be a real bargain. Later, however, after a disagreement with his cousin, Battista also acquired the other share and took as partners, Cramer and Pietro Pini. On 11 October Battista De Piazza married Caterina O'Brien in the Catholic church at Beechworth.

The partnership with Cramer and Pini continued for some time. They sold wood in Newtown, Beechworth, Basin Creek and Whorouly. Not satisfied, Battista acquired a second saw-mill on his own account. In the meantime a good opportunity came his way and he bought 320 acres of land at Mudgegonga, where in 1878, he built a house which he called "Orange Grove".

Other Italians who had bought land in the area at one shilling an acre, were Stefano Galigari, Giuseppe Osmetti and Pietro Pini. Pini's land was bordered by that of Battista. Battista and Caterina had 14 children, who, though still of tender age, helped their parents to clear the land, erect fencing and milk the numerous cows. In those days machines did not exist to separate the cream from the milk. The milk was left to settle over night and in the morning the cream was skimmed off. The De Piazza family produced 200 pounds of butter a week. Every week they loaded their cart full of vegetables, fruit, eggs and butter and went to the market at Beechworth.

De Piazza was the first in the area to buy a separator from Batran and Company. It was the famous "Alfa Lava", made in Sweden. Later he bought a butter-making machine, worked by hand. He even printed the paper that was used to wrap the small "pats" of butter, with the initials B.D.P. superimposed on an "M" for Mudgegonga. He also planted the first chestnut trees.

De Piazza possessed a vast orchard and orange grove, but cultivated a little of everything from maize to tobacco, from hops to various cereals and also produced a great quantity of hay. He raised draught horses and thoroughbreds and at the same time, dairy cows. He introduced short-horn cows. Finally, with other dairy farmers of the area, he pressed for the establishment of the "Myrtleford Butter Factory Cooperative Co.", which opened in 1903. He bought several farms in the area, including those of Saligari, Osmetti, McQuillions, Byers Murphy and "The Rock", becoming one of the biggest land-owners in the district.

De Piazza died in 1909 of pneumonia at the age of 66. His wife, Caterina, died in 1939 at the age of 87. They are buried, along with several of their children, in the cemetery at Myrtleford, but their

descendants continue to work the properties that once belonged to their grandparents. (26)

Already in 1868, other Italians resident in that district, had embarked on commercial activities. For example, of the two Costa brothers, one managed his own saw-mill and the other was a dealer in timber. A certain A. D'Alberti was the owner of a tailor's shop while Mr Cappalla had a shoe business. Alessandro Dell'Oro was a brick-layer and Pietro Garbalini worked in agriculture. (27)

On 28 January, 1887, Antonio De Campo arrived in Melbourne and he, too, came from Tirano. He had embarked at Brindisi on the ship, *Prensen Brem*. Having reached Beechworth, without losing time in looking for gold, De Campo commenced to cultivate vegetables, using Chinese labourers, and he also produced vegetable charcoal. Moreover, being an expert in agriculture, he planted vineyards and fruit orchards. In the space of a few years he became known as a producer of good wine. (28)

Other names of Italian families worthy of mention are those of Begon, Capriotti and Carroni, who dedicated themselves in a particular way to ploughing and cultivating the land. In the same places today one can still meet their descendants to the third and fourth generation. Some of them have held down and continue to hold down positions of responsibility, both in the civil and religious fields. For example, the grand-son of Antonio De Campo, Bishop F.P. De Campo, is the present day Bishop of Port Pirie.

North of Beechworth, between the two big rivers that have their source in the nearby mountains and which are the only ones to be covered with snow during winter, new towns were formed, like Chiltern, Rutherglen and Wodonga. To the south, along the fertile Owen's Valley, we find the towns of Wangaratta and Myrtleford, where the Italians continued to pour in, in the new century and in particular after the Second World War.

In the old cemetery of Chiltern, under crosses and headstones eroded by the years and by their abandonment, many of these Italian pioneers are resting. Here we read such names as Balsarini, Ioli, Mantelli, Fontana, Donchi, Ghisoni, Capini, Lanfranchi, Bagetti, Porta, De Piazza, Commensoli, Marengo and others.

We also wish to record here the two well known families of Tosi and Commensoli. Bartolo Commensoli emigrated from Edolo, Brescia, in 1880. After having worked for some years, he returned to see his family and then returned to Australia, bringing with him his two eldest children, Marco and Giovanni. In 1892 he brought out all the family, his wife Francesca, his three daughters, Antonia, Maria and Eve and his youngest son, Pietro.

For a time they settled at Mt. Pleasant on the South Coast of New South Wales. Then they moved to the mining district of Morwell in Gippsland, Victoria, where they remained for a brief period. They left Morwell and moved to the Chiltern Valley in the north-east of Victoria, where they worked in the gold mines. When he arrived at a

pensionable age, Bartolo retired to a small farm where he remained until his death.

His grand-daughter, R. Moroney, recalls even today, that before the construction of the Catholic Church at Chiltern, a priest used to come from Beechworth to celebrate Mass in Grandfather Bartolo's house, where all the Catholics of the area would gather.

"The Commensoli family was a good and solid family," Mrs Moroney recalls, "and the Italians of the district used to come often to pay them a visit. Among them were bachelors and married people with wives and children in Italy, who felt very much alone. They enjoyed immensely the family atmosphere with the grand-parents. The grandmother had the habit of reciting the family rosary every evening at a set time. It didn't matter who was in the home. She would announce, 'At this time we usually say the rosary. Those who wish may join with us, the others may leave until we've finished.' The grandmother was an exceptional woman, extremely charitable; who was like a 'bush nurse'.

"I remember very well a poor Indian who was camped near our house. He was seriously ill and had no-one to care for him. The grandmother looked after him, gave him food to eat and cared for him until he resumed good health."

Of the Commensoli children, Antonia married Joseph Ramus. From the marriage four children were born. Eva married Luigi Tosi from Alessandria and she had ten children. Two of these, Luigi and Francesco, became priests, who were all known in the Archdiocese of Sydney. John married Minnie and he too had ten children. The families moved to Carrimal in New South Wales in 1914, where one of the Commensoli sons became a priest in the Diocese of Wollongong. (29)

Some miles further north, in the district of Rutherglen, other Italians were dedicating themselves to cultivating vines - in fact, a certain G.B. Federli became manager of the "Rockbarton Vineyard" of Messrs. J. & C. O'Grady. Mr Federli was also the promoter of a movement for the creation of a school of viticulture in New South Wales, similar to the one conducted in the Colony of Victoria in September-October, 1888.

Mr Federli maintained and championed even with the State Wine Commission, the necessity of improving the quantity and quality of the vines to ensure a better wine production. He gave lessons in vine management in various localities. (30)

Originally G.B. Federli had migrated to New Zealand with the idea of creating a colony of 800 Venetian families, "very skilful agriculturists, active and sober beyond question" at Jackson's Bay in the district of Haast in the South Westland. These Venetian families at one time were to have settled in the Roman countryside but the project had fallen through and it was thought New Zealand would be a good alternative.

With this plan in mind Mr Federli visited Jackson's Bay in April, 1876, and together with the Italian Consul of Wellington, C.J.J. Johnston, he presented a detailed document of his agricultural projects to the Minister for Immigration. At the same time he presented an official request to obtain a grant of land along the Okura river. Mr Federli insisted on the necessity of utilising agricultural experts. "How can a boot-mender, a barber, a tailor or a sailor," he maintained, "put Jackson's Bay under cultivation with good results? It is impossible, absolutely impossible!" (31)

But the government of New Zealand preferred to find employment for those who were already living in the country. Consequently, in 1875, the government stopped all assisted immigration from Italy, Switzerland and Tirol and made the allotments of land at Okura available to any Italian already resident in the country and out of work.

The first group of Venetians set out for Wellington in July, 1875, and in March, 1877, found there were already 53 Italians, (27 men, nine women and 17 children) on the place. Their stay, which was hard and bitter, lasted only two and a half years.

Notwithstanding their stubborn determination, they found the land was not suitable at all for vineyards and orchards. A third of the land was marshy, the rest was virgin bush. The rains were too heavy and too frequent; moreover the colonists had to devote three working days a week to building roads for the Government, receiving as recompense for their work, only a quantity of food sufficient for their families, but no payment in money.

To add to their woes, the crops were going from bad to worse. In 1879 the agricultural experiment in New Zealand, so strongly supported by Federli, was wound up, and all the Italians together with a group of Poles and Scandinavians, left Jackson's Bay forever. It was as a result of this unfortunate experience that Federli transferred to Australia. (32)

In this century the Italian migration, particularly that which occurred between the two great world wars and also that which took place immediately after, was concentrated predominantly along the fertile valley of the Ovens River, in the localities of Wangaratta, Myrtleford and Bright.

Our fellow countrymen initially were attracted to settle in those areas because of the possibility of finding work in the tobacco industry. In fact, their hopes were not in vain as most of them dedicated themselves to tobacco production on their own properties. Their success was promising enough to constitute a most plausible reason to invite other relatives and friends from Italy to join them.

In 1922 Christopher Magnabosco, Giuseppe Piazza and Salvatore Sciuto arrived; in 1924 Remigio Cavedon and Carmine De Grazia arrived; from 1926 to 1930 Elio Corte, Antonio Vaccaro, Guido Dal Bosci, Alberto Michelini, Cobbe and Mattison arrived and later on Pasquale Tucci also arrived. These names are just some of the many. (33)

*A child from Walhalla goes to sell milk
before going to school*



The Friulian Artist, Frank Floreani

An inside view of the Catholic Church in Bainsdale, painted by Floreani



These Italian migrants were not coming exclusively from one region or from the north only. In the last wave of migration, in fact, almost all the regions of Italy were represented.

As with these recent arrivals, the process of settling was very similar to that encountered in other rural zones. The migrants commenced by working for a boss, almost as apprentices, then they started working in a crop-sharing system or in company with others and finally they bought a farm and became cultivators and producers of tobacco in their own right.

The story of Giuseppe Piazza is typical. He emigrated from the valley of Pasubio in Vicenza when in his early twenties and was joined by his family in 1924. After five years of living in Melbourne, at the start of the great depression he moved to Myrtleford. He started to cultivate tobacco in company with other Italians until in 1931 he acquired his own land.

It must be remembered that in those days the tobacco industry was still in its infancy on the Ovens Valley. In fact, during the decade preceding the arrival of our Italians, the number of tobacco growers had not ever been greater than 30 and the majority were Australian.

The Italians of the new migration understood immediately the productive capacity of the soil and the potential of the growing industry. So, as a result of their industrious efforts, in the space of a few years they managed to acquire the greater part of the land and the business. As old Mr Piazza affirms, "They collected the fruits of their labours when the tobacco 'boom' arrived after the Second World War." And in fact, it was due to the Italians that every year an average of £8,000,000 poured into the town of Myrtleford.

Giuseppe Piazza continued to plant tobacco until he retired. Today his son Dino, who married Maria Rigoni of Asiago and has five children, besides being a tobacco grower, is also a municipal councillor of Myrtleford and a member of the Control Commission for the water supply. For ten years he was also the head valuer of the production of tobacco in the State of Victoria. He is also involved in the cattle business and has investments in agricultural businesses in Victoria and New South Wales. (34)

ITALIANS IN THE GOULBURN VALLEY

The first traces of the presence of Italians in the Goulburn Valley came to light in the seventies of the last century. In September, 1875, for example, the first big transport barge was launched on the Goulburn river, 80 ft. in length, 22 ft. wide and 4 ft. deep. It could transport 50 tons in weight and carry up to 170 tons of wood. It was called *Emily Jane*, after the daughter of the builder, T. Buzza from Valtellina who was also the owner of the saw-mill at Echuca. (35)

In the following year, 1876, at Dhurringile, on a little hill, along the road that leads to Tatura from Murchison, a fine castle of 65 rooms was built by James Winter, owner of a large estate of approximately 250,000 acres of land. The small castle was built by Italian artisans. Unfortunately their names were lost in a fire. (36)

In 1876 a certain F. Egli, who lived six miles South West of Tabilk, received quite a deal of recognition at the annual agricultural show at Nagambie for his red wine. (37) Mr Talichino, instead, is remembered for having designed and built the imposing gates and many of the tombstones at a local cemetery, making it "a dignified final resting place". (38)

Other Italian names appeared in the tug o' war sports teams, include P. Venturini, Giuseppe Morelli, Giuseppe Guigetti and M. Salli. (39) In more recent times Giorgio Comi became the right arm of Erick Purbrick, owner of the winery, Chateau Tabilk, in the production of wine. (40)

The development of this first group seems to be largely due to the arrival in 1886 of a certain Battista Governa. After having worked as a shoemaker and having owned the Commercial Hotel at Nagambie, Governa changed trade and became a wood merchant and, as such, gathered together and gave work as woodcutters to many of his fellow Italian countrymen. Governa had a saw-mill where he produced sleepers for the State Railways and wood for burning for domestic purposes. For some years he provided wood for the engines which pumped water for drinking or for irrigation. Twenty tons of wood a month were consumed, but instead of asking the set price of nine shillings per ton he asked only five shillings and eleven pence a ton. Governa was also remembered for his steam boat, which he used for recreation on the Goulburn River and on the lake at Nagambie. However, misfortune struck and a fire destroyed Governa's shed and his supply of wood was burnt. (41) He then moved to the district of Leeton, New South Wales.

At the start of our century, thanks to the introduction of new and more practical systems of irrigation and to the consequent increase in agricultural holdings, the number of Italians in those districts increased rapidly. This was due in particular, to the increased cultivation of tomatoes and fruit trees and to the building of the "Shepparton Preserving Company".

Among others to arrive were Giuseppe Bertoli (1902), Attilio Coppede (1913) and Giovanni Piastrì (1913) who came from Tuscany. In the *Baptism Register of the Church of St. Brendan, Shepparton*, the names of many other Italian families are found, including Gervasi, Baldi, Cappelli, Reni, Buttacavoli, Costa, Tricarico, Zanelli, Della Vedova and Pianta. Some of these families have spread like a bush fire and are very numerous. For example, the Della Vedova family has now extended to the fourth generation, the Baldi family to the third, the Bau to the third, the Pianta to the fourth, the Anselmi and the Ferrari families to the fifth and the Boschetti to the fourth generation. (42)

Luigi Boschetti arrived from Tuscany in 1888. His wife, Clotilde Draghi, with their children, Dargenio, Luigi, Adalgisa and Basilio joined him in 1901 at Sandy Creek near Nagambie. In 1913 they shifted to Orrvale, near Shepparton. The Boschetti's had another three children, Albert, Jack and Rosa. Luigi, the second-born bought his farm in 1915 at Arcadia, where he lived with his family for 60 years. Luigi was very active in the local community. He was leader of a musical band for many years and distinguished himself as a violinist. He was a councillor of the community for more than 30 years and was mayor three times. Moreover, he was president of the fire brigade and of the school committee. He died at the age of 90, leaving ten grand-children and 16 great grand-children. (43)

After the First World War various other Italian migrants arrived in Shepparton and in other districts in the valley, from various Italian regions, such as Veneto, Calabria, Puglie, Campania. For example, there were already around 200 in the Tatura district and more than 200 in the Shepparton district. Several Italians found their way to the districts of Cobram and Kyabram.

The following names indicate the places of origin of some of the migrants, Collodetti, Magnabosco, Panozzo, Marino, Segafredo, Palma, Care', Rendina, Tassoni, Franze'. Many of these Italians, who arrived between the two world wars, found life in Australia very hard, particularly because of the shortage of work, because of racism and because of the language. "My arrival in Australia," Giuseppe Basile affirms, "was a tremendous disappointment. I had to be happy with irregular work out in the country."

"When I arrived in Melbourne in 1927," continues Fiorino Cavicchiolo, "I couldn't find work. On payment of five shillings a certain 'G.' who claimed to be from an employment agency, sent us - myself and three friends - to Junee, N.S.W., telling us that a certain fellow - he gave us the name of a big farmer in the place - had need of farm hands. We bought a train ticket and set out for Junee. When we arrived at the place we were told that the farmer had not requested workers and that he had no work for us. Thus we were isolated, without work, far from Melbourne, with little money in our pockets and very hungry. We put together our few shillings and the five shillings that the Catholic priest of the place gave us and managed to buy a train ticket for one of us to return to Melbourne in search of help.

"We remained at the place and slept under the stars, while waiting for help. When I returned to Melbourne after three months, I found work at Piangil, near Swan Hill, clearing land for 30 shillings a week. I worked for two months, then because the work had finished I had to return to Melbourne. After another two months of unemployment, I was sent to work in the salt flats at Kerang, earning four shillings a ton. Through that terrible work I managed to earn up to £2 a day. When that job was finished I was out of work for another month, then I was sent to work on the roads at San Remo (Phillip Island) for six months. Once again I was out of work.

"Finally my brother-in-law, who had come out with me and had found work as a farm hand on a farm at Benalla, called me and found work for me with W.J. Ginivan, another big farmer in the area."

Cavicchiolo worked with the farmer for six years. In the meantime he arranged for his fiancée, Maria Cecchin, to join him and then they married. "The property owner," recalls Cavicchiolo, "was a good man, but the rest of the family was very hostile and they ordered me round as if I was a slave. Not only did they never invite me into the house for a cup of coffee or tea during those six years, but they even forbade me to enter the garden enclosure around the house. Of a Sunday I used to go to the church on a bicycle and they in a car."

In 1933, Cavicchiolo, helped by his brother-in-law, bought a piece of partly cleared land in the hills at Boho South, far from civilisation, where he remained for 16 years. Finally, after the Second World War, with his wife and five children, Giuseppina, Johnny, Gina, Lina and Emma, he sold everything and shifted to Tatura, where he bought a fine dairy business. (44)

In the history of the town and of the district of Tatura, W.H. Bosse gives some impressions of the Italians who deserve to be remembered. "The Italians have earned a good reputation for hard work and scrupulous honesty. Already in the thirties they had cultivated tomatoes in the Tatura district whose quality was such that everyone was wanting the Italians as share farmers. The family was very important to the Italians and their devotion to the fifth commandment was an example to the society they had adopted.

"Numerous relatives and fellow countrymen took part in family celebrations, which helps to explain their apparent lack of interest, at times, in the affairs and organisations of the rest of the community. Nevertheless, in Tatura the Italians took part in football matches and other sporting events and were part of such organisations as the 'Rotary Club' and the 'Agricultural Society'.

"Family celebrations, like baptisms, birthdays and funerals are remembered for several years. Their weddings are spectacular and it is not unusual to have up to 500 guests. The church ceremony is not attended by everyone, but at the reception, where there is an extravaganza of food and drink, adults and children all take part. It is an emotional event that is not experienced or seen at an Australian wedding. The cost of a wedding is often equal to that of a house. Often, therefore, the newly married couple is obliged to live with the parents or parents-in-law. In the past, marriage expenses were often shared by both sets of parents, but today that practice is no longer common.

"The Italian children are dressed in lavish style and are photographed often by professional photographers. The parents expect much from the education of their children and consequently they often show a lively interest in their children's schooling. Finally, the houses of the Italians are decorated in a style contrary to Australian taste. They

make excessive use of wrought iron and of strong colours. Inside, the family photographs are displayed in great profusion in every room, together with holy pictures of the patron Saint of their village in Italy. Typically Italian vegetables are cultivated in the house gardens and are eaten after having been seasoned with olive oil. Their attachment to the soil brings its rewards." (45)

"The story is well known," writes P. O'Toole, "of an agriculturist who was incredulous when an Italian grower declared that he could extract a crop of tomatoes worth £1000 from an acre of land. An acre of land was measured out and the Italian obtained, in fact, a crop of greater value than £1000. Every inch of land had been used." (46)

THE ITALIAN COMMUNITIES IN GIPPSLAND

In the first decade of the new century, the mines at Walhalla, as elsewhere, started to slow down production and to dismiss workers. As a result the need for wood also lessened rapidly. Many Italians had to abandon the town. They lived in the area of Poverty Point, along the Thomson River, where they had built beautiful houses with stone fireplaces and had already cultivated beautiful orchards. They had also some cows and goats for milk, butter and cheese.

Only a few like the Guatta and De Prada families, remained at Walhalla or in the immediate vicinity. The way of living of these Italians, their adaptive spirit, their industriousness and frugality is conveyed to us by Lou De Prada, who spent his infancy at Walhalla, where he was born in 1904.

"My father ceased to be a wood cutter around 1907 to become a small agriculturist. We left our house at Poverty Point, near the Thomson River, to move to a cottage built on our small farm of four acres of fertile volcanic land on the steep slopes of Black Diamond Hill. My father had bought the lease for the farm for £50 from Johnny Miller, well known timber contractor. The land belonged to the mining company, however, and we had to pay 50 shillings rent per year. Our new house offered many more advantages than the one we had left. The little farm gave us the opportunity to keep two milking cows, two pigs, a little orchard and a vineyard. We dug a new cellar in the rock and erected a steel tank for the provision of water.

"With our production of milk, cheese, butter, meat, fruit and vegetables, we had little need of buying many things from the shop in Walhalla. Kerosene for the lamp, an occasional sack of flour and naturally some clothes, were the few things we had to buy. Of a morning, before going to school, we would sell milk to the families of the town at three pence a pint. My mother used to prepare bacon and butter for immediate use and would salt the remainder for our supplies.

"My particular task was to kill the wallabies, wombats and rabbits on our property. I would use traps to catch them. The wombats were boiled and given to the pigs, while the wallabies and rabbits were

roasted and provided good meat for the family. We also dug a well to provide sufficient water for an orchard. Although we were on the top of a mountain we found water at a depth of 15 feet. Our whole orchard was dug by hand and everyone helped. My father saved the seeds and also the potatoes for the following year. We would sow fodder crops to provide sufficient hay for the cows during winter. When it was time we harvested the crop, dried it and then transported it on our backs for 100 yards before placing it under the cover of the hay loft," said Mr De Prada.

He went on, "Our family lived a good life at Walhalla, a happy and healthy life. At that time the daily pay for a worker was 7/6 which could give the impression that the standard of living was very low. But goods didn't cost much and life was simple and healthy. There were few of today's commodities, such as radios, telephones, washing machines, cars, carpets and chinaware for the house etc. Money, on the whole, was used for essentials, for food and clothing.

"I left school in 1917. There was little work in the district, so I had to look elsewhere. I went to Maffra where I worked as a labourer on an agricultural property, milking the cows for ten shillings a week plus board and lodging. Milking the cows was a very hard job. Later I worked in a country area where they grew sugar beet and then in 1930 I commenced to plant my own on rented land. In 1942 I started my own dairy farm." (47)

Coming down from Walhalla, across a narrow and steep valley, one arrives in the heart of Gippsland, a vast region of rich, fertile lands, south-east of the city of Melbourne. Gippsland is also called the centre of the dairy industry in Victoria. In fact, most of the milk consumed in Victoria comes from that region.

The first Italians to arrive in Gippsland were those who left the mines at Walhalla, prior to the First World War. For example the Merlo family bought a shop at Bairnsdale; the Plozza and Biccia families bought agricultural farms between Moe and Trafalgar, while others were scattered in other agricultural areas in the various towns. Previously the Russo brothers had arrived in Bairnsdale. Following in the footsteps of their Aeolian countrymen, they opened the first fruit and vegetable shop and milk bar of the town.

"For us," writes Porter, "there wasn't any reason to go and spend our money on scotch broth, fried fish, brains cooked in breadcrumbs, roast pork or sweets of rhubarb and custard, all things that we could eat at home at any time of the year, without spending anything. There was, however, more reason to go to Russo's. First of all they were the only ones who had a "Soda Fountain". In the twenties, the "Soda Fountain" had the same attraction that espresso machines have in more recent times. The Russo shop was not the only one of its kind in the town, but theirs was the best equipped, the most picturesque and the most grandiose. There were more than 20 basket-ball sized "witchballs" hanging from the ceiling, which reflected the clients in a distorted fashion. But even these decorations were rendered less attractive by the presence of the "Soda Fountain". Because of this we

were attracted to the Russo shop, but not only for this reason. Their fine gelato also attracted us, made with bananas, maraschino, raspberries, crushed nuts, angelica and piled high with cream." (48)

In 1924-25 larger and larger groups of Italians started to pour into the district. They found work in the milking sheds, in rearing pigs, in growing crops of peas, beans, maize and hops. Others became horticulturists and at the same time bred cows. They grew such work intensive crops as peas, potatoes, onions, carrots, etc.

In her book, *The Pea Pickers*, Eve Langley relates the story of two sisters (herself and her sister) who assumed a different name and dressed themselves as boys. They ventured forth in Gippsland to earn their living, working where they could at various agricultural jobs, alone or among men. Later, one of the sisters wrote a book and themes in the book include work in the country, hunger and poverty, also meeting with people of different nationalities, their peculiarities, their solitude, their manner of dressing, their conduct, their way of living, their virtues and defects.

As we have stated, the authoress of the book was none other than one of the two girls and here we relate her comments on the style of dressing and conduct of some Italians, all bachelors with families in Italy. "They wore trousers of corduroy velvet, dark green socks, floral shirts and dark felt hats. Their beautiful shirts of soft, fine material enchanted us with their little red flowers and green leaves. We liked, too, those beautiful Latin faces, those innocent and ingenuous brown eyes and their courteous manners." (49)

These people, who were living in a primitive manner, were called "bushmen". In the evening, after a day of back-breaking work under the sun or in the rain and cold, they would come together to relax and ease the burden of nostalgia for their distant families, and also to fill in the long hours of solitude, far from civilisation.

"At the start of this cameraderie," continues the authoress, "it seemed we had gone down a step in the scale of our race. The Italians didn't mean anything to me, because I considered them to be primitive, children, animals or half dumb. I liked their faces, but the vague awareness of the racial difference kept me distant from them. The beauty of one called Antonio Crea was not the dangerous and melancholy beauty of the Indians, Kelly and Macca.

"The ones who were really livening up the gatherings of an evening, however, were the Italians. They alone were distinguishing themselves because they knew how to play various musical instruments, to sing and to entertain themselves with what little they had to hand.

"Peppino extracted an harmonica from his pocket and commenced to play as I've never heard anyone play, before or since that evening. He played folksongs, marches, Fascist songs, love songs and old dance music, all with the same free and easy style. He stopped only when he couldn't go on any longer because his throat was sore.

"One evening the owners of the farm invited the workers and friends to supper. When the meal was finished the usual improvised concert began and on this occasion, too, the principal actors were the Italians, in particular, Peppino and Domenico Gatto. Peppino took 'centre stage', smiling brilliantly and calling out in a loud voice. After him came a tall man, dantesque, refined, with olive skin and dressed in dark velvet. He lived alone in a little hut, built of bark from trees, not far from the owner's house. He came from Northern Italy and his family was still over there. For this reason, perhaps, the Italians took him to their hearts. 'Go on, Domenico,' said the owner, 'sing us a song!'

Without further ado, Domenico burst forth with aria upon aria, from Donizetti to Bellini to Mascagni and then going on to the best Neopolitan songs." (50)

At Bairnsdale, the Italians left not only the memory of their beautiful music, but also more durable things that can be admired even today.

The Monument to the Fallen of the First World War was made by an Italian sculptor by the name of Romanezi and the alfrescoes at the Catholic church of Santa Maria were done by the Friulian, Francesco Floriani. During the depression of the thirties, Floriani worked for six years to paint all the inside of the great church. It is not a Sistine Chapel, but it is the only work of its kind in Australia and is the goal of tens of thousands of tourists who come every year to visit it. (51)

Another two Italians, P. Danielo and S. Delmastro, are remembered because they lost their lives in the building of a water tower, 100 ft. high. They were buried together in the same grave on which was written, "Accidental Deaths, 27th May, 1927". (52)

During the years of the depression, some Italians worked with companies employed in the construction of roads. For example, the Pruscino brothers from Benevento, worked on the construction of the road to Omeo in the middle of the Australian Alps. "We worked like slaves," recalls Antonio Pruscino, "we were not even permitted to stop for a drink of water or to smoke a cigarette. One day a young Italian, who was not accustomed to working with a pick and shovel, arrived. By midday the palms of his hands were already raw. Seeing the young man in that condition, another Italian, who had worked with the company for some time, went to the head of the gang of workers and asked him to send the youth to the infirmary at the camp, or even to the hospital to be treated. In answer, the two were sacked on the spot." (53)

Another Italian community established itself in the Latrobe Valley, in particular, in the Upper Latrobe Valley. This community had its beginnings at the turn of the century and became firmly established between the two Wars. It developed even more after the Second World War.

After 1920, many Italians started to flock into the district to Narracan (now Trafalgar), and surrounds, but the Plozzo, Senini, Biccica and Della Torre families had already been in the area for 10 years or

more. Girolamo Dodorico and Francesco Luvison were the first to arrive at Narracan. Girolamo Dodorico was from San Quirico in Pordenone, in those times in the province of Udine, and he arrived in Melbourne in 1924. He found work in a stone quarry at Walhalla, then he went to a saw-mill near Erica where he rented some land and commenced to raise milking cows. In 1928, with the money he was able to put together from these first two jobs, he bought 228 acres of land at Walhalla, from another Italian, Carlo Della Torre, whom we have already met earlier. Before the war, Della Torre had originally bought 500 acres of land to the east of Narracan Creek.

Dodorico was the first to settle permanently to the east of Narracan Creek, better known today as Newborough. Here, in 1929, he built his first house near the Princes Highway, on land cleared from the forest. (54)

In the Depression, during the day he worked on the roads and in the evenings he milked the few cows he already had. He also worked at clearing his property.

Francesco Luvison, instead, worked first in a saw-mill for some time and then managed to get a job with the State Electricity Commission. (55)

A little later Parise, Padovan and Polo arrived, and another group of families, Turra, Faoro, Moscato, Grigoletto and others too.

While the Italians of the pre-war period were from Piedmont and Lombardy, these latest families were from the Veneto region. As a result of the laws governing sponsored migration, chain migration increased. Around some of these families the first nuclei were formed and these developed even further after the Second World War.

That is why almost all the Italians on dairy farms or mixed farms at Trafalgar today are from the Veneto region, coming almost exclusively from two localities, either from Altopiano or Asiago in the province of Vicenza or from Arsi in the Belluno province. The same goes for the Italians of Wonthaggi, while the Italian community at Bairnsdale is made up of some families from Benevento, Foggia, Calabria and Sicily, who arrived in Australia between the two World Wars. We had the good fortune to meet many of these pioneering Italian families and to listen first hand to their stories of many years ago.

Almost everyone in these country areas commenced their life in Australia doing casual work, sometimes after weeks and months of anxious searching, then moving on to agricultural work, either share farming or renting. Finally, by dint of hard and constant work, they came to own their own property. If they had no relatives or friends from their home town who might give them a hand or point them in the right direction, they had to make do by themselves. Mr Parise, who embarked unsponsored from Naples on the *Orvieto* on 11 February, 1923, had to provide himself with reserve funds of £25 sterling in case of enforced repatriation, after he had already paid £40 for the voyage.

After 40 days of travel he disembarked at the little port of Dickens, north of Innisfail and 40 miles from Babinda in North Queensland. He took lodgings at a boarding house run by Italians, but after a week, together with another Italian, he left to go and live in a hut. In this way he was able to save the 30 shillings a week that he would have paid for board. After two months of looking for work, he found a job as a cane-cutter on a sugar plantation, earning 17/2 per day. There, he cut cane for two years before leaving Queensland and moving to Victoria. He cut wood in the bush at Baliba, sleeping under the trees on a mattress of grass and branches of trees. He caught rabbits for an Australian land-owner for 30 shillings a week, plus the skins, board and lodging. He harvested grain with primitive machinery drawn by six or eight horses for £3/10/- a week.

On 27 April, 1927, he brought out his fiancée from Italy and they married at St. Ignatius' Church at Richmond. He moved to Colac, where he was engaged to spread tar on the roads, while his wife managed a boarding house. In the town there were already several Italians employed in the cultivation of onions and in other agricultural works, in government jobs or on a contract basis.

In 1928 Parise was sent to work on the roads in Gippsland at Yarragon, but the work did not last long. Then he and a nephew, G. Moscato, bought 94 acres of land owned by the State for £657 to be paid back over 30 years. It was almost all virgin bush and hilly into the bargain. Parise could buy the land only because he had already taken out Australian citizenship. He spent the next two years living in a hut with bag walls before the government built him a house.

After six years of work he parted from the nephew giving him £12. "If I had not had my wife to encourage me," said Mr Parise, while a tear trickled down his cheek, "I would never have been able to continue." (56)

Mr Parise's story is not unusual, rather it is the norm among many of our migrants. Even if migration has its rewards, the price that the migrant has to pay is high. Up to a certain point, the first migrant generation is always a stranger in his adoptive country. And the path that the migrant must pursue before reaching a certain level of success, is studded with enormous sacrifices, humiliations, discriminations and terrible loneliness.

The biggest sin that Australians have committed is that of never having understood the tremendous sacrifices that are imposed on the migrant and of having abandoned him in his attempts to get ahead. It is true that every migrant knows that he will encounter some struggles and that he will have to weigh what he has, whether it be little or much, against a future fraught with problems. He must leave his family and friends and even his national heritage. The pressures and uncertainties that he must confront and overcome in a new land, where he does not have family or friends to call on for support, require enormous reserves of resourcefulness and courage.

Migrants have made a great contribution to the Australian way of life. Until some years ago, the national diet consisted of fish and chips, bacon and eggs, smoked ham, steak and eggs. Hotels closed at 6.00 pm, fashion was basic. Newspapers were not published on Sundays, you could buy only one type of bread and that half baked. After 6.00 pm there was no social life to speak of. Not even sporting activities were permitted on Sundays and the picture theatres were closed. Even today if you eat out in a restaurant, in many cases, you must bring your own bottle of wine.

One of the first impressions that a migrant formed was that the Australian people were still searching for their own national identity. Whatever they did became a personal challenge. In their work or in their sport they had to be the best. It was not enough for an Australian to build a boat, it had to be bigger and faster than his neighbour's.

On the fringes of Gippsland there is a big area called Koo-wee-rup, which was once an enormous swamp. It was an Italian, Carlo Catani, who, at the start of the century, planned and brought about its drainage. In 1925, when the work was almost finished, Koo-wee-rup attracted many migrants, who commenced to buy properties abandoned during the preceding years of heavy floods. In 1926 an Italian bought land to the value of £50,000. In July of the same year a group of real estate agents reported that they had sold 28 farms to Italians in the Garfield-Bunyip area alone. It was said that such farms were worked on a communal system, that is, several families lived on each farm and while one or two men went ahead with the work of the farm, the others looked for work on other farms harvesting potatoes.

In January, 1927, about 400 Italian potato diggers were working in the "swamp". They were so industrious that the majority of local farmers preferred the Italians to the nomadic Australians.

A group of Italians rented 650 acres of land at Harewood Mains, near Delmore. They used 350 acres of it for growing potato crops and the rest for cultivating barley, maize and onions. Their method of labour intensive rosters of work and their intention to build an Italian colony in the "swamp", alarmed the Australians and caused resentment in the area.

The rivalry between the two groups became more hostile and the Australian agriculturists who employed Italian labour were insulted by their neighbours or accused of employing the Italians for lower wages.

By March, 1927, the Italians already owned 5,500 acres in the "swamp" and many potato diggers had bought some land of their own to plant potatoes on their own account. Then the depression came and prices fell dramatically. Furthermore, a disease destroyed the entire crop and a cloud of misery settled on the district.

The Italians who had rented land abandoned the place, those who owned their land invested their last savings to buy potato diggers and other machinery. In the following years, prices returned to normal, but the boom years had gone. Many decided to diversify and planted

cotton, grain and other vegetables. Koo-wee-rup came to life again. A factory was built to work the cotton and the Italians returned in great numbers to the district, this time developing vegetable gardens for the big Melbourne merchants and for the Australian armed forces. (57)

When a migrant, by dint of hard work, managed to put himself on the same level, or even higher than a local, he became the subject of criticism. His honesty was doubted; he was criticised for not knowing how to live or for living in a dirty, miserly fashion. It was as if people expected him to kiss the ground that had provided for him and to thank the native born for all that he had acquired.

The Australians did not understand or appreciate that the person of the migrant is worth more than any consumer goods he may happen to display. They were not asking at what human price such presumed comforts had been won. It is true that at the beginning life was lean and times were hard in the camps, the bosses were demanding and there were times of poverty and depression, but on the other hand there was the courage and the will to get ahead, to make a new life, even at the cost of cruel separations and sacrifices. Then at the end of the line, they often found a world quite different from the one of their dreams, a world bristling with unexpected difficulties, humiliations, confusion, insecurity and isolation.

ITALIANS AND THE SILK INDUSTRY

The contribution made by Italians to the development of the silk industry in Australia and particularly in Victoria, is worthy of mention. In 1873 the new Italian Consul for Melbourne, Cav. Luigi Marinucci, an energetic and keen man, had hardly taken up his new position when he commenced to involve himself deeply in the conditions of the Italian community. He wanted to give Italians a social direction, to encourage them to value their human potential and to stimulate their economic activities.

Moreover, he used his position to influence the local authorities in order to place Italian professionals in the various government offices of the State and the agriculturists in the country. But in 1876 he was involved in a serious scandal, due most probably to excessive zeal and good faith. Some time earlier he had recommended an ex-Captain of the Cavalry, the Tuscan Augusto Bruno, to the Ministry for Crown Lands, that he be assigned vast pastoral lands near Benalla.

In September, 1875, Bruno had already commenced to build the houses necessary for the farm and to plant 40,000 mulberry plants on the said land. "It seems that it was his intention," writes Bartolomeo Galletti, "to raise silk worms, not so much to make the cocoons and to extract the silk as they commonly do in Italy, but to produce the eggs and to sell them in boxes as is the practice in Japan. In one way or another we are referring to an important and quite new industry in these distant lands, for which Captain Bruno met with approval and general good will." (58)

But the following year a scandal broke that also involved the Consul Marinucci. Because of the agrarian reform in process at that time, the pasture lands were not permitted to be in excess of 130 acres of land. Bruno, however, managed to obtain more than 2,000 acres thanks precisely to the pressure and contrivance on the part of the Italian Consul.

The reactions were not slow in making themselves heard, first on the part of an English pastoralist, who had seen his unlimited holdings broken up, and then by the usual press reports. The situation, already serious, rapidly became worse when Bruno and a certain Montagretti founded a society for action with the aim of setting up a silk industry works.

"Montagretti was a Tuscan," writes Bartolomeo Galletti, "who had resided in Australia for many years; he was a man of means and had a good reputation." Among the directors of the society the name of the Consul Marinucci appears.

The scandal could not be buried; the Minister had to tender his resignation and the Government instituted a Commission of Enquiry. The Consul excused himself, declaring that his name had been included in the Society without his consent. Bruno and his partners lost land and capital.

The silk industry, although common in Europe, especially in Northern Italy, was only in its infancy in Australia. The Italians had been the first, or among the first, to introduce it to this country. In fact, according to the Consul G. Biagi and others, "The lawyer Martelli from Turin was the first to extend the culture of mulberry plants with the aim of establishing a silk industry in Australia." (59)

Martelli, along with some other Italians from Piedmont and Lombardy, who had settled in the Ballarat district, commenced silk production, an occupation that they had learnt in their home towns. The Italians who founded the Colony of New Italy did the same. They were mostly Veneti and were the survivors of the ill-fated expedition of the French Marquis de Rays. As soon as they had established themselves on the plots of land that they had reclaimed from the bush, they commenced, among other activities, the culture of the silk worm, which was an important part of the tradition of their home towns also.

As a consequence of this experience and the knowledge acquired from their home town industries, also the fact that the mulberry plants were growing rapidly because of the temperature and climate of the new place, the government of New South Wales decided to help these new pioneers financially and to encourage the new industry. In 1890 these Italians of New Italy had already planted 25,000 mulberry plants and were selling the silk-worm eggs in various parts of Australia.

On 31 March, 1894, at the initiative of an Italian and a Ticinese, Leonardo Pozzi and Boldini, and three others, Perrott, Somerville and Brown, a public meeting was called at the Melbourne Town Hall,

during which the great majority decided to form "The Victorian Silk-culture Association". The aim of the association was to encourage silk culture, to teach those new to the industry, to find markets for the sale of the cocoons, to subsidise the planting of mulberry plants and to encourage the construction of spinning mills.

One of the more convinced supporters of such an industry was, without doubt, the Cav. Professor F. Gagliardi, who later became vice-President of the association. At the start of the nineties, on his own property at Hampton, near Brighton, Professor Gagliardi commenced to plant mulberry plants and to raise silk-worms.

In the January, 1896 issue of the monthly of the association, *The Silk Grower*, an article was published under the title of "A model silk farm". It ran, "At Hampton, near Brighton, you can see one of the best efforts made in the State to date, to establish a mulberry plantation, with regard to rationale and efficiency. The owner, Professor Ferdinando Gagliardi, an Italian gentleman of culture, who knows intimately the culture of the mulberry plant and the raising of silk worms, proposes to construct a model plantation on his five acres of land. In fact, he started last summer and has planted two acres. He will continue until all his property is planted up. At the moment 500 plants are developing vigorously with their dark-green leaves. And between one plant and the next, for now, Gagliardi has planted vines of the Hermitage type. Fifty mulberry plants have just arrived from Lombardy. Professor Gagliardi hopes in four or five years time to produce from 50 to 100 kilos of cocoons and eventually about 15 kilos of eggs.

"At the moment the eggs are imported from Lombardy and include the following varieties, Italian yellow, Poly yellow, Monzini, which is a cross between the Italian type and the Asiatic type, and finally White Chinese." (60) Many of the cocoons produced in Australia were sent to Italy to be processed.

Mr Giuseppe Merlo from Alexandra, Victoria, writing also in the monthly, *The Silk Grower*, after having referred to his own experiences with the culture of silk worms acquired from his own town in Lombardy, said he is convinced that, because of the good climate of this country, the silk industry should be a success and added, "My experience in Northern Italy leads me to plant the mulberries two metres apart in rows and distance the rows nine metres apart from each other." (61)

NOTES

- 1 - Murray Walker, *Pioneer Crafts of Early Australia*, MacMillan Co. of Australia, 1978.
- 2 - A. Garran, *Australia: The First Hundred Years*, Summit Books, 1886, p. 287.
- 3 - *ibid.*
- 4 - O. White, *Australia for Everyone*, Melbourne, Wren, 1974, p. 102.
- 5 - G. Biagi al Ministero degli Esteri, 4 febbraio, 1868.
- 6 - F. Gagliardi, *Lettere alla Gazzetta d'Italia* - Firenze 1881.
- 7 - A. Garran, *op. cit.*, p. 287.
- 8 - Typescript - Yandoit, Spa Centre Development Association.
- 9 - Information provided by St. M. Planta (Mercy Convent Myrtleford).
- 10 - From a study of the Della Vedova family, by Mary Wickham (nee Della Vedova).
- 11 - A.J. Williams, *Maldon & The Tarrangower Diggings*, 1953.
- 12 - The Age, "Where Past and Present Meet" by Nancy Dexter, 3-1-1983, p. 12.
- 13 - *The Shepparton News*, 10-6-1983.
- 15 - Loma L. Bautfield, *Green Pastures & Gold: History of Ararat*, p. 68.
- 16 - *ibid.*
- 17 - J.S. James, *Vagabond Country*, Melbourne, 1981, p. 199.
- 18 - Fr. Ebsworth, *Pioneer Catholic Victoria*, P. Press, Melbourne, 1973.
- 19 - *Righetti Family* - a folder of documents 1856-1955 which provides information from letters received from Italy, buying and selling contracts, on the Righetti family and on other Italians in the district - State Library of Victoria.
- 20 - Loma L. Bautfield, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
- 21 - Murray Walker, *Pioneer Crafts of Early Australia*, Melbourne, 1978, p. 19.
- 22 - *Daylesford Almanac*, 1889.
- 23 - Fr. Leo Lane, *The History of the Parish of Beechworth, 1854-1978* - H. Stephenson & Marcia Brown, 1978, p. 475.
- 24 - St. Joseph's Church Beechworth - *Baptism Records*.
- 25 - *ibid.*
- 26 - Information provided by Patricia De Piazza, grand-daughter of Battista De Piazza.
- 27 - *Directory of Beechworth*, 1888.
- 28 - Information provided by Bishop F.P. De Campo, Bishop of Port Pirie, grandson of Antonio De Campo - Letter, 19-3-1983.
- 29 - Information provided by Mrs. Morihey.
- 30 - *The Australian Vignerons & Fruit Growers Journal*, 2, June 1980.
- 31 - H. Laracy, *The Italians in New Zealand* - Società Dante Alighieri, Auckland, pp. 15, 16.
- 32 - *ibid.*
- 33 - Information provided by St. M. Planta.
- 34 - Ricordo "Santuario di S. Antonio" (passim).
- 35 - Joyce Hammond, *Bridging the Gaps* - Shire of Goulburn, 1871-1971, p. 11.
- 36 - W.H. Bossence, *Tatura and the Shire of Rodney*.
- 37 - *ibid.*, p. 50.
- 38 - *ibid.*, p. 58.
- 39 - *ibid.*, p. 118.
- 40 - *ibid.*, p. 70.
- 41 - *ibid.*, pp. 13, 45, 46, 48.
- 42 - Information provided by Mr. Cavicchiolo.
- 43 - *Shepparton News*, 6-4-1981, p. 7.
- 44 - Information provided by Mr. Cavicchiolo.
- 45 - W.H. Bossence, *Tatura and the Shire of Rodney*, p. 285ss.
- 46 - P. O'Toole.
- 47 - Lou De Prada, *My Walhalla*, Gippsland Printers Pty. Ltd., Morwell, Victoria, 1978, p. 14ss.
- 48 - H. Porter, *Barnsdale: Portrait of an Australian Country Town*, Sydney, 1957.
- 49 - Eve Langley, *The Pea Pickers* - Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1878.
- 50 - *ibid.*

- 51 - Bairnsdale - Church of Santa Maria, Fioriani-Church.
- 52 - H. Porter, Bairnsdale: *Portrait of an Australian Country Town*, Sydney, 1957.
- 53 - Information provided by Antonio Pruscino.
- 54 - Jerzy Zubrycki, *Settlers of the Latrobe Valley* - A.N.U., Canberra, 1964; p. 11, Note (4).
- 55 - *ibid.*
- 56 - Information provided by Mr. Parise - Cf.: *From the Dawning: A History of Yarragon & District* - N.A.U., Traralgon, Victoria, 1978, p. 96.
- 57 - Niel Gunson: *The Good Country* - Granbourn Shire, 1968.
- 58 - Gen. Bartolomeo Galletti, *Intorno al mondo con la Ristori - Note di viaggio* - Rome 1876.
- 59 - G. Biagi, *op. cit.*
- 60 - *The Silk Grower* - January 1896.
- 61 - Merlo, Giuseppe - *The Silk Grower*, August, 1896.



Filippo Fermio.
Early resident of Walthalla (Vic)

THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY OF 13 - MELBOURNE

As we have already seen, the first Italians to respond to the lure of gold reached Victoria towards the middle of the last century. But quite soon, when the vision of gold had vanished, they moved out into the surrounding countryside near the mines, or moved to the city of Melbourne. Here the Italian community, initially not very numerous, gradually became firmly established. Most of the Italians dedicated themselves to the retail trades, but there were also those who, having assumed positions of a certain standing, tried to organise the small community. For example, one of the first Italian identities to be recorded in the colonial history of Victoria was Giuseppe Bosisto from Como. Having graduated in pharmacy at Leeds and in London, he emigrated to Australia in 1846. He stayed for a time in South Australia, then like so many others, he moved to Melbourne at the start of the "gold rush". Indeed it has been estimated that, by the end of 1851, more than 15,000 people had moved from the colony of South Australia to the gold fields of Victoria.

We do not know if Bosisto had been caught up in "gold fever", but certainly, if he had, it did not last long. Bosisto was an active man of great initiative, so, having established himself at Richmond, he did not confine himself to the preparation and dispensation of medicines, but became interested in politics, in community administration and in industry. He became the third Mayor of Richmond and was later elected as representative for the constituency of Jolimont in the State Parliament, a seat that he held for 20 years. A century was to pass before another Italian was elected Mayor of Richmond.

Bosisto founded the first Pharmacy College in the State of Victoria; he was President of the Administration Committee for the Melbourne International Expo - it was said that the gigantic dome of the Exhibition Building was his idea. He was also head of a cultural and trade mission to India and Great Britain.

In 1883, in London, he had insisted on the absolute necessity of making Australia one united nation.

On his return from Europe, he financed a public campaign against phylloxera, a plant disease injurious to vines from California. Unfortunately his advice was heeded only after his death and by then the phylloxera mite had destroyed most of the best vines in the colony.

Bosisto made his most significant contribution to Australia in the field of industrial chemistry with the foundation of the "Eucalyptus oil industry". His brand of "Bosisto's Eucalyptus Oil" was exported world wide. (1)

Around 1880, a small group of Italians was already asserting itself in the business world. Besides Bosisto, we would like to cite the jeweller Brentani, whom we have already mentioned in Chapter 11 and the Campo brothers who founded a flourishing factory for making mirrors, employing about 20 Italian workers. There was also a certain Bartolomeo Dardanelli, a successful merchant who managed a shop at Nine Flinders Street. The Lucini brothers are also remembered as producers of all kinds of spaghetti and pasta, as are Luigi Pascira and Luigi Perrea, who were restaurant owners. Aristite Cattabeni managed a billiard saloon at 85 Bourke Street. Then there was Masina, who came out from England and was the owner of a printing works at 44 Bourke Street. Luigi Manucci had a shoe shop at 143 Little Lonsdale Street, and finally there was Mangarini who made plaster casts at 140 Latrobe Street. (2)

These are only some of the names that bear witness to the Italian community of Melbourne and, indeed, of Victoria in general. The Italian community was always active, enterprising and hard working – and closely allied to the fortunes of Italy, according to the testimony of many of their contemporaries. In fact, in 1861, on the initiative of the lawyer and architect, Alessandro Martelli, and the merchant, Bartolomeo Dardanelli, who were two of Garibaldi's supporters living in Melbourne, a committee was formed which opened an appeal to buy a sword to present to Giuseppe Garibaldi, almost as a protest against his forced retreat to Caprera before the whole unification of Italy, and also as a memento of his voyage in Australian waters some years previously. (3)

This incident made such an impression on Garibaldi that, when he was exiled in Caprera, he still remembered it with feelings of warmth and nostalgia. Like so many other exiles after the disastrous Roman campaign of 1849, Garibaldi, by 1853, had wandered from one country to another and from one continent to another. He even landed on the Hunter Islands in Bass Strait to take on fresh water. He had taken a load of grain to China and was returning to Chile.

"We sailed," wrote Garibaldi, "towards the Indian Ocean and left the Indian archipelago for Lombok Strait. We had tacked with some difficulty in those Straits, having found the South-West monsoons still in force. In the Indian Ocean, outside Lombok Strait, we quickly found the steady breezes from the East. We were tacking to the left, that is receiving the wind from the left side while holding the bow, as much as possible near the origin of the wind and continued to do so. Then, with the aid of the west winds, we sailed through Bass Strait, between Australia and Van Diemen's Land. In this Strait we landed on one of the Hunter Islands to take on water. There we found a settlement, recently abandoned by an Englishman and his wife, because their companion had died there. We established this when we found his

grave and on a slab the following story of the colony was written. The couple, according to the inscription, were frightened by finding themselves alone on that deserted island and had abandoned it and moved to Van Diemen's Land.

"The most important building was a modest, but comfortable little house, carefully built, where we found tables, chairs, beds, etc., not luxurious, certainly, but with that stamp of good living, so natural to the English. For us the most useful find was an orchard, where we found fresh potatoes and plenty of other assorted vegetables, which replenished our stores.

"Deserted island in the Hunter Islands, how many times have you so deliciously stirred my imagination! When I became fed up with this civilised society I would transport myself in imagination to your pretty cove, where, on landing for the first time, I was greeted by a flock of partridges, and where, among the centuries old trees, the clearest and most poetic little stream was flowing, in which we freely and joyously quenched our thirst. We then took the necessary provisions of water for our voyage". (4)

The committee for the "sword appeal" collected, not only from the Italian community but also from the Australian community, the extraordinary sum of £358 sterling. The majority of the donors were from Melbourne, but there were also those who lived far from the city, in Ararat, Clunes, Bendigo, Heathcote, Deniliquin (NSW), Beechworth, Ballarat and Chewton. Martelli and Dardanelli had a booklet printed with the title, *"List of subscribers to the Sword of Honour - presented to Giuseppe Garibaldi by his admirers in Australia"*, with all the names of the donors.

In the preface to the booklet, which took the form of an open letter to Garibaldi, dated 5 May 1861, they wrote, among other things, "The donors of this sword are anxious to offer their homage to that Italian hero who has done so much for the unification of Italy and for the expulsion of foreigners from the garden of Europe." (5)

Giuseppe Garibaldi received the sword from a British delegation, sent for that purpose to Turin, on the 8 August, 1861, the year of the unification of Italy and the year in which the first two Italian Consuls to Australia were nominated.

He immediately sent an official message of thanks, which was displayed in the Colonial Library in Melbourne. Immediately after, his assistant wrote a letter addressed to the architect, Alessandro Martelli, in which Garibaldi's sentiments appear much more spontaneous and genuine.

"Tell our friends in Melbourne that the General was very pleased with the fine appearance of the sword. That Italy which has broken the chains - not all however - of foreign domination, that wants to crush those vipers who have gnawed at her heart for centuries, brandishes aloft the sword of Spartacus. That Italy truly reborn, is extremely pleasing to him. And he said, "This is our Italy, the true Niobe of the people who call their sons to arms. It is not a puma as

the French are used to sculpting on their swords and which our servile artists have imitated when making those they have given to me. But a people born free can guess the thoughts of one that has freed itself.

"Don't you agree? I wanted to tell you what I couldn't in the reply to your letter, you will understand". (6)

In the sixties other Italians settled in Melbourne. They are listed in the *Melbourne Directory of 1866* and in the *Post Office Directory of 1869*. For a start, we see that in the first half of the 1860's various Italians had set up a variety of business enterprises. For example, Giacomo Bonelli opened a printing works at 74 Spencer Street, S. Donelli opened a spaghetti making factory in Sydney Road, Brunswick. "Probably," writes Fr. Luciano Secolari, "the Donellis were the only Italian family in Brunswick when the Catholic Church was built in 1874.

"However, it seems that Donelli, from Milan, suggested to the then Parish Priest to dedicate the new church to St. Ambrose, Bishop and Patron Saint of that important northern Italian city. Many years later, in 1930, the Donelli sisters donated the land in Sydney Road, Brunswick to the Salesians for the construction of a hostel and a Don Bosco Club." (7)

Other Italians we found in the *Melbourne Directory* were - Cutolo, the famous Neopolitan singer, Giovanni Grimoldi, maker of meteorological instruments at 81 Queen Street, Polisani, producer of wines in Caroline Street, South Yarra, Antonio de Basto, manager of a restaurant at 77 Flinders Street and Riccardo La Fonte, owner of a grocer's shop in Church Street, Richmond.

From the *Post Office Directory* we see that in the following years, other Italians started businesses of their own. A certain Luigi Boggiano opened a photographic studio, Bonella had a building company, T. Canna had a taxi business, Canobbio had a joinery business, Cortino a mechanic's business, Giovanni Edami a wine shop, Luigi Prerira a café, Sanguinetti a tailor's shop, Pirani had a shop and Tommaso Verga a factory.

We uncovered further proof of the development of the Italian presence when, on 4 May, 1867, the first Italian ship arrived in Melbourne, the Corvette of the Royal Navy, called the *Magenta*, a ship of 2,500 tons, which was completing a scientific and commercial expedition around the world. The *Magenta* remained anchored in the port of Melbourne for two weeks and was the centre of attraction for many visitors. The personnel of the mission, which included the philosopher Enrico Giglioli and the zoologist, Senator De Filippi, were able to meet the authorities of the Colony and to visit the city and its environs.

The local authorities exercised the most exquisite courtesy towards the guests, who were the first representatives of a united Italy. The controlling body of the Victorian Railways granted free transport on all trains in the Colony to the entire crew of the *Magenta*. To the

Captain and his Officers, the local authorities offered a reception at the Melbourne Club, the most exclusive club in Melbourne. Moreover, they were made honorary members and guests of honour during their time ashore. (8)

A delegation of fellow-countrymen presented a prophetic document signed by 190 Italians, resident in the capital of Victoria, in which they stated, among other things, "Your visit to this port, whilst it tells us that Italy is now a great nation, united and free, also convinces us that Italy's flag is to be protected and respected in all parts of the world... We believe it is our duty to ask you to draw the attention of His Majesty's Government in Florence to the possibilities of commercial trade between Italy and Victoria." (9)

Enrico Giglioli, a professor at the Institute of Higher Studies at Florence, who was appointed to compile a report of the adventurous voyage, recalls, when referring to our fellow countrymen in Melbourne, "Many Italians who had settled in Victoria, rushed to greet the first national ship to land in Victoria, to enjoy for the first time the sight of our glorious flag and, because they were so far from their beloved fatherland, to experience the absolute pleasure of being able to set foot on a piece of Italian territory." (10)

In order to stay linked for a few more hours to that little piece of Italy, many Italians wanted to spend the last night that the ship was in port, in company aboard ship.

THE FIRST CENSUS

The year 1871 marks the first census of the colony of Victoria in which Italians were included in a category of their own. This showed that the Italians were no longer a negligible group, as they had been considered up till then, rightly or wrongly. Without counting those naturalised Australians, the census result of the number of Italians was 772 persons, 718 males and 54 females. (11)

In that same year, 1871, the Italian Vice-Consul, who was running the Consular office during the absence of the Consul, sent a report to the Italian Government on the Italians resident in his own district, and added that, "Because the Italians were so widely scattered, I had to resort, almost exclusively, to the postal method of sending out forms. The result of the Consular census showed a figure of 714 Italians. However, the number of Italians effectively present in the Consular district of Melbourne, according to information collected by the Consulate, is considerably larger than this census figure indicates." (12)

What interests us greatly in the above-mentioned census is not so much the number of our migrants resident in Victoria in that period, but rather the characteristics peculiar to them, listed in their answers to the questions posed on the census forms, i.e. age, place of birth, level of education, marital status, language spoken, religion, etc.

With regard to the place of birth, at the head of the list we find 327 from Lombardy, followed by 95 from Liguria, 59 from Sicily, 52 from Piedmont, 39 from Tuscany, 20 from Emilia, 15 from the Marches, 13 from the Veneto, 12 from Campania, five from Lucania, four from Lazio, one from Calabria and two omitted to state their birth place, 70 were born elsewhere. (13)

The Italians resident in the consular district of Melbourne were distributed thus; 569 in the Colony of Victoria, 17 in the South Australian colony and 128 in New Zealand.

Of these 714 Italians, 595 were over 17 years of age and 119 under 17 years of age. 462 could read and write, 227 were illiterate and 25 were infants. In the field of religion 651 were Catholic, one was Jewish, 62 were Evangelical, Lutherans and Protestants. Finally, 283 spoke Italian, one spoke German and 430 spoke English. (14)

A considerable number of migrants settled in the colony of Victoria, particularly in Melbourne. Besides the great musicians, Zelman, Cutolo, Cecchi, Giannone and artists like Sani, Del Vescovo and Nerli, we must remember the strong group of Tuscans, which included Catani, Baracchi, Checchi and Gagliardi, who contributed so much to the development of the colony. We will look at these talented men in more detail in another section of this book.

We mention also two companies who arrived in Australia. They sold Tuscan statuettes and came, in the main, from Barga. "You see them in the streets of Melbourne with a basket full of their wares and they go from house to house, from shop to shop and from office to office." (15)

THE FIRST COMMUNITY STRUCTURES

In June, 1877, the first Italian Club in Australia was constituted in Melbourne. It put forward the following aims -

- (a) to promote a convenient meeting place for Italians resident in, or passing through Melbourne, and for those persons of any other nationality who may wish to associate with the same.
- (b) to represent, promote and defend the interests of Italians in this colony and in all the other colonies of Australia.
- (c) to assist and advise Italians who are ill or out of work. (16)

The Italian members wanted to celebrate the "drawing up of the constitution" with a dinner given for the foreign members.

"It was hoped that this would conserve the national character as much as possible. The Consul who presided at the reception made a toast to the newly constituted club with a patriotic reminder of our nation and a warm salute to our liberty..."

"A likeable fellow called Baracchi then wanted to liven up the evening with poetry full of spirit and good fun. It was a most enjoyable evening that also included plenty of music." (17)

The following year, 18 October, 1878, also in Melbourne, the first colonial committee was constituted. It was composed of Ricciotti

Garibaldi, Giovanni D'Adami and Pietro Baracchi. The committee had the task of providing information and giving useful advice to all Italians wanting to "move to this rich region". The address of the committee office was, Italian Colonial Committee, Russell Street, Melbourne, Australia. (18)

The writer, W.H. Newman, in his book, *Melbourne: the biography of a city*, furnishes further information on one of the above mentioned persons. "To the East, at the end of Bourke Street, at one stage Franceschi's baker's shop attracted attention. It took pride, not only in its products, but also in its employees. Once it boasted that a philosopher and three anarchists were among its workers. Moreover, its secretary was Ricciotti Garibaldi, son of the great Italian liberator. He was born in 1847 in Montevideo, the son of Anita. Ricciotti took part in the battle of Bezzecca in 1866, in the battle of Mentana in 1867 and wrested the only flag lost from the Prussians at Digione in 1870.

"Apart from these few heroic episodes, Ricciotti Garibaldi was a corrupt, intractable man and an anarchist. In London he had scandalised the English high society because of the kind of life he led. In 1874 he married the Londoner, Constance Harriet Hopercraft and in 1877, together with his wife and three young daughters, Constance, Rosa and Anita Italia, he migrated to Australia. Here he continued the same sort of existence, drifting from one job to another. There was little good blood between Giuseppe Garibaldi and his son Ricciotti. Once, when he heard tell that his son had been put in prison, the father was reported to have said, 'If I come to know that Ricciotti has been put in prison, I will drink a glass of wine to the one who sent him there.' "Later," continues Newman, "Ricciotti became an employee of the Education Department of Victoria. Then he bought a fish shop where business was so poor he had to sell a sword belonging to his famous father in order to raise sufficient money to return to Italy." (19)

THE MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION

"Our country," writes Gagliardi, "on this occasion has expressed great interest in this exhibition". (20) Because of the great quantity and variety of goods to be displayed - 9,000 articles ranging from cars, manufactured goods to craft goods - 40,000 square feet of space was assigned to Italy. Italy had now the fourth largest display after England, France and Germany. Interest was such that the Italian government, over-turning an earlier decision, not only agreed to be officially represented by the Consul General of Italy in Melbourne, Cav. Alessandro De Guyzueta, the Marquis di Toverana, who was nominated the Commissioner for the occasion, but also made available an Italian ship, the *Pulice*, to transport the articles to be displayed. The Italian section was divided into two big pavilions, one was situated to the east of the big central aisle, entering from Nicholson Street, and the other to the north-west along the western avenue. Both exhibitions had been prepared with taste and style and were the result of painstaking work by Olivieri and Gustavo Scargatti from Venice. (21)

During the last 20 years of the century the Italian migration to the Colony of Victoria, and in particular to Melbourne, increased considerably. There were three main reasons for the increase -

(a) the International exposition in Melbourne which attracted the attention of the Italian public with regard to Australia and made many aware of the opportunities available to our workers.

(b) the publicity given to the request for man-power for the construction of various railway lines, and finally

(c) the reduced travel prices offered by various shipping companies which travelled the Australian route.

And so it was that, in this period, the Southern Italian migration commenced, in particular from the Aeolian Islands. J.S. McDonald called it the "Aeolian exodus", because, after the unification of Italy, between 1880 and 1890, many Aeolians chose the path of migration and availed themselves of the chain migration system. The first to arrive would establish themselves and then invite other members of their same family, relatives, friends or fellow townsfolk to embark on a one-way voyage. (22)

The Aeolians, a sea loving people, were accustomed to sailing and to moving from one country to another, but almost always it had been treated as a temporary migration. Many of these people had made more than one ocean crossing to North America or to Argentina and some sailors had even been to Australia in the 1850's.

Then, as often happened, the tales of prosperity, related by those who had returned from the south lands, or stories of success written by someone already living down there, enticed many others to take the step of emigrating. At times, children of tender age were sent by parents to relations already established in the country, so that they too could have the same opportunities of a better life.

The Aeolians were different from all the other regional Italian groups in a particular way. While those from Lombardy and Piedmont, for example, dedicated themselves to heavy work such as wood-cutting, charcoal production, working in the mines and in sugar cane plantations, the Aeolians monopolised the fruit and vegetable retail businesses. (23)

"In the city of Melbourne," wrote the Consul Squitti in 1891, "there are some hundreds of Italians who live and prosper within the frameworks of their professions observing the laws of the country and enjoying the friendship and esteem of the populace, except in rare cases where religious fanaticism or racial prejudices, nourished by ignorance, create a barrier against clear and impartial judgement.

"In some cases the migrant made the error of leaving himself open to public ridicule by going around playing the street organ with a monkey as an added attraction; these people don't have any shame..." (24)

"In 1889 the first Italian Mutual Aid Society was formed with the name of "Societa' Mutua Italiana". The members of the society numbered more than 100 and it had the aim of mutual assistance for its component members." (25)

At the end of the century, another Consul reported in more detail on the professions exercised by the Italians resident in the city of Melbourne. "The Italian community of Melbourne," wrote the Consul Pasquale Corte, "is generally loved and respected and enjoys a good standard of living, although our fellow countrymen who have accumulated great fortunes are few. The community is composed of Sicilian fruiters, musicians from the province of Naples, terrazzo workers and labourers from Lombardy and Piedmont, pedlars of statuettes from Lucca and Carrara, but also includes several artists of merit, sculptors, painters, doctors of medicine, lawyers, naturalists, business men and especially distinguished engineers who occupy some of the best positions in the administration of the colony. Professionals who warrant special mention are the astronomer Comm. Pietro Baracchi, director of a very important observatory, the engineer Catani, director of public works, the engineer Checchi, director of the *Water Supply* and Cav. F. Gagliardi, director of the National Library.

"Several professors of music and song also merit special mention. Because of their talent and mastery of music they were able to assure themselves of an honorable position despite the fact that Italian music had been neglected because of the very strong promotion of German music.

"First of all we have Alberto Zelman, an orchestral director and distinguished composer and his two sons who are worthy followers in their father's footsteps. Then there is Giulia Tamburini Coy and her daughter, Alice Rebottaro and her husband and brother, Buzzi, Mr and Mrs Stafani, Mallet and various others.

"The fine arts are represented by the excellent Venetian painter, Sigismondo Zacutti and by Brun from Triest, sculpture by the Pellegri brothers and by other sculptors who did not settle permanently in Melbourne.

"Italian industry is represented by a few firms; the one which merits special attention is the mirror factory of the Campi brothers. Also commercial firms are not numerous, although several enjoy good credit, like the firm of the Natali brothers, which is involved in an import-export business, the firm of F. Gagliardi & Co. managed by Maniachi, the Italian Trading Company directed by L. Porena, the firm of Galli, which deals in wines, the Pellegrini firm which deals in marble and the Victorian Railways Cushion Company directed by Tessero. This does not include a large number of well established fruit shops, fish shops and restaurants, which are owned by our fellow Italians." (26)

From the dawn of the new century to the Second World War "numerous Italians found themselves either in Melbourne or in other centres", wrote Capra in 1909, "and all in good circumstances." (27) Capra found the Italians of Melbourne, in general, living in good economic circumstances, above all because there were no great crowds of migrants in the same place and because of the favourable social conditions in Australia which provided a good, secure base for the individual.

The migrants who settled with their families in the established centres and in the metropolitan areas "are mostly owners of shops or market gardens." (28)

Besides the bits and pieces of information we have already documented, we know very little of the Italians who settled in Melbourne. We know, for example, that in 1891, most of these migrants lived in the East Melbourne district, an area which comprised a part of Fitzroy, a part of Carlton and Gipps Ward. They were scattered over a wide area but with a particular concentration in that part of Carlton to the south of Pelham Street. (29)

Among the Italians resident in this district there was a significant group of wandering musicians from Viggiano. They formed "a picturesque itinerant group of harpists and violinists who were accustomed to travelling round the world from infancy, to earn themselves a living. These musicians, coming from Viggiano and nearby towns, arrived in Melbourne in the 1870's. In 1885 one of them had settled permanently in Melbourne and by 1895 they had formed quite a large community." (30)

Before the First World War between 35 and 50 families had established themselves in the inner city and lived close together in Argyle and Cardigan Streets in South Carlton. In the same area another group of Italians from other parts of Italy had formed. For example, six of the 11 residents around Landsdowne Square were Italian. The marriage registers at the Sacred Heart parish in Carlton reflect a similar concentration and all those, except one, who contracted marriage in that Church between 1890 and 1914, were residents of that part of Carlton. (31)

About 20 marriages were celebrated in St. Brigid's Church, which includes North Fitzroy and North Carlton, but the addresses of the spouses were somewhat scattered. (32)

From these initial nuclei, who in 1914 numbered a few hundred, the Italian population increased rapidly between the two wars.

From 1921 to 1947 the Italian colony in the inner city, even if it is not possible to ascertain the exact number, was scattered through Fitzroy, Collingwood, South Melbourne, Brunswick and North Carlton. The group in Carlton and North Carlton increased appreciably in number, and there were more migrants from Northern Italy than from the South. (33)

In the period between the two wars, 1920 to 1940, in St. Ignatius' Church at Richmond, 160 marriages between Italians were celebrated and 320 baptisms were performed. Not all were residents of the area, but almost all were resident in the metropolitan area of Melbourne. (34)

In 1933, in the area outside the inner city, but still within the metropolitan area or just beyond, numerous groups of Italians were already settled, for example in Dandenong, Ferntree Gully, Frankston, Lilydale and in particular, Werribee. (35)

Also these nuclei avoided the problems common to many new arrivals. In the preceding period and during the economic depression of the 30's many Italian migrants who could not find work in Melbourne, especially those who belonged to the category of unskilled workers, were forced to move away from the city and find work in the country. Those who established themselves in Melbourne were the ones who already had some support who were qualified in certain, particular jobs. The Friulani, for example, were expert terrazzo workers and introduced their art to Australia. So too the Veneti, who mostly came from the high plains of Asiago and who had spent the post-war years rebuilding their ruined villages, were mainly bricklayers, stone workers and carpenters. Moreover, several of them arrived with sufficient capital to start up their own businesses or work in association with fellow countrymen. (36)

It is true the occupations pursued by these fellow countrymen of ours were rather uniform, but a strong pattern of continual progress and variety was emerging.

In order to view briefly the range of occupations in which the Italians were involved, we could divide the workers into two categories, (a) those resident in the city including the inner city and (b) those resident in the metropolitan area or just beyond. Among those in the first category (a) there were the professionals – teachers, some university professors, priests, musicians, doctors etc; those in commerce – importers, fruiterers, restaurant owners, hoteliers, travel agents and businessmen in general; the skilled workers – bricklayers, terrazzo and marble workers, stonemasons, black-smiths, carpenters, mechanics, fishermen, etc.; other trades – tailors, shoemakers, hairdressers, barbers, photographers, etc; unskilled labourers – “bricky’s” labourers, road construction workers, delivery workers, builders’ labourers, night watchmen, lift operators, etc. (37) Several were connected with small catering services, restaurants and hotels – cooks, waiters, barmen, shop attendants, etc. Others started up restaurants which, over the years, have been known to serve the best Italian cuisine. Today, several of these still attract the elite among gourmets. They are Ernesto Molina’s Café d’Italia (1916), Giuseppe Codognotto’s restaurant (1924), the Café Bella that became Camillo Triaca’s Café Latin (1924), Rinaldo Massoni’s Café Florentine (1926) and the Club Hotel that became Mario’s in Bourke Street and was owned by Mario Vigano (1932). (38)

Among those in the second category of workers (b) we find horticulturists, citrus and other fruit growers, owners of small properties where a little of everything was cultivated, small dairy farmers and pig farmers, etc. (39)

Because they were always seeking to better their situation, the Italians would move from one job to another, from one commercial enterprise to another. We could cite numerous examples but we shall limit ourselves to the most typical and significant.

Many of the prosperous fruiterers we know today, commenced selling their fruit and vegetables in hand-carts as “barrow-boys”, so too,

many of the icecream manufacturers started out as "ice-cream cartmen". Among those who moved from one commercial venture to another we remember Felice Caleo, who was born in Sydney in 1899. His father had emigrated from the Aeolian Islands in 1880. After working as a fruiterer, in 1926 Felice moved with all his family to Sea Lake in Victoria, where he opened a general store and established a catering service for weddings and other celebrations. In 1927 he moved to Melbourne where he managed a café - a restaurant and cake shop - for a little over a year. After that he opened a large furniture shop, "Essendon Home Furniture".

Another Aeolian, Felice Carrà, belonged to a group of pioneer Italian migrants in Victoria. They were a group of men and women who, at the start of the century, arrived in these remote lands after a voyage full of discomfort, to search for the well being and security that the inhospitable Aeolian soil could not offer its inhabitants. In 1902, at 16 years of age, Carrà had embarked on the ship, *Oroia*, with a friend, Antonio Bongiorno, to join his father and a younger brother, Giuseppe, who had emigrated to the city of Melbourne some time earlier. With his brother, Felice started to sell fruit, vegetables and flowers in the streets of the city, in the busiest centres.

When the brothers had scraped together the necessary capital, they opened a fruit and vegetable emporium at Brunswick, in partnership with their father. Felice then married and moved to Horsham in the Wimmera district, where he and his wife managed a pastry and fruit shop. Mrs Carrà became well known in the Horsham district because, assisted by her daughters, she actively contributed to the work of assisting Italian migrant families in the district.

In 1920 the Carrà family returned permanently to Melbourne with their seven children and settled in Sydney Road, Brunswick, where they opened a wine, beer and spirits shop.

Those who emigrated after the First World War, found life in Australia very hard, above all because of the scarcity of work. Beniamino Braida, from Friuli, arrived in 1924 and because he could not find work in Melbourne, moved to Bendigo to take up the arduous work of a wood-cutter, work to which he was not accustomed. As soon as he had saved a little money, he returned to Melbourne and founded the "Granolithic Company". This undertaking increased its activities continuously. Among the thousands of works carried out, the firm could boast of having completed the flooring and terrazzo works in the principal hospitals of Melbourne, including the new Royal Children's Hospital, the Royal Melbourne Hospital, Prince Henry's and the Dental Hospital.

Ernesto Cester, who arrived in 1927, worked as a shoe-maker, a farm hand and a cook wandering from town to town in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. In 1933 he brought out his family and settled down to cultivating tobacco at Myrtleford. After the war the Cester family moved permanently to Melbourne.

In the suburb of Moorabbin, the Cester family embarked on a commercial enterprise which, in less than 20 years, succeeded beyond all expectations. They commenced by cleaning poultry by hand and supplied three outlets in the city. The work seemed quite promising so the Cesters decided to establish a factory on five acres of land acquired at Noble Park, but had to move immediately to Springvale, because they could not obtain a licence at the first site for the killing and plucking of fowls. At Springvale they established the "Cester Poultry Supply", which, with the installation of new plant and machinery, grew from 200 to 300 fowls per week to an output of 1,500 per hour. In 1958 they discovered, by chance, an enormous bed of sand on their property. To market it, they created the "Cester Sand Pty. Ltd." In 1965 the Cesters acquired an agricultural property of 72 acres at Lilydale, where, in the hilly part they planted a magnificent vineyard and on the lower part they raised fowls and pigs. The following year they created the "Coldstream Rural Enterprises" and opened shops to sell fresh poultry and chicken on the spit, direct to the public. That was the start of a chain of 18 shops which sold chicken on the spit all over Melbourne. The shops were grouped together by the company name, "Spiedo Chic Pty. Ltd." (40)

These, like so many others of our migrants, set foot on Australian soil with very little in their pockets, but had the wealth of plenty of good will, initiative and the will to succeed.

At the conclusion of this historical trip across the State of Victoria, we wish to emphasise two aspects, which indeed are relevant to the other Australian States in the life of the Italian community, and which happened during the fascist period and during the difficult years of the Second World War.

During the period of Fascism, the community was torn apart by a multitude of divisions. With the advent of Fascism in Italy, groups and counter-groups were also formed in Australia. The people broke up into fascists, antifascists, radicals and anarchists. And during the Second World War all these divisions increased the sufferings, the discriminations, and, it could be said, the hatred towards the Italians.

The outbreak of discrimination was not unexpected, given the traditional antipathy of Australians towards Southern Europeans. This was borne out by skirmishes in the city. The Casa d'Italia in Carlton was forced to close, after having been ransacked by vandals. Many shops owned by Italians had their windows broken. Italian children were mocked in the schools.

Several Italians who worked in industry, in government works and in the mines, lost their jobs. So too, in the big emporiums such as Myers, few Italians could work without some harrassment. In the country the ill feeling was even more apparent. However, most of the miners at Wonthaggi voted to work alongside the Italians in the coal mines.

In 1941 certain Australians tried to chase the Italians away from the Werribee area, claiming that they were a danger to national security because of the presence of the RAAF at Point Cook.

In July, 1942, the Victorian Department of Agriculture expressed concern at the continual increase of foreign agriculturists (Italians), and at their cooperative method of acquiring land, a method which "struck directly at the Australian agriculturists and put the wage structure at risk."

Notwithstanding the denials and reassurances of the authorities, angry protests arrived from various agricultural centres such as Mildura, Colac, Lilydale and Shepparton. *Smith's Weekly* claimed that already a quarter of the land in Victoria had fallen into the hands of foreigners. "Without doubt," Broome asserted, "hidden resentment was at the root of all this discrimination." (41)

As a consequence of all the bad feeling, many Italians lost their positions of employment and were interned under the accusation of being fascists or because they were suspected of being a danger to the nation.

NOTES

- 1 - G. Serie, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1851-1890, Melb. Uni Press. Ctr.: H. Laracy, *Quaderni of the Italian Cultural Institute*, 1971.
- 2 - *Melbourne Dictionary for 1860*, Published by Sands & Kenny Co.
- 3 - From "List of subscribers to the Sword of Honour" presented to General G. Garibaldi by his admirers in Australia, Melbourne, 1861.
- 4 - *Le memorie di Garibaldi nella redazione definitiva del 1872* - L. Cappelli Editor, Bologna, pp. 337-8.
- 5 - From "List of subscribers", op. cit.
- 6 - Nino Randazzo, *Italians in Australia*, p. 62.
- 7 - P. Luciano Secolan, *A Short History of St. Ambrose's Parish*, Brunswick September, 1976, p. 2.
- 8 - Enrico Giglioli, *Viaggio Intorno al Globo della R. Piroscafa Italiana Magenta Milano 1876*, p. 746.
- 9 - *ibid.*, p. 797.
- 10 - *ibid.*, p. 797.
- 11 - Census of Italians abroad, 31 December 1871 - Stamperia Reale, Rome, 1874.
- 12 - *ibid.*
- 13 - *ibid.*
- 14 - *ibid.*
- 15 - F. Gagliardi, *Lettere alla Gazzetta d'Italia*, Florence, 1881, p. 322.
- 16 - Melbourne Italian Club, *Statutes and Regulations*, Evans Bros. Printers, Melbourne, 1877.
- 17 - F. Gagliardi, op. cit., p. 24.
- 18 - Melchiorre, *Il Divinismo*, p. 97.
- 19 - W.H. Newman, *Melbourne: The Biography of a City*.
- 20 - F. Gagliardi, op. cit., p. 322.
- 21 - *ibid.*
- 22 - J.S. McDonald.
- 23 - Maria Triaca.
- 24 - Squitti, Report (Melbourne 14/11/1891), published in *Emigrazione e Colonia* - published by G. Berteo, Rome, 1893.
- 25 - *ibid.*
- 26 - Corte, Pasquale, consul, *Il continente Nuovissimo or l'Australia Britannica*, Torino, 1898.
- 27 - Calma, G.
- 28 - *ibid.*, p.
- 29 - F. Lancaster Jones, *Italians in the Carlton area: the growth of an Ethnic Concentration* - Reprinted from *The Australian Journal of Politics & History*, Vol. X, n. 1 April 1964, p. 90 ss.
- 30 - *ibid.*
- 31 - *ibid.*
- 32 - *Registers: St. Brigid's Parish*, North Fitzroy.
- 33 - Lancaster Jones op. cit.
- 34 - Parish registers, Richmond.
- 35 - F. L. Jones, op. cit.
- 36 - Census of Italians abroad, op. cit.
- 37 - C. Price, *Southern Europeans in Australia*, A.N.U., 1979, p. 154.
- 38 - *The Age*
- 39 - C. Price, op. cit., 155.
- 40 - *Ricordo del Santuario di Sant'Antonio Melbourne*, 1969 p.183.
- 41 - Broome

BRIEF GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

"The State of Western Australia is the biggest (eight times bigger than Italy), but the least developed of the Australian States.

"Topographically it is divided into six regions – the Kimberleys, the East, the Central and the North-West, which are mining regions and almost unknown, while the South-West and the Eucla are agricultural regions. The traveller has only to go outside Perth, the capital, to immediately have the impression of being in a pioneering country, immense, empty, dry and hostile.

"Only in the South-West can one admire the great forests of gigantic Jarrah and Karri trees, which form the basis of the wood industry. This is also the most suitable region for agriculture, because of its fine climate, the quality of its soil and the plentiful supply of water – the climate and the temperature because of the sea breezes. Drought is unknown and rain falls regularly and plentifully." (1)

Those who travel towards the West and the North-West experience, for hundreds and hundreds of miles, the monotony of the bush, uniform and barren and of the salt bush or spinifex with few oases of dark green colour.

These are the mining zones where, in 1887, gold was discovered for the first time at Kimberley and Yilgarn and where, some years later, the quantity of gold discovered was greater than that of all the other Australian States.

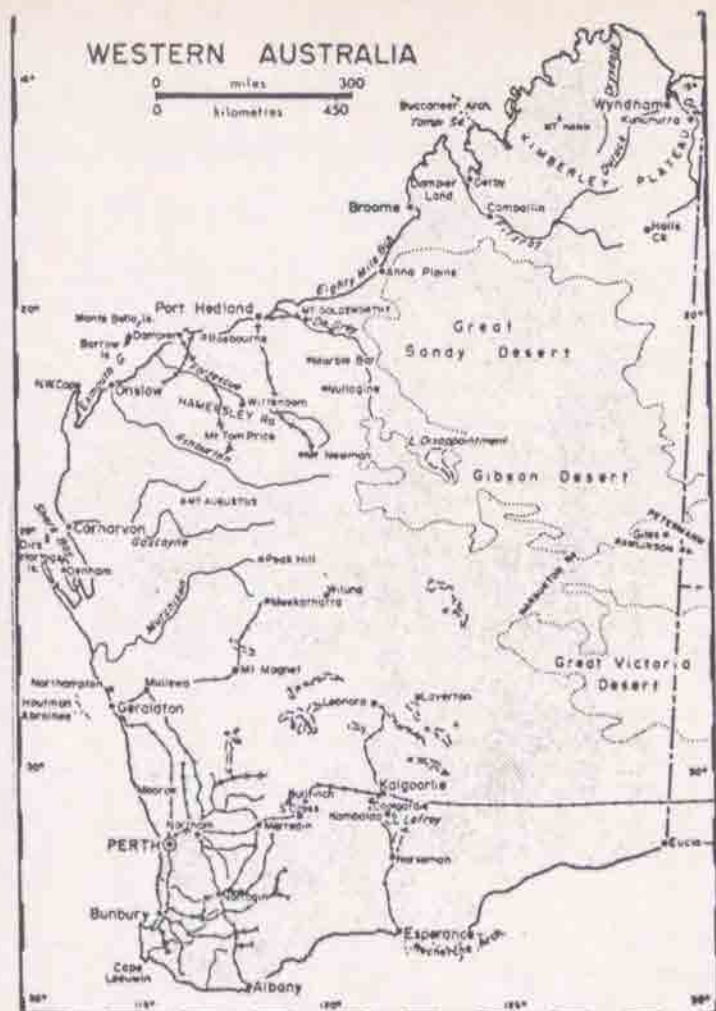
This served to put the State on the path, which still continues today, of rapid development.

Historically, the first European to land in this part of the continent was the Dutchman, Dirk Hartog, in 1616. After Hartog, other navigators landed or sailed along the western coast, receiving very negative impressions of the land. (2)

In 1826, because of fear that the French might occupy that part of the continent, Darling, the Governor of New South Wales, with orders from London, sent 44 convicts and a group of soldiers to take possession of the so-called "New Holland" under the command of Major Lockyer. (3)

In 1827 Captain J. Stirling, also under the orders of Governor Darling, explored the Swan River and chose the site to construct a town. He wrote enthusiastically about its possibilities because of the fertility of the soil and the possibility of a port for commerce with Asia.

In principle the British government showed reluctance to open a new colony in the Swan, but when it came to know that a group of capitalists, with Thomas Peel as its leader, was ready to finance a colony of 10,000 emigrants, it withdrew all reservations.



On 2 May 1829, James Stirling was nominated as the first Governor and the territory of New Holland was elevated to the level of a colony with the name of Swan River Colony.

But, because of its isolation, the new colony progressed very slowly and at the cost of many sacrifices.

300 migrants settled at Perth and Fremantle. By 1848 the residents of Perth had increased to 1,148, while those outside the town numbered 1,400.

By 1856 the population of Perth had climbed to 3,000 and in 1871 to 5,000.

The Swan River Colony, later called Western Australia, received full independence from the other colonies in 1890 – only ten years before the Federation of the Australian States. (4)

NOTES

- 1 - Osmar White, *Australia for Everyone*, Wren, P. 347.
- 2 - Australia, *New Zealand Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 20, P. 1602.
- 3 - *ibid.*, p. 1607.
- 4 - D. Pike, *Australia the Quiet Continent*, Cambridge University Press, p. 17.

THE ORIGINS OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY IN 14— WESTERN AUSTRALIA

It is customary to trace the history of Italian emigration to Western Australia back to 1846 and to the arrival of the Benedictine Fathers, some of whom were Italian. But this is not entirely accurate as some Italians, such as Dr Giustiniani, a nobleman and physician, were to be found in the new colony as early as 1836. (1)

According to the writer Mary Durack, it was a certain Captain Irwin who during a visit to England, encouraged the doctor and Methodist minister, Luigi Giustiniani, to emigrate in order to care for the souls of the whites and the Aborigines along the Upper Swan River in the north of Western Australia.

Still according to Mary Durack, Giustiniani arrived in 1836 and settled into a house built especially for him in Guilford where he had a small church erected also. The settlers were perplexed to hear that English was not one of the many languages the minister spoke fluently. They further discovered that he was a moody character given to uncontrollable outbursts of rage and that he had been a Jesuit priest and Lutheran minister. (2)

On the other hand, according to a more plausible version of the facts, Dr Giustiniani abandoned the priesthood and the Jesuit order after gaining a degree in Rome and went to Germany where he converted to Lutheranism and married a woman who was herself a Lutheran. Then having moved to Great Britain he became an Anglican. Giustiniani was a man of many talents, fluent in English, German, French and Italian. He could converse in Latin and Greek, knew Hebrew and Syriac and was a qualified doctor. (3)

Within a few months of his arrival in the colony he had established large vegetable gardens and had begun to raise cattle which he then left to the Aborigines to look after. He also took to defending the Aborigines against the large landowners, cattlemen and sheep-farmers. Indeed, in 1837 he was the first white man to defend the Aborigines in the Perth court where, as C.T. Stannage tells us, he was ridiculed and censured. (4)

Towards the end of that year the Western Australian Missionary Society fired him. Thus he left the colony but not without first having

published an account of his discoveries in the *Swan River Guardian* and having denounced the treatment handed out to Aborigines. (5) In 1846 the first group of Italians arrived, together with several Benedictine monks. Their Superior, the legendary Rosendo Salvado, had been given the task of founding a Benedictine abbey and undertaking the conversion of the Aborigines.

During a visit to Rome to be consecrated the first Bishop of Perth it was Bishop Brady who encouraged Don Salvado, José Serra, Angelo Confalonieri from the shores of Lake Garda in the Trento region, and Canon Aldo Raffaele Martelli from Ancona, together with 24 other priests, seminarists, nuns, and catechists, to come to Australia to dedicate themselves to apostolic work in his vast diocese. Another of the group was Nicola Caporelli, a layman from Rome.

There were only about 300 Catholics under Bishop Brady's care but he was looking, above all, for missionaries to convert the Aborigines. (6) The group set sail from England on the frigate *Elizabeth* on 17 September, 1845 and arrived at Fremantle on 8 January, 1846 after 113 days at sea. (7)

Father Angelo Confalonieri was given the task of starting a mission for Aborigines at Port Essington, in the far north. (8) Canon Aldo Martelli went to work for Bishop Brady, the local bishop. (9) We shall look more closely at these two priests in the third part of this book when we deal with the Italian contribution to religious life in Australia.

Nicola Caporelli was sent by Pope Gregory XVI – on his own request – as Honorary Pontifical Consul General of the Papal State, a title which was never recognised by Earl Grey, the British Colonial Secretary.

He must have made some inappropriate remarks soon after his arrival because in 1847 he apologised through *The Inquirer* newspaper for comments attributed to him about the Catholic Church in Perth. (10)

He was also an expert viticulturist and wine-maker. As soon as he arrived in the colony he leased a vineyard near Morgers Lake from William Leeder and in March 1847 he produced some excellent wine. On 13 March, 1847, *The Perth Gazette* published an article on Caporelli saying, among other things: "The unflagging perseverance and the praiseworthy efforts of Mr Caporelli in promoting the cultivation of vineyards since his arrival in the colony 14 months ago, deserves the most heart-felt thanks of all the community." (11)

It seems though that Caporelli left the colony on 25 November, 1848 headed for Waterlilly in Tasmania. He must have invested some money in the Western Australian Mining Company before leaving because it is known that he lost shares in the same company in October 1850.

The second group to reach Western Australia was assembled by José Serra who had returned to Italy to be consecrated Bishop Co-adjutor to the Bishop of Perth. It was an extremely critical time, not only for

the Catholic Church, but also for the entire colony of Western Australia which was close to collapse.

This group comprised eight Spanish Benedictine missionaries, an Irish one – Fr. Domenico Urquhart – and Fr. Salvatore Marino from Naples, together with 32 lay religious brothers who were craftsmen, of whom 25 were Spanish and seven Neapolitan. Those from Naples were Bonaventura Alsino, Giuseppe Ascione, Agostino Balsamo, Nicola Filomena, Mauro Rignasco, Raffaello Rizzo and Francesco Ventura.

On 6 October, 1849 they embarked on the *Ferrolana* at Cadiz and arrived at Fremantle on 29 December after 85 days at sea. (12)

There were good stonemasons and builders among the Benedictine brothers. The most famous was Brother Giuseppe Ascione. He took charge of the construction of the Santa Maria Cathedral after having, in 1858, completed a period of work in Bishop Brady's office. (13)

These events in the lives of the Benedictines of New Norcia are recounted by Don Salvado in his *Memorie Storiche dell'Australia*. There is very little other information about Italian emigration in that part of Australia until 1877. We know only that a certain Bartolomeo Argenti, a sailor, settled at Albany in 1855.

Giovanni Marchetti, himself a sailor from Venice, arrived in 1856, and in 1867 Giuseppe Marselli, "convict no: 9517", came out on the convict ship *Norwood* after having been convicted of murder in Edinburgh in 1865. Some years later he was pardoned and settled in the colony. Giuseppe Marselli from Leghorn was a wood-cutter and shipwright.

A certain Antonio Pettini was married in Greenough in 1868. (14) The Benedictines opened a station in the same year at Marah, about 80 miles north of New Norcia, which was run by an Italian, Brother Benigno, for over 25 years. (15) Some small rural communities that included Italians sprang up in the south-west. Names such as Della (from the Valtellina district) and Aquilia (from North-Eastern Sicily) appear among them in the 1870s. (16)

In 1877 the Superintendent of Police reported to the governor of the Swan River settlement that there were only 13 Italians living there, although some had done so for 20 years. The report, prepared at the request of the Italian Consul-General in Melbourne, confirms what is already known about the period in which the first Italians arrived and also that there were few of them, but it furnishes us with no other details. The figures, as we have seen elsewhere in our account, should not be taken too literally. In fact, according to other historians, another group of Italians arrived between 1840 and 1850, some from Grottaferrata and other from Capo d'Orlando. (17) This group was probably the first lot of Sicilian fishermen who were joined, towards the end of the century, by a large group of fishermen from the Puglie. Unfortunately it has been impossible to find any evidence of their presence. Of the 13 mentioned in the Superintendent's report, only

one, Giuseppe Marselli, was a fisherman, and he was also a boat-builder. The Neapolitan Gaspare Ferrari, on the other hand, was a botanist; he had arrived on the same ship as the Benedictine monks and had taken up wine-growing. Four others were religious men, four worked on ships and three were farmers. It appears one of these was Giovanni Battista Demas, from Padua, who in 1880 owned vast stretches of grazing land at Greenough Flats. (18)

One must conclude as does Carlo Gamba that, in reality, "it is not clear how many Italians there were". (19)

It has to be another 10 years before the number of Italians had grown sufficiently so that more reliable figures could be collected.

Large scale inter-colony and foreign immigration to the West took place in the second half of the 1880s. It occurred as a result of the great demand for labour in public works, such as the building of railways, roads, waterworks and ports, and also because of an economic crisis which struck the eastern colonies, particularly Victoria and New South Wales. There was also the discovery of rich goldfields and the creation of farming laws (1892) that were considered the most liberal of any in the colonies. (20)

Many Italians, especially from Lombardy, moved to the colony of Western Australia attracted by the opportunity of making money.

There are many examples of this internal migration of which the following are but a few: Eugenio Vanzetti and Lodovico Gianini moved there from Broken Hill; Giuseppe De Piazzi arrived in 1893 after having worked for two or three years in Victoria; Giulio Davini emigrated to the west in 1894 after having worked in New South Wales and New Zealand; Pietro Zappa moved to Kalgoorlie in 1899 after having left Italy in 1877 and then worked in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales. (21)

From 1885 to 1892, and again in 1895, the Italians of the alpine valleys in Italy experienced particularly difficult times because of the harsh prolonged winters and poor crops. The cold and the torrential rains made their already miserable lives even more precarious, and the spectre of hunger was ever present.

So it was that the most courageous among them decided to join their relatives and friends living in a distant land. With time it became more common for people to leave. This is how that tradition of chain emigration, that lasted many years, began. Among those who came from Italy were Emilio, Carlo and Angelo Genoni, brothers who arrived together in the late 1880s. Another brother, Giovanni Battista, joined them in 1894. Two of the Armanasco brothers emigrated in 1894 while the third brother, Agostino, arrived in 1898.

From 1888 to 1896 a total of approximately 244 Italians came to the colony, 32 of them from New South Wales, 107 from Victoria and 97 from South Australia; the rest came directly from Italy.

Another large group of about 853 reached the colony between 1896 and 1900; only some 183 of them came from the eastern colonies, all the others arriving from overseas. (22)

ROYAL COMMISSIONS IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

From the beginning of the century Italian immigration to Western Australia grew substantially. From 1900 to 1905 about 2,450 Italian migrants arrived directly from Italy or other countries, only some 30 coming from the other Australian States. From 1905 to 1915 another 5,478 men and 486 women added to these figures. However, the greatest increase occurred between 1911 and 1915; it appears the main causes were the war with Turkey of 1911 and imminent world conflict. (23)

These migrants had made Australia their second choice after the United States because it was rich in land and mineral resources, but by the time they arrived mining was on the decline. It became even more difficult therefore to find work, while money was needed to take advantage of the much publicised farming boom. Thus they moved into the numerous mining centres in search of work or cleared bushland for landowners, or did other farm work in the Lawlers, Southern Cross and Laverton areas. They also worked on the construction of railways, roads and waterworks. Some small groups of Italians obtained permission to start up their own mines. In the Kanowna district, for example, six Italians obtained a licence to open a mine. Others spent their lives as solitary, wandering prospectors; their exact number is not known but according to the eyewitness accounts of some elderly citizens it must have been quite high.

Some worked as manual labourers in the South-West of the State, or earned their livelihood as green-grocers, fishmongers and wholesalers or organ-grinders. (24)

This sudden influx of Italian migrants into the mining areas once more alarmed the unions and Labor politicians who did not delay in calling for a government inquiry to ascertain if these Italians were being brought in under proper employment contracts, or secretly, with nothing more than verbal agreements. Their demand was based on the "Commonwealth Immigration Restriction Act 1901" which prohibited "any person from performing physical work in the Commonwealth of Australia under a contract or an agreement". Consequently a Royal Commission, known also as the Roe Commission after the Commissioner who headed it, was set up to investigate "Foreign Contract Labour in Western Australia". (25)

The Commission was not able to establish the truth or otherwise of the claims. It merely compiled a list of the various accusations made by the unions and those who had sold out to discriminatory union policies.

Among the Italians questioned Giovanni Genoni had this to say about himself: "I am a carter by trade and have been in Western Australia seven years. I came of my own free will to see if I could make some money and was willing to do any work at all. My first job

after I arrived was carrying out maintenance work on the Great Southern Railway. Then I worked in a sawmill...and I am saving money to buy myself a farm. There are many Italians who save up to buy themselves some land. Some of them in fact are already looking for good land on which to plant vineyards. In their own villages they did not have enough to survive; and since there are just too many people there they prefer to come to Australia where many of them have settled permanently." (26)

Another witness, Agostino Armanasco, owner of a hotel in Kalgoorlie, said: "I know of no man who signed a contract in Italy to come here. They come here because they need to make a little money to buy themselves some land, as others have done. When they arrive they have little money but no Italian comes here to starve. There is always a friend to meet them at Fremantle or Kalgoorlie or Coolgardie... There is always someone who can give them work... Australians don't work out in the heat and therefore that work goes to Italians." (27)

The Commission realised that Italian migrants came to Western Australia quite independently without being bound by any contracts. They were motivated purely by economic necessity and often turned to their compatriots already living there for help in finding work.

The Commissioner in his report stated that "it is absolutely clear that these foreign workers receive the same pay as British or Australian workers, whether in the mines or out clearing the bush".

But what the Royal Commission did not perceive, or did not want to acknowledge, was the need to help and protect migrants when they first arrived. As the migrants did not know the language and were ignorant of union regulations and the marketplace, they were often exploited. It was not unusual for some middleman to turn up to greet the Italians as they disembarked. This person would offer to find them work in exchange for small compensation for himself and £5 sterling for the foreman, to be deducted from the migrant's paypacket at the rate of £1 per week. Often, however, once the agreed amount was paid, the migrant would be sacked in order to make way for someone else to be exploited. (28) In this way Italians and other migrant groups fell victim to these jackals. The Italians were hardly treacherous schemers working against the interests of the unions and local workers!

Even the union representatives who called for the Royal Commission had been careful to point out that their opposition to foreign labour was based principally on economic reasons. The General Secretary of the Goldfield Trades and Labour Council stressed that as far as he and the majority of workers were concerned anti-Italian sentiment was not based on racial considerations. "As long as it appears these people come to Western Australia with the idea of settling and becoming citizens and assimilating, we have no objection to their coming." (29)

Hardly two years had elapsed when, in 1904, the Italian community found itself once more under attack, not from the Commonwealth this time but from the State. It was a case of similar accusations made by the same people. Italian workers were accused of accepting below award rates, of receiving preferential treatment from employers to the detriment of Australian workers and of immigrating on the basis of secret or verbal contracts. (30)

The State Royal Commission headed by the Minister for Mines, A. Montgomery, found the charges were without substance and, as the previous one had done, limited itself to making recommendations. It suggested, for example, that Italians should not be allowed to work where explosives were used. The inquiry's report also stated that "there are rumours about the supposed violation of wage rates by Italian workers, but this Commission has been unable to find any convincing evidence that such a state of affairs exists. The depositions in support of the abovementioned rumours have been misleading and not worthy of credence. We have noted that a certain preference is shown for Italian workers in some mines, but the reason indicated by employers is that the Italians, unlike the British, do not reveal how work is proceeding to a company's competitors or how the plans for a mine are developing. (31)

The British Consulate in Genoa helped to prove the Italians were not being used to force wages down. It brought to the attention of the Commission articles that appeared in numerous Italian newspapers, discouraging or indeed condemning emigration to Australia. (32)

The mine owners and managers made no secret of their preference for Italian workers and gave their reasons quite openly. The manager of the *Great Boulder Mine* at Kalgoorlie explained the reasons for employing Italian labour as follows: "We employ Italians in our mines to increase our efficiency. I think a man must be free to do what he wants. The unions want to control all foreign workers and I think there is no advantage for Italians in belonging to unions. I am not of a mind to have too many Italians in any one mine. Their efficiency depends on being few in number and mixed in with British workers." (33)

The same thoughts were expressed by the manager of the *Western Australian Firewood Supply Company*: "If only a certain percentage of each nationality is represented and no group is allowed to dominate then work is done more efficiently; if a group is allowed to become strong it starts to control everything." (34)

A period of quiet followed the 1904 inquiry. Italian miners continued to be employed and appreciated by everyone except the unions. But the war of nerves continued and the hostility towards migrants did not abate. Neither the Commission nor the statements by employers or unionists succeeded in dispelling the myth of the Italian as a 'job-stealer'.

From 1901 to 1946 the situation remained more or less the same. For this reason it is difficult to accept the often repeated and convenient

argument that the opposition to migrants was motivated purely by economic considerations. The Australian historian D. Pike is more likely to be correct when, after having examined Italian immigration to this country, he concludes that "the labour movement always concentrated its efforts on attempting to keep Italians away from Australia or away from work". (35)

Even the Consul Zunini in his book *L'Australia attuale* denounced the different forms of racism directed towards Italians in Australia. "According to the working masses, Italians occupied a place somewhere between the Chinese and the blacks. I am not exaggerating at all when I say that they were often called 'blackfellow'. In fact the case of the Irish woman who refused to go to Italy after having married one of our countrymen is typical. To the judge who asked the reason for her refusal she answered, caught between astonishment and indignation: 'But Your Honour, do you believe a British subject could consent to living in a country of blacks?' These were her very words." (36)

"It seems strange," continues Zunini, "that feelings of hostility were nurtured towards Italians when our community was always composed of respectable, hard-working and industrious people. These feelings of hostility seemed to be a mixture of dislike and disdain. Italians were despised because they were Italians and because they were workers.

"The smaller local newspapers certainly did not help create a more favourable climate. Attacks against foreigners, and Italians in particular, had become commonplace. Any pretext was good enough to lash out at the abhorred 'dago'." (37)

Two years later on 26 August 1909 the Federal Labor Member for Kalgoorlie resumed these attacks in Parliament, though fortunately they did not come to anything. He said: "These Italian rogues who do not know a word of English arrive in groups of six or a dozen people and go directly from their ship to the mines, where the British look for work in vain." (38)

ITALIAN EMIGRATION AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The beginning of the first global conflict brought a halt to immigration by Italians and other national groups until 1919.

In 1919 the first Australian servicemen to ever serve in a European war returned home.

Once more the proverbial powder-keg went off in Kalgoorlie. During an argument with two ex-servicemen an Italian drew a knife killing one of them and seriously injuring the other. The old hatreds which had never subsided flared up and groups of young hooligans, ex-servicemen and vandals began terrorising the Italian community, breaking into their shops and homes. They took over hotels owned by Italians, stealing money, looting and destroying furniture and equipment.

A deputation from the Returned Soldiers League announced that all Italians without families had five days to get out of Kalgoorlie and Boulder. Terrified women and children were forced to seek refuge in nearby bushland where they stayed until things settled down a little. (39)

There were those who defended the Italians. *The Kalgoorlie Miner* bitterly censured the authorities and the police for not having prevented the attack against the foreigners and not offering them any protection.

A Kalgoorlie lawyer wrote a letter to the Colonial Secretary in defence of the Italians: "Without doubt you are aware of the raids against Italians and of the looting of their belongings at Kalgoorlie and Boulder ten days ago, and of the destruction and plundering of their properties by the mob. In addition to having lost their personal belongings, these people were forced to abandon their homes and the hotels they own to spend a very cold winter's night out in the open. Two men among these claim that the police made no effort to prevent the destruction and the theft of their goods. Furthermore, the fact that there were no arrests, or perhaps only one or two, and that there was no official inquiry into these events seems to show, without the slightest doubt, that the worst suspicions and accusations are true." (40)

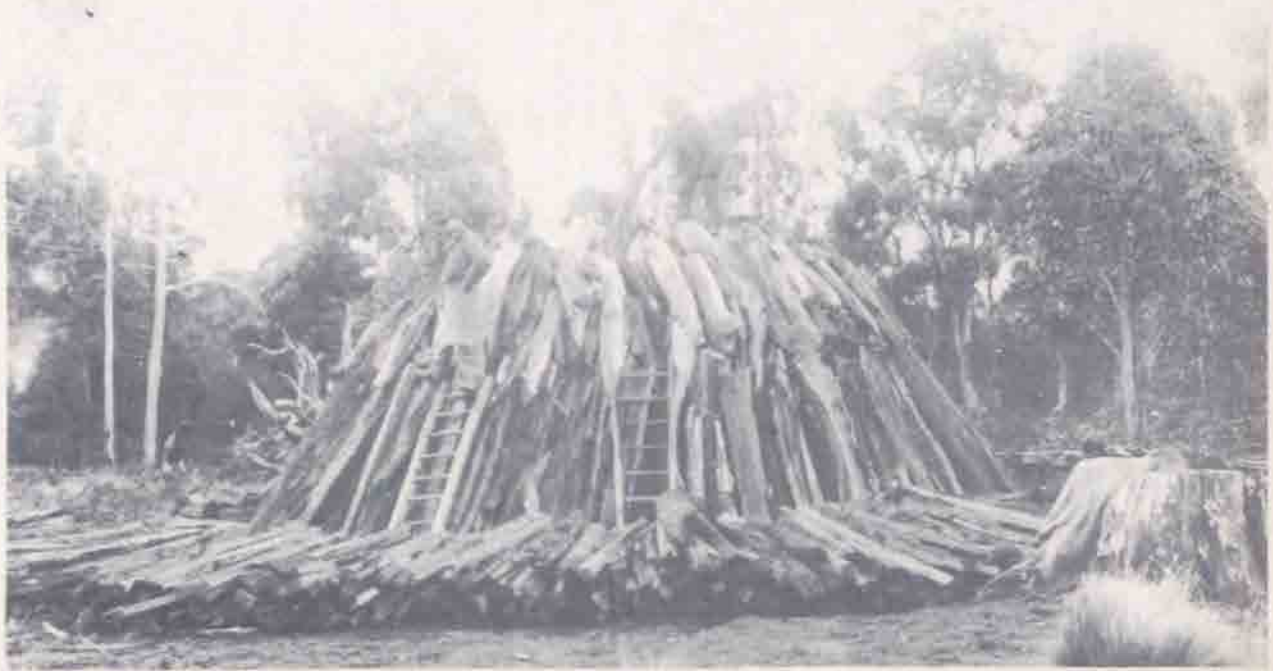
In response the Under-Secretary said that the Government did not recognise any claims for compensation. To add insult to injury, the breweries required the Italian owners to repair their hotels as quickly as possible, under threat of having to pay for any repairs carried out by the breweries themselves. (41)

Many left the district and the work in the mines to go to Perth or went into the bush searching for work as timber-cutters. Their families followed them, gradually moving to localities where they could settle down to live in dignity and peace.

Italian emigration to Australia recommenced the year following these violent events on a much larger scale than before the war. Between 1922 and 1926, 2,413 Italians arrived in Western Australia. In the five years between 1926 and 1930 the arrivals increased to 4,533. The Great Depression of the 1930s, combined with the new Italian policy on emigration, reduced the numbers of migrants from Italy between 1931 and 1935 to 1,936, and to 1,958 in the five years immediately before the Second World War. The total number of arrivals was therefore 9,950 for the period between the two wars. (42)

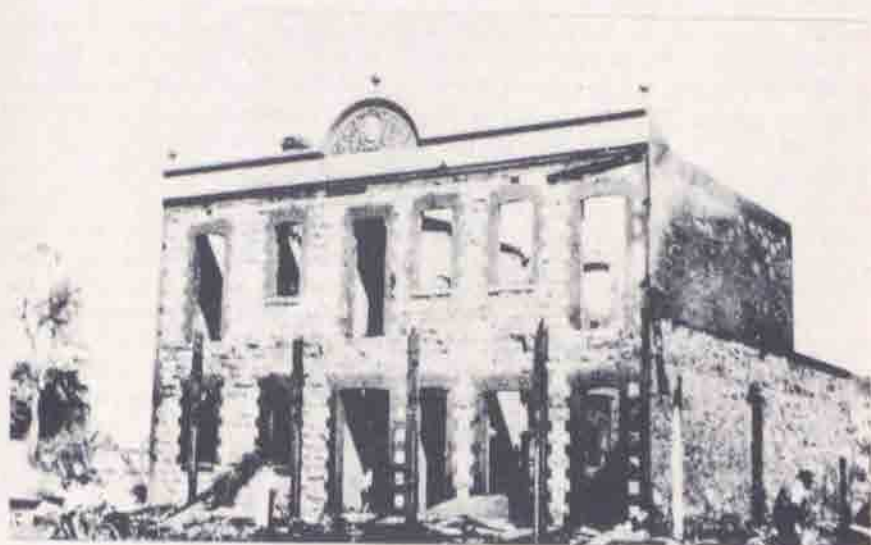
Many of the newcomers went directly to Perth and Fremantle and the surrounding district. But once more the majority settled in the farming areas, especially along the coast, near the Swan River and around Harvey. There was a decline in the numbers going to the Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie and Leonora districts. In conclusion, although there was a shift towards the towns, 57% of new arrivals still preferred to live in rural areas.

Preparing a coke stack





*The remains of Dingbat Flat and (below) the Home away from Home Hotel after the
not of 1934*



THE GREAT DEPRESSION OF THE 1930s

The Great Depression of the 1930s brought unemployment, hunger and suffering and re-awakened the hostility towards migrants. Its effects were felt by everybody, but migrants were especially hard-hit. Many of them had neither family nor friends to turn to for help.

From 1929 the number of homeless continued to grow and families were turned out of their homes because they could not pay the rent. Furniture and personal clothing were impounded and sold to pay off debts. Many migrants without families did not even have an address where they could receive mail. Unemployed migrants were denied normal government assistance.

"The Italians," writes C. Gamba, "did not seek this help, but rather did any work at all to obtain food and a roof over their heads." (43)

During the Depression only those mines supported by American investment continued to operate and grow. Gold was the only marketable resource left. The unemployed poured into the mining areas from every corner of the State and from South Australia. Kalgoorlie was swarming with people in search of work. The local residents were lost among those who arrived from the city and surrounding countryside. Those who spoke another language stood out, as did those who were readily identifiable like the Italians with their black felt hats and peculiar shoes and their own particular mannerisms, or like the Yugoslavs with their high cheek-bones.

These Italians and Yugoslavs soon became targets for the hostility of the unemployed, as though the migrants were the cause of their ills. If the migrants had jobs, then suppressed hostility exploded into overt displays of hatred because it was felt that the work, by rights, belonged to the Australian unemployed.

So it was that in January 1934 another bloody incident took place, once more at Kalgoorlie; the most serious and shameful in the history of that mining town. There had been other disturbances before but nothing like this. It all started with an argument. (44) A popular Australian Rules football champion called Jordan refused to pay for the beer he had drunk at the "Home from Home" hotel, run by Claudio Mattboni, an Italian from the Valtellina.

When the Australian was thrown out of the hotel he challenged the Italian to a fight which the latter refused because the challenger was drunk. However, after a torrent of abuse from the footballer the hotelier responded with a blow, which was all it took to make the other man bite the dust. Unfortunately, as he fell, the Australian hit his head against a rock and died a few hours later. The night Jordan died the local riff-raff burnt down the hotel and the wine shop, then they poured into the streets and continued setting fire to houses. The following night they burnt down other hotels in Boulder. By that stage the situation had reached flashpoint. During a gathering in Boulder's Burt Street, the decision was taken to never again work alongside foreigners, who were accused of every manner of thing.

Coming from that rabble of miners and unemployed who were mostly drunk, could be heard phrases the like of: "...now we'll clean these dagoes out once and for all; we'll burn them". By the third night it was obvious something was about to happen. Indeed, after having burnt down the foreigners' hotels and shops only their homes were left. The small but neat houses had not been built in town but on land leased from the Ivanhoe mine. Whilst they were not very sturdy and had not been constructed according to building regulations, they did great credit to their owners who had started from scratch.

A second large gathering took place in Kalgoorlie's Richardson Street on that same night, during which the first dynamite explosions and gunshots were heard. Under the influence of alcohol, the locals burnt down the migrants' social club and then attacked the European quarter, burning down 50 of their houses and once more terrorising women and children who were forced to seek refuge in the bush. For three days men armed with guns and "molotov cocktails" hunted "dagoes". Two people were killed and many injured while more than £65,000 worth of damage was done. Eight people were arrested although several were later set free. However, despite the condemnation by the press and the lack of support from the politicians, the miners stood firmly by their decision not to return to work unless all Southern Europeans were first sacked. The mine owners were faced with a dilemma; they were convinced that it was not right to sack workers because of their nationality.

Therefore, as had occurred before in similar circumstances, they solved the problem by putting the poor Italian and Yugoslav miners through a dictation test, which was certainly not going to resolve the problem of whether to employ them or not. Naturally most of the foreigners lost their jobs, and the few who passed the dictation test preferred to leave voluntarily. "It is sad," observes the author Wendy Lowenstein at the conclusion of her account of these events at Kalgoorlie in 1934, "how the most unexpected things can happen to a peaceful community. And those attacked were really good people." (45)

But the tribulations of these unfortunates did not end in 1934. The war alienated the Italians from the Australians even further. Friends became enemies and Italians were at times interned indiscriminately. The officers and crew of the ship *Remo* which, at the outbreak of war, happened to be in Fremantle, were arrested and imprisoned. The movements of Italian farmworkers and commercial travellers were restricted. Fishermen had their fishing licences revoked and their boats confiscated. Some Italians working in the mines were transferred to Perth for security reasons. Italian soldiers made prisoner in Northern Africa were transported to Australia.

NOTES

- 1 - J.S. Battie, *Cyclopaedia of Western Australia*, Perth, 1912.
- 2 - Mary Durack, *To be heirs forever*, Corgi Ed., 1979, pp. 125, 126.
- 3 - Gentili, Stransky & Iraci, *Italian Migration to Western Australia, 1829-1946*, p. 7.
- 4 - C.T. Stannage, *The people of Perth*, Perth City Council, 1979, p. 40.
- 5 - Cf. Gentili, Stransky & Iraci, op. cit.
- 6 - P. O'Farrell, *History of the Catholic Church in Australia*, Brisbane, 1977, p. 76.
- 7 - *Dom Salvado's Memoirs*, University of Western Australia Press, 1977, p. 22, (published as *Memorie storiche dell'Australia*, Propaganda Fide, Rome, 1851).
- 8 - *ibid.*, p. 8.
- 9 - P. O'Farrell, op. cit., p. 52, (Cf. G. Capra, *Gli emigrati italiani nell'Australia Italiana*, Genzi, Turin, Anno III, June-September 1912, nos. 6-9, p. 203).
- 10 - Caporelli, as Consul, probably warned the Passionist Fathers who were about to leave the Stradbroke Island mission, near Brisbane, not to go to Western Australia because of its primitive conditions. Cf. Gentili, Stransky & Iraci, op. cit., p. 8.
- 11 - *Perth Gazette*, 13/3/1847.
- 12 - Dom Salvado, op. cit., p. 104.
- 13 - J. Oldham, *Western Heritage*, Peterson Brokensha, Perth, 1961, pp. 92, 67.
- 14 - Gentili, op. cit., p. 9.
- 15 - *ibid.*, p. 4.
- 16 - *ibid.*, p. 9.
- 17 - "La Fiamma", in *Ricordo del Santuario di Sant'Antonio*, Melbourne, 1969.
- 18 - Gentili, op. cit.
- 19 - C. Gamba, *The Italian Immigration to Western Australia - Uni. of Western Australia*.
- 20 - G. Capra, *L'italiano in Australia e Nuova Zelanda - Guida Pratica*, Ditta Francesco Vassone, Ivrea, 1914.
- 21 - Gentili, op. cit., pp. 11, 12.
- 22 - C. Gamba, op. cit., p. 20.
- 23 - Gentili, op. cit., p. 17.
- 24 - C. Gamba, op. cit., pp. 23, 24.
- 25 - "Report of the Commission on Foreign Contract Labour in Western Australia", (A.S. Roe, Commissioner), in *Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers 1901-1902*, II, pp. 871ff.
- 26 - D.R.G. Packer, *Italian Immigration into Australia*, thesis, University of Melbourne p. 76.
- 27 - *ibid.*, pp. 76, 88.
- 28 - R.G.R., 1902, p. 13.
- 29 - D.R.G. Packer, op. cit., p. 79.
- 30 - *Report of the Royal Commission on non-British Labour in Western Australia, 1904*.
- 31 - D.R.G. Packer, op. cit., pp. 79, 80.
- 32 - N. Randazzo, "Gli italiani in Australia", in *Ricordo del Santuario di S. Antonio*, Melbourne, 1969, p. 86.
- 33 - *Report of the Royal Commission...*, op. cit.
- 34 - D.R.G. Packer, op. cit., pp. 79, 80.
- 35 - Pike, *Some Reflections on Italian Immigration into Australia*.
- 36 - Leopoldo Zunini, *L'Australia attuale - usi, costumi, agricoltura, industria, commercio*, Società Tipografica Ed. Naz., Turin, 1910, pp. 6, 9.
- 37 - *ibid.*
- 38 - N. Randazzo, op. cit.
- 39 - C. Gamba, op. cit., pp. 35, 36.
- 40 - *ibid.*, pp. 36, 37.
- 41 - *ibid.*, p. 37.
- 42 - *Borne, Italians & Germans in Australia - A.N.U. Melbourne, 1954*.
- 43 - C. Gamba, op. cit., p. 40.
- 44 - *ibid.*, p. 40ff.
- 45 - Wendy Lowenstein, *Woevils in the Flour*, Hyland House, Melbourne, 1978, p. 1230.

15- ITALIANS IN THE GOLDFIELDS

The events that took place in the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria between 1850 and 1860 were repeated with the same intensity at the end of the century in the colony of Western Australia. The discovery of abundant alluvial gold was like honey to bees. And indeed, those who came from every part of the Australian continent and the world in search of their fortune were truly as numerous as bees around a honeypot. It was an overwhelming flood of human beings of every race and class, of prospectors and opportunists. They moved from one place to another at the slightest news of the latest find, at times leaving thriving centres looking like ghost towns.

The first discovery of alluvial gold which was made by Charles Hall in the Kimberleys (1) sparked the first actual gold rush in the West. Other discoveries were made in the Pilbara district; gold fever, however, did not last long. In 1887 some small gold deposits were found in the Yilgarn district, 330 miles east of Perth. But the first proof of the fabulous wealth hidden in the desert came from Arthur Bailey and William Ford when they discovered the rich deposits at Coolgardie in September 1892. In the space of a few days they collected 534 ounces of gold dust. (2)

In June 1893, three Irishmen, Paddy Hannan, Thomas Flanagan and Dan Shea collected 200 ounces of gold in small nuggets over two or three days in another locality called Kalgoorlie-Boulder (known also as the Golden Mile). They did not even have to dig for it. Over eight years £20,000,000 worth of gold was dug out of the Golden Mile. (3)

The colony's population went from 27,000 in 1891 to 100,000 in 1895 and to approximately 200,000 by the end of the century. The Italians, as already mentioned, were among the first to arrive and continued to do so in growing numbers. Even though it is said that Italians are not adventurous by nature and believe more in hard work and a steady job, there were those who, struck by gold fever, sought to follow the risky and tough life of a gold digger. These Italians set off with a swag over their shoulders, a water bottle around their necks, a billy-can, a few provisions, their pick and gold pan, to endure hardship and privation as they travelled across the limitless and still unexplored plains. (4) The majority though was drawn to the mining area because there was a demand for labour and because they were hoping

to find other Italians there to help them get work quickly, since they themselves did not speak English and had no one else to turn to. The mines were always in need of extra hands. They relied entirely on timber to strengthen mine-shafts and passages, as fuel for engines providing electricity and compressed air, to power drills and create ventilation, to draw water and work the mills and sift the gold.

Not all Italians were prepared, or able to be, wood-cutters. To begin with it was worse than miner's work; it meant the wood-cutters had to live in the bush, often far from town, with little water and in unhealthy conditions.

Another job at which Italians, particularly from Lombardy, were experts was the processing of coal used extensively by blacksmiths and in purifying the ore.

The mining area began 300 miles east of Perth at the point where the officially recognised rural zone ended and it continued on for another 300 miles. Along this area the famous gold-rich centres of Southern Cross, Coolgardie, and Kalgoorlie-Boulder sprang up and development then moved northward as far as the Kimberley region.

Today many of these places seem more desolate than ever; once the bush was cleared only a few shrubs were left here and there. Towns which had been once full of life are now uninhabited and abandoned ghost-towns.

"Sadness, solitude, the sense of an oppressive weight," wrote G. Capra in 1907, "this is what one feels passing through these places. Here and there the land has been disturbed, dug up...at other spots piles of earth indicate the 'prospect' had appeared good and attempts had been made to work the location. Elsewhere one can see abandoned mine-shafts, flattened corrugated iron shacks, the remains of the tables on which thoughtful and feverish workers had eaten, empty jam, meat and milk tins scattered about, broken bottles, battered pots and pans, all testifying to a period of intense but short-lived activity; the spent bullets of a lost battle; evidence of a life endured with pain which had come abruptly to a halt, the humble left-overs of wasted hopes...A stone with an inscription, a rough wooden cross, often stood out to indicate that under that arid earth, which only spring covered in green and flowers, a digger, a miner, an Italian was at rest waiting for eternal resurrection, perhaps dreaming of another life of well-being and splendour, without the worry of survival." (5)

SOUTHERN CROSS

The town of Southern Cross sprang up in the district of Yilgarn following gold discoveries in the area. It grew rapidly and, just as quickly, fell into obscurity. It had, however, opened the door to the east for tens of thousands of prospectors. It was the first stop on the way to the great fields of Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Broad Arrow, Menzies, Leonora-Gwalia and Laverton further north.



The labour of the mines...but any work would do, especially early on, and when times were hard.

They were forced to live in hovels without any basic necessities or comforts.





The great majority of Italians worked as 'wood-cutters'...



...or 'choppers', or, when transporting timber, as wood-carriers...

...or cleared the land for farming.



Several mines in the Yilgarn district to the south of Southern Cross, such as Marvel Loch and Parker Range, remained active for many years.

The Yilgarn district was the first gold centre to attract a large number of Italians and a few made their fortune in a short time.

The first was certainly Luigi Jacoletti who on 23 July 1889 left Southern Cross together with William Ford and George Withers and made for the south in search of gold. Having lost their way, they followed a flock of migrating birds until they reached a small oasis where they decided to camp for the night. While they were inspecting the terrain around the spring they discovered some alluvial gold dust. The following morning, as they moved along the dry creek bed, they found plenty of gold nuggets and gold dust. They marked off the area with pickets, calling it *Native's Grave*, and left to stake their claim. They later sold it for £300. Ford and Jacoletti stayed on a while to work for the new owner. Meanwhile Jacoletti found another large deposit near Marvel which he called the *Jacoletti Mine* (6) and which turned out to be so rich that it continued to yield gold right up to 1944. In 28 years 42,000 tons of earth were crushed to produce 6,000 ounces of gold to the value of £2,800,000. Together with a few others, the Jacoletti Mine became legendary in the history of the Western Australian gold rush. (7)

Eugenio Vanzetti, a metallurgist and prospector, was another pioneer who contributed considerably to the development of the colony. After having worked until 1892 as a mining engineer at Broken Hill, Vanzetti moved to Western Australia in search of gold. He formed and ran a London-based company which controlled the *Golden Pig* and *Haddon* mines, as well as others, all situated in the area around Southern Cross. The biggest problem there was the lack of water, needed to wash the crushed stone. Vanzetti came up with a plan to transport the stone to where supplies of water were abundant. In 1895 his company bought land at Seabrook in the Mortlock area and there he built a water reservoir and a plant for cleaning the gold. The Government agreed to provide him with cheap rail transport for his gold; in exchange his company would also use the government railways to transport all its general provisions, materials for the miners and, above all, the water for the mine workers and their families. The plan though came too late, because soon after, a pipeline was laid all the way to Kalgoorlie.

Vanzetti also bought some large farms where he employed 25 families brought out from Italy specifically for that purpose. (8)

The most well-known and admired Italian was Eric Carnicelli, the owner of eight gold mines. He was reputed to be a millionaire at the age of 50. His parents, who were among the first Italian settlers in Western Australia, owned a property in the Southern Cross district, about 50 miles from the town. When he was nine, Eric used to travel ten miles a day to and from school with his younger sister. They would put their shoes on when they were within sight of the school

and on their way home in the afternoon, wrapped them in a sack and hid them in a bush. Their mother told how she too had to walk ten miles in order to meet the butcher who passed through those parts twice a week. There were no refrigerators then and one can imagine what happened to the meat in summer.

The lack of water was another problem. In summer the Carnicellis were entitled to only 200 gallons of water a week which had to be brought all the way from Southern Cross. (9)

In 1908 several miners and wood-cutters had settled in the district with their families and had either bought land, small shops or mines. Others worked on the construction of the Perth-Kalgoorlie pipeline.

The 1911 Postal Directory offers some valuable information, although we must not forget that it lists only those who owned houses, businesses or farms. Therefore, labourers in the bush or those who lived in hotels, guest-houses or tents are not mentioned. At Yilgarn we find: G. Antognoli, H. Bertali (or Bertelli), A. & L. Della, G. Massa and B. Pelosi; at Parker Range: G. Depaoli, R. Filamatti, A. Fomicatti and D. Negri who owned two mines in partnership with a certain McMahon; at Democrat, near Marvel Loch where Carnicelli was well-known, Pasini had his own mine, *The Lady Agnes*. (10)

In 1928 a certain R. B. Panizza settled in the Southern Cross district. After having worked in the Mt. Isa mines in Queensland for six years, Panizza bought 400 acres of land at Southern Cross. H.A. Dellabosca instead bought a business near Yilgarn. Finally, Pietro Mazza in 1946 became owner of the *Christmas Gift Gold Mine* where he had found a rich mineral deposit.

COOLGARDIE

In 1892, Coolgardie, where Bailey and Ford had found their first golden nuggets, was the scene of a new gold rush. The usual flood of prospectors poured in, arriving on foot, on horseback, by camel, on bikes, in wagons - by any means possible. They ignored exhaustion and privations, of which the worst was the lack of water. (11)

The fossickers laboured in their thousands on the plains around Coolgardie, planting the characteristic stakes or pegs, a piece of red cloth tied to them, at regular intervals to indicate their claims, which in many cases (but not always) offered good returns.

In just a few years, almost magically in the midst of these comings and goings, a graceful town grew up. Tents and bush dwellings were quickly replaced by equally simple structures made of corrugated iron or timber, which in turn were replaced by timber and stone dwellings.

The numerous Italians who had come had also endured the tough conditions of a prospector's life. They travelled through those vast and desolate plains tormented by an unending and feverish anxiety. (12) They became even more numerous when drilling work began in search of veins of gold. Large quantities of timber were needed as mine supports and for fuel to drive motors. The surrounding forests were cut down and the Italians showed themselves to be the best at this type of work. (13) The story of their life at Coolgardie, as in all the mining and gold-digging areas, was among the most distressing because of the solitude, desolation and neglect in which they lived. Accidents on the job were also quite common, the chronicles of the day telling of several cases.

One accident that cost the lives of three Italian miners in the Jacoletti mine left an indelible mark in the minds of the local population. (14)

Another three men, among whom was Pietro Mozza, were buried alive 220 feet below the surface during a cave-in at a Boulder mine. One was killed instantly while Pietro Mozza and his other companion saved themselves by seeking refuge in a pocket without being able to escape. The rescue team worked for 94 hours to save them. (15)

One Sunday morning, Mr D. Harper, the father of the Western Australian gold rush, saw an Italian who was patching up his boots and told him not to be so miserly but to go and buy himself a new pair which cost only four shillings and sixpence. The Italian told him that that pair had to last one more shift. In fact they did, because once down in the mine he was killed instantly by a rock that fell on his head. (16)

It was in a Coolgardie mine that the most sensational accident in all of Western Australia's mining history occurred. Modesto Varischetti was buried in a flooded mine 1,000 feet below the surface for nine days.

The 19th March 1907 was a particularly hot day at Coolgardie. Modesto Varischetti went down alone to escape the heat and at the same time to be ready to begin his four o'clock afternoon shift; he slowly made his way to the tunnel at Level 10. On the surface a sudden storm broke. The creek beds flooded and began to overflow till a great raging body of water made its way in through the mouth of the mine. Before any one realised it, the water had, in no time at all, filled the Level 10 tunnel. The workers who were going down for their four o'clock shift took refuge at Level Nine and struggled to make their way back to the surface. Only Varischetti was missing. Fortunately for him he had found refuge in a passage connecting Level 10 with Level Nine where an air pocket had formed. That something of the kind had happened, was also the one ray of hope the rescue crew had as they began their work. The following morning the mine's manager took charge of the operation after having alerted the Department of Mines. He went down into the mine himself as far as tunnel number Nine where, once he had gone 365 feet further on, he began striking the rock floor at intervals with a hammer. After a

few moments a weak tapping sound was heard in response; Varischetti was alive. There were two ways of trying to rescue him; by pumping out the water, which would have taken time, or by using divers. The rescuers chose the second option. Inspector Grabbe telegraphed the Department of Mines in Perth requesting divers be sent immediately; they arrived by train at four o'clock Friday morning. Meanwhile, Varischetti's Italian friends kept in constant contact with him using a sort of morse code that was common in the zinc mines in Italy. Nine days later, after several attempts and at grave risk to himself, one of the divers brought him to the surface, safe and sound although suffering from shock and exhaustion. Enthusiastic and grateful applause broke out among the crowd as it greeted his courageous, bold and generous rescuer. "As soon as they heard of this courageous act, our miners at faraway Charters Towers in Queensland had a commemorative gold medallion struck and given to him through the Italian Consul in Brisbane." (17)

KALGOORLIE

In June 1893, the year following the discovery of gold at Coolgardie, the famous Patrick Hannan pushed on with two companions a further 40 miles to the east and made the most sensational gold discovery in the history of Australia. Without pick or shovel, and in only three days, these Irishmen collected 200 ounces in small nuggets which lay glistening in the red sand of dry creek beds in the middle of a frighteningly desolate country. (18)

At the news of the discovery, published in Australian and overseas newspapers, the usual wild rush took place, and just as Coolgardie had overshadowed Southern Cross so Kalgoorlie-Boulder overshadowed Coolgardie, turning it into what is now perhaps the most famous of Australian ghost towns. There are only a few stone buildings that recall the past of this once beautiful town, full of life and movement, with a population of 20,000 people today reduced to little more than 500. 34,000,000 ounces of gold were extracted from its mines.

Despite the race towards these new discoveries a good number of Italians stayed in Coolgardie. Among them were wood-cutters and miners such as G. Gherardin, J. Lampi, and S. Buttini, building contractors such as L. Borseria and C. Magetti, cokemen such as L. Rodegari, hotel-owners such as C. Boco of the Grand Bar Hotel and Mrs L. Godenzi of the Freemasons Hotel, shop-owners such as C. Lardi and bakers like M. Bigliotti. (19)

By the end of the same year more than 2,500 prospectors were moving through that "immense, arid, sandy, rocky and treeless plain" which was the district of Kalgoorlie.

In 1895 the first mines such as the *Great Boulder* and the *Wealth of Nations* were opened and within 14 years a prosperous town of 25,000 people sprang up. In 1907 the mines had increased to nine and had already yielded 9,495,000 ounces of gold. (20)

Between 1896 and 1902 more than 500 Italians were working in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder district. But their number fell away because they had no union and the native-born Australians were, as usual, hostile.

Post-First World War migration again saw an increase in the size of the Italian community which, however, precipitated the terrible events of 1919 and 1934. In any case a strong contingent of Italians remained in the district. By the turn of the century several of them were self-employed and were already very well-off. Others spent their time looking for gold having obtained their own licence. We do not know their names, only that six had obtained miner's rights and that they were working in the Kanowana district, several miles north of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. Of the prospectors at least two became well-known figures in Australian history because of the riches they accumulated. One of these Italian pioneers who certainly did not lack a spirit of adventure and a love of danger was Giulio Davini.

Davini, born near Lucca on 12 June 1846, emigrated to Australia at the age of 23. Having arrived in Sydney, he was sent to work in the copper mines at Cobar, a small town 723 miles to the north-west. A year later he went to work on the construction of the Bourke railway line. From there he moved north-east to the Richmond River where he grew sugarcane for seven years. Giving this up he spent a short time in New Zealand, then returned to New South Wales and embarked on a ship for a visit to Italy where he remained for a year. On his return he settled in Western Australia and worked on the construction of the Southern Cross-Coolgardie railroad. Once the trunk-line was finished he let himself be lured to the mines where he worked for various companies, after which gold fever drove him and a friend to prospect on their own. Early in 1899 they struck it rich and he became co-owner of the *Hidden Cross Mine* with Lodovico Gianini. (21)

Lodovico Gianini came from Montagna, a small town in the province of Sondrio, and he arrived in Melbourne in 1887 at the young age of 20. As soon as he had disembarked he was put on a train and sent to the Broken Hill Mines, more than 1,000 miles from Sydney and deep in the heartland of the colony of New South Wales. He stayed until 1892 when news started to filter through about rich gold discoveries in Western Australia. Dropping everything he took off in search of his fortune. In Western Australia he worked first at the mines in Coolgardie, Lake View, Boulder and others in the Golden Mile.

Then with George Mayman he set off to look for gold. He was one of the first to arrive at Kurnalpi where he spent a couple of years. He

backed the development of the *Hidden Secret Mine* discovered by Davini, becoming its principal shareholder in 1899. It made him rich. (22)

Almost all the Italians who had been living at Kalgoorlie-Boulder for several years had their families with them by now and owned their own homes; their wives were Italians or first-generation Australians. The new arrivals and the majority of miners were bachelors and therefore led a nomadic existence; they lived in poor encampments or boarded in Italian hotels. (23)

The Italians living in Kalgoorlie-Boulder fell into the following categories: six were hoteliers (four in Kalgoorlie, two in Boulder) employing some 30 others of their countrymen; four were mine-owners, six shop-keepers and businessmen, one was an engineer, two were bakers, one the owner of an eating-house and one a carpenter. There was also a commercial agent, a doctor, a statuette vendor and just over 150 miners and mining company employees, as well as three single women (one from Romagna) who ran a dress-making shop and a laundry. (24)

"The four hotels owned by Italians in Kalgoorlie," wrote G. Capra in 1907, "were all situated in Hannan Street, the main thoroughfare and meeting-place for the Italians of the town and the nearby working districts. I called a gathering of Italian families in Robustelli's hotel and we took the opportunity of celebrating the engagement of a Tuscan miner to an Italian girl born in Australia.

"In the Sandonini hotel, which was the most popular, I arranged two meetings of Italians which finished up being very festive and cordial, reminiscent of gatherings in our distant homeland." In the account of his visit to Western Australia G. Capra also noted that: "Dr Spina is waiting to practise his profession and is the head of the Italian community in Kalgoorlie, a head without a body because unfortunately nothing unites the Italians and many do not even know each other. Mr Vallono, a Neapolitan, sells Italian foodstuffs, particularly oil, noodles, cold meats and the like. Two men, one from the Valtellina and the other from Val d'Aosta, work in the Catholic school and at the convent. Indeed, quite a few Italians work for religious institutions, especially as gardeners or purveyors." (25)

TOWARDS THE NORTH

Numerous mining centres had sprung up for 1,000 miles beyond Kalgoorlie-Boulder. They were most evident in the Menzies and Leonora-Gwalla districts (1898) and to the north-west around Mt Magnet, Cue and Day Dawn (on the Great Northern Highway) and around Lakeside.

Before the end of the century the Italians in the Menzies district (1895) were very numerous but by early 1900 their numbers had dropped dramatically because work in the mines had either slowed or had ceased altogether. At Woolgar, for example, the Italians were

not to be found in the mines but instead felling mining timber deep in the bush. (The area was not suitable for farming because of a lack of rainfall). "The lives our countrymen led," wrote Capra, "were sad, uncomfortable and lonely. Similarly, the Italians at Kookynie (1900) could be recognised by their shabby clothes and the characteristic absence of a tie." (26)

Murrin Murrin (1897), Mt. Morgan (1899) and Mt. Prat were all active mines. The closure of a mine in 1907 put over 200 Italians out of work. Further north-east the mining centre of Malcolm, near Leonora-Gwalla, (1897) had sprung up. There were about 20 Italians living there, two of whom had their families with them. East of Malcolm, there were some 60 other Italians scattered over a distance of 100 miles who had no contact with each other. They were mostly wood-cutters. (27)

THE LEONORA-GWALLA DISTRICT

Many mines were to be found at Leonora-Gwalla, among which the biggest was the *Sons of Gwalla Mine*; it could easily have been called an Italian mine as it employed so many of these migrants, almost all of whom were from the Valtellina or Bergamo.

Within six years the mine, which opened in 1896 at the height of the gold boom in Western Australia, had produced gold to the value of £27,500,000.

The mine was discovered by Welsh migrants and was immediately bought by British companies. But all the miners were Italian, and the mine manager was a young American. (28) Over 150 Italians were employed at Gwalla, yet only 10 had their wives and families with them; the others had wives in Italy or else were bachelors. Two had either married local women or were living with them anyway. 110 of these Italians worked in the mines and the rest at felling timber. "About 15 were unemployed because of the general mining crisis that also affected Gwalla at the turn of the century. The Italians suffered because employers, to their own detriment, preferred to employ British workers." (29)

However, the Italians remained at Gwalla and raised their own families. This made their lives more stable and helped them integrate into the local communities, so much so that by 1936 they and their descendants made up 40% of the population. The *Sons of Gwalla Mine* continued to provide work for the people of the district for over 60 years, although at first the mine had been very dangerous to work in. Several Italians who lost their lives in it were buried in the cemetery on the other side of Mt. Leonora.

The following families formed the nucleus of the Italian community for many years: Mazza, Columbo, Calneggia, Valli, Pozzi, Piandalli, Zappa, Richetti, Varischetti, Mosconi, Patroni and Tagliaferri. The Quarti family was among the most well-known and respected in the area.

In Leonora itself there were only the Pelletti and Fannetti families, both of whom were market gardeners, while six miles out of town the Giudici family had a well-established poultry farm.

That part of Gwalla where Italians lived was called 'Italian Camp', and in its time was divided into two areas: those from Bergamo lived down below, while those from the Valtellina lived further up the hill. Like almost everyone in Gwalla they too lived in modest corrugated iron houses, covered in a rough hemp cloth, either whitewashed or sometimes painted in blue or pink.

Beside their houses many Italians erected a canopy to provide shade in which to rest out of the hot summer sun, or under which they gathered with friends to play cards. (30)

THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY IN DAY DAWN AND DISTRICT

The next mines to be developed after the Kimberley, Ashburton and Gascoyne gold mines were the ones at Peak Hill and Murchison, which were still active in the first decade of the twentieth century. Several hundred Italians worked in the Day Dawn and Lakeside mines, and in the bush at Nallan Nallan. There were also others scattered about the mining areas and elsewhere in the bush.

The size of these districts was equal to the size of Northern and Central Italy and they were ideal for prospectors in their frantic search for gold.

From 1887 to 1895 many Italians worked at Yalgoo until the mines there were closed and abandoned, and allowed to return to nature. Yet, within a radius of 60 miles, there were 14 other mines. A number of Italians who lived and worked at the Boolardie mine became very rich.

Another 300 or so Italians were employed in the mines at Thunderlarra and Yuinyurri where they also cut timber. And although the Mt. Margaret, Lennonville and other mines eventually shared Yalgoo's fate, Italians not only worked one of the mines at Lennonville but actually owned it. "Day Dawn...might easily have been an Italian town because the streets were full of Italians and the majority of workers were Italians, and the air resounded with the babble of different Italian dialects." (31)

G. Capra is not the only one to testify to the presence of Italians in the Day Dawn district. The Australian author H.H. Wilson confirms it in her book *Gateways to Gold* and, perhaps painting an overly dark picture, describes the poor working and living conditions of these immigrants.

For various reasons, the *Great Fingal Mine* in the Day Dawn district drew hundreds of Italian miners who all gathered to live in a quarter known as "Sky Town".

Italian migrants, forced to leave their homeland because of difficult times, were known as 'eyeties' in Australia. But despite earning more money, many found their new lives to be even more cruel. The heat was unbearable and that vast treeless and waterless landscape seemed like hell on earth.

They had to adapt to living in miserable shacks without any basic necessities or comforts. Enteritis and dysentery were common ailments which killed many of those who avoided miner's phthisis (silicosis), a slow death.

The Italians were so desperate to work and make money to send back to their families in Italy that they accepted work that Australians refused as being too dangerous.

The mining authorities did not always provide water to keep down the dust in the mines, and ventilation was bad. However, many Italians did not use water even when it was available.

After a long and suffocating shift underground these men returned to the surface where they had to endure nights of stifling heat. The Italians were not physically equipped for this kind of work, although they were always prepared to work hard. It hardly needs to be said that they dropped like flies.

The "eyeties" were pleasant, hard-working men but the members who died were frightening. They occupy a section of the cemetery near Cue and sections in cemeteries in Italy. Many Italians returned to their home towns and their loved ones, only to die soon after. Despite the wealth and the adventure associated with the *Great Fingal* these deaths took the shine off the gold.

The Italians did not only carry out heavy mining work. Day Dawn owes them a vote of thanks for the construction of its beautiful and distinguished stone buildings, so irresponsibly demolished or allowed to fall into ruin. The offices of the Bewick Moreing Mining Company, which are still standing, the stationmaster's cream-coloured stone house, the post office and – most impressive of all – the railway station "were all built in 1898 by Italian stonemasons", says H.H. Wilson, "many of whom had come to work in the mines but had found the work underground too hard... Not only was their stonework perfect but the overall design of the buildings was attractive". (32)

G. Capra, during his visit to the Italians in Western Australia in 1907, also makes a point of mentioning the large number of injuries among Italians who worked in the mines and the even greater number of those who became ill as a result of the work. At Day Dawn there were two hotels run by Italians: the Cosmopolitan, owned by Mr G.B. Fango and the BCX Garbora, owned by Mr Garbora from Tortona. There was also a general store run by Italians. (33)

Before concluding this section on the Western Australian gold mines we should mention those other Italians who worked for the Murchison Gold Company in the gold mines along the Murchison River. Having been opened in about 1891 they still yield 10% of the State's total gold production.

At the end of the last century an ugly incident took place precisely in the Murchison district. Leslie R. Menzies recounts it in his book *Gold Seeker's Odyssey*: "The manager of the mine brought in some Italians prepared to work for lower than award wages. The other miners felt wronged and when the Italians arrived at the mining camp they were confronted by a violent demonstration. The more extreme members of the group, armed with pistols, rifles and butchers' knives marched towards the Italian encampment and began to shoot wildly. Several Italians and other miners were killed. The government was forced to intervene and ordered the mine manager to sack the Italians immediately." (34)

WOOD-CUTTERS AND COLLIERS

There were always large numbers of Italians who worked as wood-cutters, work which was worse than mining as it transformed them into brutes. Wood-cutters lived in bush camps far from other human communities, with little water and often in unhealthy conditions.

The vast Australian bush can be a grassless desert of eucalypts, acacias, tamarisks, and deathly oppressive silence. It is also often a treacherous labyrinth in which an unwary traveller can be lost, never to be found again. This happened to some Italians who worked as wood-cutters, - 'choppers' - or wood carriers.

The south and south-west of the colony have become famous for producing timber for construction and export. "This area has always been very rich in those timbers which are particularly valuable building materials because they are resistant to white ants, parasites and other pests. The greatest demand was for Jarrah and Karri, the former especially for wharves, bridges, railways and roads. These trees reach 260 feet in height and have a circumference of 39-42 feet. Tuart, Redgum and Wandoo are other trees of the eucalyptus family that provide timber." (35)

Already at the beginning of this century, there was large scale clearing of forests to create rich farmland and the Italians took part in this work, their numbers increasing considerably right through the first decade, particularly because of the mining crisis. It was easy to go from clearing bush to farming.

Italian wood-cutters were to be found in the areas of Yarloop, Northcliffe, Shannon River, Karridale, Jarrahwood, and in the districts of Nannup, Manjimup, Pemberton and elsewhere. At the beginning of this century Italian wood-cutters came from every part of Italy, but with time the Southerners constituted the majority. However, there was a solid representation from lower Lazio, Tuscany and Lombardy. At Yarloop, for example, the Italians, who were mostly Tuscans, Venetians and Sicilians, worked as wood-cutters transporting timber with

the aid of 15 or 20 bullocks set in pairs or in a line, and which later was loaded on to trains. About 30 worked in the saw-mill at Williamsburg.

At Greenbushes, another 50 or so Italians under a foreman from the Valtellina, supplied fuel to the local tin mine and cleared land for farming. In the mining areas Italians were the sole suppliers of timber to the mines.

"The wood-cutters live in groups of five or ten, in clusters of tents, and in the morning they leave in groups of four or six, going off in various directions with an axe over their shoulder, a sack with provisions around their neck, and in their hand the usual billy-can for their tea. They return at sunset when they are tired, to light the fire to cook their own food." (36)

"What a strange sight they present at night. The groups are set apart by their own fires which they light near their tents and which that night were blazing awesomely high reaching up to the clear and starlit southern sky. Italians from nearby tents gathered around the closest fires. An amazing gathering. It seemed a nocturnal meeting for God-knows what dark and terrible conspiracy. But the bronzed countenances of those gentle men who conspired together only to earn a crust sparkled with joy, and the red flickering flames lit up the smiles and the expressions of rapturous wonder on the faces of those lost brothers who were happy to see me, hear me talk in that wild and distant place about their homeland, their families and their loved ones. What pity I felt for those poor Italians reduced to little more than beasts by their oppressive toil and solitude. About 50 Italians, among them two young women from the Valtellina, had already collected around the last fire I stopped at; one woman was recently married and had arrived in Australia one month before me. She was still disoriented and cried a lot in disbelief at finding herself in such a desolate place, lacking the most basic and ordinary comforts, and with only a tent and the naked earth as its floor for a home. This change is very hard for a woman to accept, especially if she has to be on her own all day.

"They filled the air with Italian songs and I politely urged them to be close, exhorted them to help and love one another. For even in the bush Italians do not bother to get to know each other and yet if there is one place where knowing and helping one another and staying together is necessary, it is precisely in this deserted and lonely bush. I then told them to do honour to themselves as Italians, especially by keeping away from drink and gambling, and after bidding them good-night I retired to my tent. Their shout of 'good night' was an answering chorus in the bush which echoed in the air, carrying to the far-away encampments, from whence an answer in kind seemed to return. It was an emotional moment and I saw many Italians furtively wipe away a tear as it furrowed their moist cheeks, perhaps their first experience of such sweet emotion in so many years of rough and heavy work which would brutalise the most civilised of men." (37)

THE 1908 WOOD-CUTTERS' STRIKE: THE ITALIANS DEMAND JUSTICE

In the first months of 1908 quite a lot of Italians were sacked because of an oversupply of timber and because the mines were cutting back production. These Italians were forced to look for work elsewhere as did about a dozen of them who were forced to leave Lakeside; others faced the same fate. It was said that this was in retaliation for the strike by the wood-cutters at Kurraqang which had spread to other centres, threatening to close down the mines.

The strike ended with the wood-cutters winning a pay increase and in addition obtaining the free supply of water to their homes.

This is what G. Capra, a witness to the strikes, says: "I questioned Mr Collins who is in charge of the wood-cutters, and Mr Coughland who handles provisions for the mines, and showed my concern at how my fellow countrymen who were without work – some since their arrival from Italy – were being treated.

"They reassured me and asked me to reassure our countrymen that it was only a passing crisis and that no preference was given to the other workers – as the Italians feared – nor were the Italians being sacked so that native Australians or the British could be hired instead. It happens though, and unfortunately it happened at Lakeside, that some unemployed British miners were hired to work in the bush while at the same time several Italians were sacked on the pretext that there was not enough work.

"I was told that this injustice, which Mr Collins admitted existed, was not always easy to redress because there were too many complications and too many local interests involved, and because our countrymen would find the powerful workers' unions against them. The same Mr Collins would not be as free in future to take on foreign labour, even less Italians.

"Our friends – Mr Collins said to me kind-heartedly – are too defenceless." (38) This was sophistry: pretending the Italians were the cause of everything, making them out to be innocent and defenceless victims only because there was no one to protect them. On many occasions, the Italians were accused of taking work away from others, of working like negroes and at lower than award rates. Here is further proof for the blind men of the unions who have never wanted to see, and even less, admit the truth of how Italians are treated.

"In July of the same year," continues Capra "the wood-cutters from Nallan Nallan 30 miles from Day Dawn, of whom about 200 were Northern Italians and some were Southerners, presented a petition for better pay and improved working conditions. The petition was knocked back and in August they went on strike. Conditions in the bush around Nallan were worse than those in the bush around Kalgoorlie. The wood-cutters had to provide their own water, often travelling five or six miles to fetch it. General foodstuffs cost a third

more than at Cue with a two pound loaf of bread being six pence rather than four pence, meat nine pence and tea one shilling and 11 pence.

"They asked especially for five shillings and sixpence per ton of wood cut instead of five shillings and made it known that in order to obtain the asked-for improvements they would have been happy with five shillings and threepence. Those who loaded the timber received eightpence and were asking for one shilling. For one and a half months the mine managers held firm while the small mines were closing down and the big ones were using up their coal. Then, when the big mines were threatened with closure because of a lack of coal and increased operating costs and because there were rumours of all the other wood-cutters in Western Australia going out in support, the affair was referred to the Arbitration Court. Its judgement left matters as they were, except for a threepence increase which raised the price of loading each ton of timber to 11 pence. At a large meeting it was decided not to accept this offer, however much the British, who were mainly loaders and therefore the ones mainly favoured by this judgement might have wanted to accept it. Everybody declared themselves to be of one mind in this.

"The strike leaders were a Briton, an Italian and an Australian, representing the nationalities that made up the bush workers. The Italians, who were the ones most in need of justice and the most intransigent, (they wanted to show that the accusation of working for lower rates and of not being loyal to their workmates was false) stood guard in the bush to stop work starting up again, even if it involved simply the loading of timber which had already been felled. More than a few Britons had tried to cart timber away, failing to show that kind of worker solidarity they had promised. In the meantime, deliberately, slanderous rumours were circulating and found their way into the newspapers. They were meant both to frighten the Italians and to show them in a bad light.

"Supposedly, those who did not return to work by the Monday were to be considered unemployed vagrants without visible means of support and would be made to leave. There were stories about armed threats, about the Italians possessing explosives, about bloody deeds, about dangerous characters who would not balk at committing a crime, stories about foreigners who stole other people's jobs. They were rumours which respectable people gave credence to..." (39)

The strike was kept going for another month, especially by the Italians who saw themselves often being betrayed by the British. All the mines were closed down at different stages, until the intervention of Mr Moore, the Western Australian Premier, fully supporting the strikers and the Italians, settled the matter.

NOTES

- 1 - John Larkins, *Dictionary of Australian History*, Rigby Publishers, Melbourne, 1980, p. 106.
- 2 - *ibid.*, p. 58.
- 3 - H.H. Wilson *The Golden Mile*, Melbourne, 1977, p. 157.
- 4 - Giuseppe Capra, *Gli Emigrati Italiani nell'Australia Italiana* Gens - 1912.
- 5 - *ibid.*, p. 210.
- 6 - M. Uren, *Glint of Gold*, Melbourne, 1948, p. 31.
- 7 - H.H. Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 14, 27 (Cf. J. Gentilli, C. Strausky & C. Iraci, *The contribution of Italian migration in Western Australia, 1829-1928*, p. 6).
- 8 - O.D.S. Garden *Northam: an Avon Valley History*, OUP, Melbourne, 1979, pp. 141, 142 (Cf. J. Gentilli, *op. cit.*, p. 7).
- 9 - H.H. Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 23, 24, 25.
- 10 - J. Gentilli, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
- 11 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 211.
- 12 - *ibid.*, p. 212.
- 13 - *ibid.*, p. 214.
- 14 - H.H. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- 15 - *ibid.*, p. 18.
- 16 - M. Uren, *op. cit.*, p. 208 ff (Cf. Bill Beatty, *Tales of old Australia*, Sydney, 1966, p. 92 ff).
- 17 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
- 18 - H.H. Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 156, 159.
- 19 - J. Gentilli, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
- 20 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
- 21 - J.S. Battie, *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia*, Perth, 1912, p. 363.
- 22 - *ibid.*
- 23 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
- 24 - *ibid.*
- 25 - *ibid.*, pp. 224, 225.
- 26 - *ibid.*, pp. 236, 238.
- 27 - *ibid.*, p. 239.
- 28 - Bill Peach *Peach's Australia*, Clayton, Victoria, 1976, p. 127.
- 29 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 243.
- 30 - Norma King, *Western Australian Goldfields*, Rigby, 1980, pp. 106, 113.
- 31 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, pp. 264, 266.
- 32 - H.H. Wilson, *Gateways to Gold*, Rigby, Melbourne.
- 33 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*
- 34 - L.R. Menzies, *Gold Seeker's Odyssey*.
- 35 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*
- 36 - *ibid.*, p. 227.
- 37 - *ibid.*, p. 230.
- 38 - *ibid.*, p. 229.
- 39 - *ibid.*, pp. 267, 269.



A. sugar cane plantation

Italian cane-cutters in Ingham, North Queensland





They raised a family...

...and improved their property.



16 – THE GROWTH OF FARMING AND FISHING

Between 1905 and 1921 most of the Italians left the mines and the bush to go into farming or start a business. This trend increased to the point that by 1930, 57% of all Italians had made the transition. (1)

Rarely could recently arrived Italian settlers buy land, even when they arrived during the farming boom. The majority had to find work in the mines or in the bush as wood-cutters or with the Government in public works or as farm-hands. Dejected, many decided to return home, although before the end of the nineteenth century a lot of Italians had already invested their savings in farms. As well as the three or four farmers mentioned in a police report of 1877, a few years later we find other Italians buying farms in the Jarrahdale district a few miles south of Perth. One of these was the only market gardener in the area, and had previously been a wood-cutter for several years. (2)

Some Italians had already settled at Kalamunda in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Among them was a man whose name was Arduino and who came from Ormea in the Ligurian Apennines. He and his brothers had become very successful having planted an orchard that extended as far as the eye could see and a vineyard which was even bigger; it was like being at Monferrato. A little further on there was another Italian and his son who had vineyards and land under intensive mixed farming. (3)

Further north-east in the district of Northam, a town situated in the Avon Valley, 107 miles from Perth, a certain Robustelli had bought a 30-acre property some time before 1890. He had emigrated in 1880 with his family from Grosotto in the province of Sondrio.

The land around Northam was good for growing grain and fodder, for raising cattle and, as well, it was rich timber country. In 1890 some substantial gold deposits were found there and these attracted several thousand prospectors. That same Robustelli had worked in gold mines before buying his farm.

The Consul Zunini visited the Robustelli family in 1890 and made the following observations: "Robustelli made up for a lack of money with hard work and sobriety. In a few years he paid off his debt and transformed his land into an oasis." (4)

In 1908 G. Capra also met Robustelli at Northam during his visit to the Italian community in Western Australia. "Mr Robustelli from the Valtellina is a well-loved and respected person, so much so that when I went with him to his farm I noted with satisfaction how everyone greeted him by name. This sign of respect in a foreign land, especially in one inhabited by the British, who often believe they are the only people in the world capable of achieving anything, gladdens us and remedies somewhat the unwarranted concept of us that has been given by ill-informed persons. Besides, this gentleman is a model Australian settler whose example should be followed by all.

"He worked on the great water pipeline between Perth and Kalgoorlie and he used his savings to buy uncultivated land. At first life was bitter and difficult for him as he lived in a hovel covered with leafy branches and bark. His good wife from Lucca, who was the daughter of one of the labourers working under Robustelli on the pipeline, shared his squalid existence and was a source of consolation to him. He had become engaged without having met her, relying on what her father told him about her; and she came out from Italy immediately, bringing her mother and two other sisters who married Robustelli's brothers, both of whom were miners at Kalgoorlie. He owns a vast farm of over 250 hectares where he was everything that honest work can provide; wealth and respect. He also has another 400-acre holding where he employs a team of Italian workers to cultivate it. His house is a haven, especially for those Italians who are without work. They are always going to Robustelli's place; I myself met two of them who were on their way there. But, wise man that he is, Robustelli always tells them, even if they are Italian: 'If you want money, work for it. I shall give you work for two days, for a week, although I do not need more workers, and then I shall pay you what you are owed. You will find food and lodgings here with me and my family'.

"His property was one of the most beautiful thereabouts and yet he was not very happy this year because of the lack of rain. In fact he wrote to me that the previous year [1907] he had harvested an abundant two and a half tons of wheat per acre, while this year he had only got one and a half." (5)

The construction of the Perth-Albany railroad and of the South Western and Great Southern Highways opened up the southern part of the State to agricultural development and land subdivision.

Much of this land was assigned to native-born Australians or to British migrants who immigrated on assisted passage, believing the land set aside for them was similar to English soil. They soon realised though that it was quite different: not very fertile, rather sandy and arid, and received little rainfall.

Discouraged, many of them abandoned or sold the land, and either poured into the towns of Perth, Fremantle and Geraldton or returned to Britain. Much of the land was bought by Southern Europeans, particularly Italians. Accustomed to long hours of hard work, they transformed it into a green oasis of vegetable gardens or pasture for

dairy cattle: "The districts of Osborne Park, and further south of Balcatta, Wanneroo," writes Carlo Gamba, "are perfect proof of the excellent work done by these Italian migrants." (6)

A number of Italians who had helped build the railroads and highways went south after having saved enough money to buy themselves a little of that virgin land.

In 1897 Emilio, Carlo and Angelo Genoni, brothers who had emigrated from the Valtellina in the 1880s and had worked on the construction of the Albany-Berkeley railway and then in the Coolgardie gold mines, bought 3,000 acres of uncultivated and uncleared land near Bromehill. (7)

By the end of the nineteenth century several Italians had settled to the south-west of the town in areas such as Kojonup, Bridgetown, Dardarup, Katanning and Tambellup. A certain Pietro Painsi was among the first in the area to open an account with the National Bank. (8) Others from the Valtellina - A. Ferrari, Giuseppe Imberti and Angelo Marinoni - settled in the district in the first decade of this century.

In 1906 P. Zunini, the Italian Consul in Perth, chose some large tracts of land in the same area to be given to Italian families to clear and cultivate. "The Consul's plan did not come to fruition for various reasons: because of the opposition within the Italian Government to the Southern deputation [which supported the scheme], the opposition of the Labor Party which threatened to greet the settlers with guns and because of the poor impression the general Australian population had of Italian migrants. They had been described not as settlers but as vulgar individuals and were called all the usual things that our people generally are." (9)

Italians had bought properties along the Great Southern Railway: Maffesconi, Moretta and Togno at Tambellup, and M. Negri at Wagin, and Canali at Cuballing. (10)

Similarly, Italians settled in numerous districts along the South Western Highway. "You could see the expert hand of our peasants at work" in the farming districts of Pinjarra which were under full cultivation and beautifully developed. (11)

"About 15 years ago, around 1896, three small houses belonging to Italians from the Valtellina - Gunelli, De Pizzi and De Marco - sprang up almost magically 12 miles from Bunbury which is a small seaport and one of the main farming towns in the farming districts of the south-west. Tired of the hard work in the desert mining regions and being lovers of freedom and the greenness of the fields, they came to settle here where they bought some private, and some Crown, land." (12) Others such as the Valle brothers from Teglio, together with Resta and Mammone, followed their example. (Mammone was such a strong worker that he spent his youth in the Queensland and Western Australian mines.) In the early 1900s there were some 10 Italian farmers with families who owned properties bordering on each other. Some had brought over their elderly

parents. There were 17,000 acres of prime land under cultivation, equal to 688 hectares, almost all under intensive farming. Vines, peas, potatoes and fodder were grown and some land was left as pasture. (13)

Mr Gemelli, who worked tirelessly (the only bachelor, he cultivated a good 200 acres on his own), tried to grow mulberry trees but found they did not do well and they produced too few leaves for the silkworms. (14)

"Every farm has a name. Some named their farm after their home town: for example, 'Teglio'." (15)

Waterloo, about 16 miles north of Bunbury, had a small Italian community. Out of a total of 39 Italians there were 11 men, eight women and 20 children. The land was vast and fertile, and given the favourable climate the Italians had transformed it into a luxuriant garden. (16) Even today certain names linger on: Barbetti, Bertelli, Damiani, Della, Del Marco, De Piazzì, Di Zotti, Garbellini, Gelmi, Giumelli, Marconi, Morellini, Pedretti, Reata, Vella. (17)

The districts of Donnybrook, Balingup and Newlands also attracted Italians for many years. They were all miners or wood-cutters and came from the Valtellina area, from Tuscany and Piedmont in particular. (18) Today the Italian names still found in those districts, such as Torrisi, Cavallaro, Patané and Licciardello, are mostly from Norther-Eastern Sicily. (19)

Still south of Perth and in the dense Karri (*Eucalyptus diversicolor*) forests, there were some Italian families who had given up wood-cutting to raise dairy cattle. Another large group at Coorrianup worked as share-farmers, having been given houses, sheds and enough pastures for 20 cows and two draught horses. In exchange they had to raise calves until they were eight months old and clear a certain area of bush for the landowner every year. The family could use the land they cleared and would be given more cows. After five years these families had generally saved enough money to buy their own farm. Already by 1911 the two Recapoli brothers and a certain Gervasini owned properties in the Kuling district west of Lake Jilakin. (20)

Quite a few Italian families or families of Italian descent bought properties in the Kalgarin and Pingaring districts. They were a close-knit community, helping each other on the farms, spending their leisure time together, sharing common religious observances, and eventually marrying within their own community. (21) The number of Italians in the district continued to grow especially because of the presence of Italian POWs during the war. Many of these prisoners returned after the war, sponsored by the same Australians they had worked for as labourers, this time coming as free men to work on the railways or again on the Australians' farms. (22)

One of the families in this area were the Belli. "It is said," writes author H.H. Wilson, "that during the first seven or eight years, when goods and provisions were brought from Hopetoun by horse-driven cart, a Catholic priest would come by boat from Albany and then

would ride on Mrs Chambers' supply wagon to Ravensthorpe in order to celebrate Mass. During those times when a priest was not available, the Catholics of Ravensthorpe were helped by Tom Soranson and the Belli family who for several years had owned a property at Kundip." (23)

North of Perth, about 60 Italian families had moved to the edge of Geraldton where they mainly grew tomatoes. Some 50 other families lived in the Murchison district along the river where, it is said, the most fertile land in the State was to be found.

There were also Italians at Guildford, the most important wine-producing centre in Western Australia. Among them were a Mr Rossi, who managed a large tavern, and two qualified Italian viticulturists. (24)

Closer to Perth the Italians worked as market gardeners. For many years market gardening in Australia was usually associated with the Chinese and yet the Italians also managed to carve out a niche for themselves in the business, by importing and growing a large variety of vegetables more typical of European tastes and not yet known in this country, such as certain types of lettuce, cauliflower, artichokes, zucchini and green beans. For obvious reasons market gardening developed near towns and large centres such as Perth, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie. One of the main problems was finding the right type of soil, some soils being more suited to growing celery or beetroot than lettuce. Consequently some market gardeners initially worked for little return. The best known Italian market garden areas were Osborne Park, Wanneroo and Balcatta.

Among the earliest fruit and vegetable growers in the Perth district were: Guelfi (1903-4) in Osborne Park; Masengo and F. Marsengo (1903-4); Fomiatti (1908) and Antonio and Maria Grisafulli (1912) in Wanneroo (among the first tomato-growers); Torris (1909) a vegetable grower in Beaconfield and Spearwood; P.L. Vicci in Armadale (1911); F. Piaggio in West Guildford; Maria in Swan; A. Menebrea, an orchardist in Darlington; P. Zanetti, an orchardist in Heidelberg and Pietro Zanetti a strawberry farmer in Kalamunda; Armando Pondelli and Giuseppe Busato, wine-growers in Toodyay. (25)

The success of the Italians in the areas around Perth brought others into the business and market gardens sprang up everywhere. Around 1940, out of 750 market gardeners 250 were Italian and 150 Australian, while the rest were Yugoslavs, Macedonians and Romanians, while the rest were Southern European countries. Another large group of about 350 Italians were potato-growers in rural and semi-rural areas. The best-known potato-growing districts were Harvey, Waroona, Hamel, Donnybrook, Brunswick, Junction, Dardanup, Manjimup, Bengert, Marybrook and Pickering. Potatoes could be grown in the drier areas in winter and in the wetter areas in summer. (26)

Few Italians settled in the wheat-belt or ran large cattle stations as they required large amounts of capital which Italian migrants certainly

did not have. They were happy to own their small intensive or mixed (wheat and dairy cattle) farming properties.

Italians owned properties in many different localities, not only along the coast but also inland, to the very edge of the great desert. For example, the Camicelli family property was situated 50 miles south of Southern Cross and 10-12 miles from Marvel Loch.

ITALIAN FISHERMEN AT FREMANTLE AND GERALDTON

In an article entitled "1846: Primi italiani nell'Australia Occidentale, i siciliani di Nuova Norcia", published in a *Fiamma* supplement on the occasion of the visit to Australia (25-29 September 1967) of the Italian President, Giuseppe Saragat, we read: "We have to go back to 1846 for the arrival of the first group of [Italians] at the mouth of the Swan River in the newly established British colony.

"The story of these 200 Italians is unique and it was, thanks to their initiative, sense of adventure and courage, that after having overcome initial set-backs and difficulties, they were able to settle successfully in Western Australia and contribute to its development..."

Some of these 200 Italians, who according to the author of the article accompanied Dom Salvado, the Spanish Benedictine who founded the New Norcia abbey, came from Grottaferrata "...where news of the imminent departure had spread, attracting members for the expedition, while some were from Capo d'Orlando (Sicily), the last Italian port of call before the ship set course for Australia. After having given some assistance to Dom Salvado these Sicilians settled at Point Peron (about 20 miles south of Fremantle) and took up fishing, which was a risky and unprofitable occupation.

"Life was a struggle as they did not have the right kind of fishing equipment and needed to sell their perishable commodity quickly... Later [in 1877], a group from the Puglie joined the earlier arrivals." (27)

As already noted, it does not appear that this story about the arrival of the first Italians in the colony of Western Australia can be verified by historical sources, though the same account is given by other writers and historians. If the 200 Italians had in fact left with Dom Salvado he would undoubtedly have mentioned them in his diary; instead he lists only the names of Italian priests and Neapolitan tradesmen.

The well-known student of Italian immigration to Western Australia, Carlo Gamba, makes no reference to them either in his small book *I pescatori italiani di Freemantle*, nor in his thesis *L'immigrazione italiana nell'Australia Occidentale*.

The first detailed information about Italians in Western Australia comes from Dom Salvado. Other, more sketchy information, is avail-

able from a despatch dated 28 August 1877 from the Governor of the colony informing the Italian Consul in Melbourne of the numbers of Italians living in Western Australia.

Apart from those fishermen who settled at Point Peron around 1881 there was another small group not far away at Rockingham.

From 1881 to 1891 other fishermen arrived from Italy; it seems that the first really large group started forming in 1885.

"In the absence of historical documents," writes Joseph Gentili, "the known descendants of these first fishermen were interviewed. Mr Cono Glorioso confirmed that his grandfather, also called Cono after the patron saint of Naso and Capo d'Orlando, emigrated in 1885 with ten or 12 companions. Other interviews confirmed the presence of: Carlo Basile, Francesco Camarda, the aforementioned Cono Glorioso, Antonio and Cono Jannello, the four Minuta brothers, B. Paparone and Santaromita." (28)

"One woman also confirmed that during her childhood in Rockingham, between 1896 and 1904, there was a small group of cottages at Point Peron where Italian fishermen lived. Her father, a baker, made bread for them three times a week and each time took them a cartload. It is impossible to estimate precisely, but by the amount of bread consumed it would seem that there were between 50 and 100 fishermen." (29)

Between 1901 and 1904 the number of fishermen grew to about 400, of whom 190 were Italians - Sicilians from Capo d'Orlando - 90 were native-born Australians while 64 were Germans.

"They almost totally monopolised this industry because the Austrians were not able to compete with them given how frugally our countrymen lived," wrote the Consul Zunini. (30)

The fishermen formed two associations, one Sicilian and the other Puglian, which controlled the actual fishing and the selling of the catches in the markets of Fremantle, Perth and surrounding districts. The Sicilian association was set up by a certain Glorioso, who was also its first President. Only Sicilian fishermen could join and as a group they all took their instructions from one Santaromita. The association had about 70 members and 25 boats and its assets of £1,200 were invested in those boats and other equipment. The size of the annual haul was 250,000 pounds weight which was worth £6,250 a year. It was not much but allowed their families to live fairly comfortably.

The Sicilian fishermen had a well-run association whose membership was very united.

The Puglian association had 80 members and 35 boats, and assets of £1,600. While the Sicilians took up deep-sea fishing, the Puglians went after smaller fish although their annual haul and earnings were similar.

However, the Puglian association was poorly organised and inefficiently run. Consequently it folded after only a few months. (31)

There was bad blood between the two, mostly because of their different ways of living. The Sicilian fishermen lived on shore in groups of three or six in houses rented near the port, and were self-sufficient; they did their own washing, their own housework and cooking. The Puglians lived instead on their boats, sleeping, cooking and washing on board. Thus a certain animosity grew up between them. The Sicilians considered the Puglians to be dirty and disorderly. Furthermore, in 1906 the Australian fishermen began to complain about the Italians, accusing them of ruining the industry by continually fishing the same grounds and selling the fish at artificially low prices. The leaders of this hate campaign were the five Stirling brothers. They were the ones who burnt the Italians' nets and when the Italians went out to fish, having to pass under the bridge, the Stirlings would pelt them with all sorts of refuse. Once an Italian, having sighted a school of mullet, was about to put to sea when he was stopped at gun-point; then his antagonists went out and made a good catch instead.

All this enmity had its roots in the same racist attitudes that existed elsewhere towards the miners, the wood-cutters and the cane cutters. Australians could not compete with Italians and so were always afraid of losing their jobs.

The fish was sold to agents and merchants who supplied the main hotels, restaurants and trans-oceanic cargo vessels.

Much of the fish was prepared for export, some of it smoked. "It is very difficult to know how many fishermen there are in Fremantle. When I returned among them on Sunday," writes the Salesian G. Capra, "I saw a large number, more than 100, and that was not all of them; many had left that same morning to go fishing. Ten fishermen had wives. Almost all came from Sicily and many were very young, and unfortunately, like their fathers, little educated." (32).

"Apart from the rough life they lead and perhaps their rough background, and a lack of care in their appearance, and the places where they live, nothing can be said against them. They are all worthier of respect than many other classes of Britons and Australians. They are upright, honest, industrious and never any immorality disturbs the peace of their camp or quarters. They are often the victims of petty theft at the hands of non-Italians." (33)

Opposite Geraldton, at a distance of about 60 miles, lie the Abrolhos and Hontruay reefs forming the Wallabi, Easter and Pelsort groups. Dutch ships sent to explore the Australian coastline and the land, foundered there between 1605 and 1652, and all that remains of them are some small cannons, instruments and various bronze objects. They were found in the guano deposits of marine birds who, except for when Italians came to fish and disturbed them, were the sole tranquil inhabitants of those islands. "These fishermen who are Sicilians and are divided into two groups, are about ten in number. Every Sunday morning, they leave in large sailing vessels after having stocked up with bread, flour for their 'tagliatelle' and 'maccheroni', and wine, tins of sauce, and water. The voyage lasts four or five days, even less with favourable winds. They return home with half a ton,

sometimes even a whole ton of fish, which they sell to an agent at threepence a pound, irrespective of the type of fish it is: truly a low price. They earn 50 Italian lire a week which is reduced to 30 or 35 when deductions are made for the cost of provisions and the hire of boats (few of them have their own). They lead a hard bitter life, always at sea, enjoying no spiritual or intellectual pursuits, nor any female companionship because they do not speak English; many do not know how to read or write." (34)

There are fishermen - one is a Spaniard - who operates off Geraldton, but they are not part of the Sicilian or Puglian groups. If one adds the Italian fishermen in Fremantle, Rockingham and Geraldton to those scattered elsewhere, we find that there was a total fishing community in Western Australia of over 300 Sicilians, Puglians and Neapolitans, with others from Romagna and Le Marche.

ITALIANS IN OTHER EMPLOYMENT

At the beginning of the twentieth century only a few Italians had settled in the towns, mainly in Perth and Fremantle. There were still sufficient numbers of them though to form a small nucleus around which larger Italian communities were later to be formed. This occurred on a smaller scale in a few of the mining and farming areas as well where the Italians tried to scrape together some money in order to start working for themselves, and, with their families, whom they brought out from Italy or raised in Australia, they laid the foundations for their future.

In this period there were already many Italians in Fremantle where two of the hotels and two general stores were owned by them. Other Italians were office-workers, some were travelling fruit and fish vendors. Still others carted fish and supplied the fishermen with all they needed in the way of bait, ice, equipment and so on. In Perth there were Italians who transported vegetables. Many of the Northerners took up heavier work as bricklayers and terrazzo-layers, stonemasons, carpenters and joiners. (35)

In Perth there were four taverns whose owners were from the Valtellina, Val d'Aosta, Novara and Liguria.

"In one of these taverns", writes G. Capra in 1907, "I found 31 Italians of whom 15 were about to return home, ten were off to the mines, four were staying in Perth and two were moving to Victoria.

"In Perth I met more than 100 Italians who did not present themselves well because they found themselves in such despairing circumstances and were without any emotional or material resources." (36)

Oldrini, the owner of a small hotel, was one of the first Italians to settle in Western Australia.

Ezio Lusini from Terni emigrated to the state in 1909. After having worked as a wood-cutter at Worsley near Manjimup until 1920 he bought a tavern in William Street and, a little time later, a vineyard

at Warmeroo and a haberdashery. Luisini became a benefactor and adviser to many Italians.

Luigi Ramacciotti was one of the editors of the *Perth Morning Herald*. Other Italians had set up prosperous businesses. One owned two noodle factories and another ran a large vehicle repair shop. There were numerous tailors and shoemakers.

Among the Italian professionals there were two doctors and three university lecturers, as well as a doctor of Italian descent. There were several music and organ teachers.

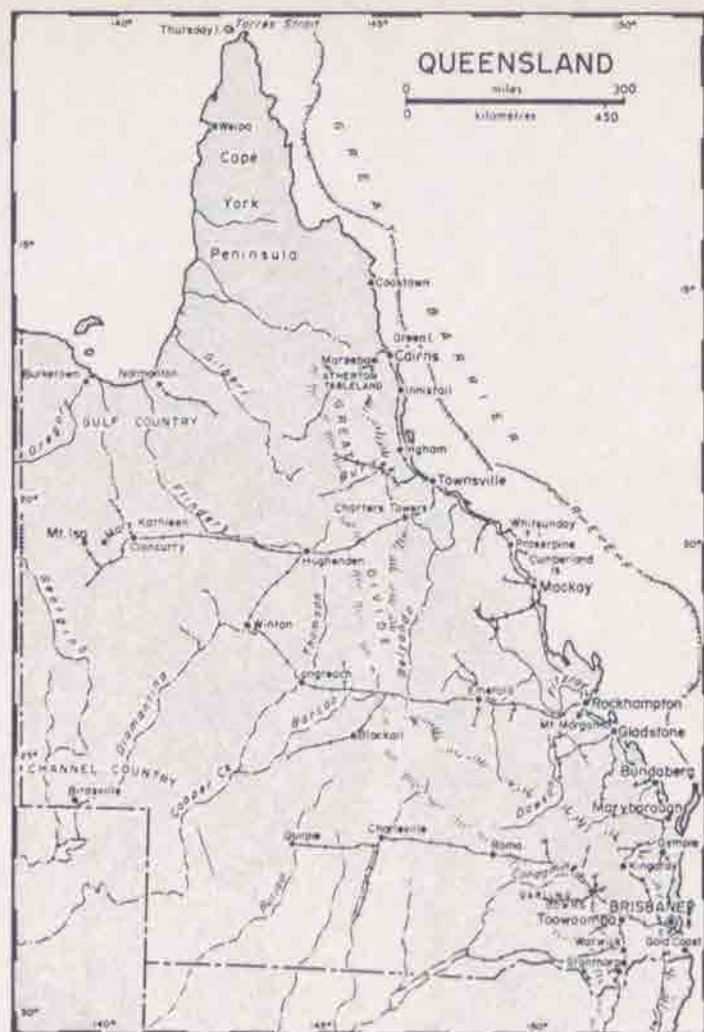
Another Italian worked for many years with Customs while the Department of Public Works employed a good Italian engineer.

In the streets one would meet the usual musicians; a group of them became well-known in the city by playing outside hotels and at road intersections.

Yet another lot of Italians, mainly Northerners, lived and worked in country towns, generally as mechanics, printers, tailors, hotel owners or managers, barmen or waiters, labourers, jockeys and stable-boys.

NOTES

- 1 - W.O. Borrie, *Italians and Germans in Australia*, Melbourne, 1954, p. 61.
- 2 - D.M. Gava, *The History of Italian Migrants in Osborne, Wimmeroo, 1900-1920*, thesis, University of Western Australia, 1978.
- 3 - L. Zunini, *L'Australia Attuale...*, Turin, 1910, p. 57.
- 4 - *ibid.*
- 5 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-6.
- 6 - C. Gamba, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
- 7 - Gentili, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.
- 8 - Merle Bignell, *First the Spring - A History of the Shire of Kojonup*, University of Western Australia Press, 1971, p. 186.
- 9 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 203.
- 10 - Gentili, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
- 11 - C. Gamba, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
- 12 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 250.
- 13 - *ibid.*, p. 252.
- 14 - *ibid.*, p. 254.
- 15 - *ibid.*, p. 256.
- 16 - Gentili, Strausky & Iraci, *Contribution of Italian Migration to Western Australia, 1829-1928*, typed manuscript, p. 9.
- 17 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 258.
- 18 - Gentili, Strausky & Iraci, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- 19 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 257.
- 20 - W.E. Greble, *A Bold Yeomanry, Kulin, 1848-1970*, Perth, 1979, p. 57.
- 21 - *ibid.*, p. 179.
- 22 - *ibid.*, pp. 157-179.
- 23 - H.H. Wilson,
- 24 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 202.
- 25 - Gentili, Strausky & Iraci, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- 26 - C. Gamba, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
- 27 - *La Fiamma*, supplement, 26/9/1967, p. 114.
- 28 - J. Gentili, "I pescatori Italiani nell'Australia Occidentale: mito e realtà", in *Studi Emigrazione*, Anno XXI, June 1984, no. 74, pp. 234-5.
- 29 - *ibid.*, p. 235.
- 30 - L. Zunini, "La colonia Italiana nell'Australia Occidentale, Rapporto del vice Console d'Italia a Perth", in *Emigrazione e colonia*, 1905, pp. 552-553.
- 31 - *ibid.*
- 32 - G. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 275.
- 33 - *ibid.*
- 34 - *ibid.*, p. 194.
- 35 - J. Gentili, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
- 36 - G. Capra, pp. 275-76.



BRIEF GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF QUEENSLAND

After Western Australia the State of Queensland is, geographically, the largest in Australia.

Situated in the North-Eastern part of the continent it extends across the Tropic of Capricorn between the 1st and 29th parallels and between the 138th and 154th meridian. It has a length from North to South of about 1,300 miles and a width from East to West of about 900 miles. It is a third of the size of Europe, three times bigger than France and Germany, almost six times bigger than Italy and Norway and seven times bigger than Great Britain.

In 1824, Governor Brisbane sent a detachment of soldiers with a group of prisoners to take possession of the Northern part of New South Wales. They tried to establish themselves at Redcliffe, but because of the hostility of the Aboriginal tribes, they had to retreat further south along the estuary of a great river that they called Moreton Bay. Here the capital of the State was founded with the name of Brisbane, in honour of the Governor.

There they erected a palisade, some barracks, a guard house and a prison. The aim was to initiate the colonisation of the North and to attract free colonists and migrants to settle there. But the distance, together with the scarce and precarious means of communication, made the place a receptacle for the worst prisoners and because of the pitiless discipline imposed, it soon acquired infamy as a hell on earth.

In 1830 there was about 1,000 prisoners and 100 soldiers at the place. The only benefits they enjoyed were a school attended by 33 children, a chaplain and a doctor.

In 1832 the Governor reduced the number of prisoners to 300; the majority being women who had been sentenced for the second time in the colony of New South Wales.

In 1830 Governor Gipps wrote to Lord Glenelg of his intention to close the prison, to sell the 900 head of cattle and the 4,500 sheep, to employ women in agricultural works, to divide the land and to permit squatters to enter.

Five years later the squatters started to head towards the north, occupying extremely large areas of land. Only then did talk commence of forming a new colony, separate from New South Wales.

In 1859, the British Government consented to the formation of the new colony in the tropical part of New South Wales, commencing from the 29th parallel, with the name of Queensland in honour of Queen Victoria. The population of this immense colony was barely 23,520 whites. The new colony, completely devoid of financial resources, passed through an extremely difficult period.

Soon, however, the explorers commenced to take coastal surveys, to proceed into the estuaries of the great rivers, to inspect the surrounding lands and then to transport colonists with cattle and sheep together with equipment to clear the land and to build huts.

Then explorers of another kind commenced to scour the land looking for gold and mineral deposits. And they, too, founded new

colonies. They set up gold and mineral mines; they laid out roads and immense pastoral lands and cultivated large areas of land.

So, in 1863, cane sugar and cotton were introduced. Later gold was discovered in great quantities and this attracted many fortune seekers. The colony and its development gathered pace and progressed rapidly.

THE WHITE MAN CONQUERS THE TROPICS

Doctor Cilento, whom we have already met, a Nobel Prize Winner and specialist in tropical diseases confirms in his book, "Triumph in the Tropics", that the history of Queensland is essentially the triumph of the white man over his environment and his conquest of the tropics.

At the time of colonisation it was believed almost as an article of faith, that it was impossible for the white man to work at such a latitude.

The scientist, Willem Bosch, wrote in 1844, "We are absolutely certain of the accuracy of our hypothesis. Every section of the human race is given his particular place by the God of creation. This is his native land where all the things which are necessary to him in particular have been placed and thus his race is preserved. He cannot pass beyond the length and breadth of his boundaries without causing grave damage to his health and danger to his life."

Such an idea and theory was shared by many doctors, who believed that the tropical climate could cause typhus, malaria, dysentery and smallpox.

Queensland, the first tropical territory to be colonised by a white man, put to rest Willem Bosch's theory.

17 – THE FIRST PIONEERS IN QUEENSLAND

Some of our fellow Italians, perhaps in an excess of patriotism, have declared that North Queensland was made by the Italians. Even if such an assertion seems somewhat exaggerated, we will see that, on the whole, the Italians contributed in no small way to the conquest of the tropics and to the development of the sugar industry, as, indeed, did no other group. The Italian presence in Queensland traces back its origins to the foundation and there we find Italian explorers listed among the explorers and Italian pioneers among the pioneers.

Therefore, we can see that the Italians were a determining factor in the economic development of Queensland and to them goes the credit for having saved, with their labour, the sugar industry, whilst at the same time, inspiring other white workers to grow sugar cane.

We dedicate this chapter exclusively to those Italians who lived through the pioneering era of the colony and who, before that, helped to build roads and railway networks.

In the following chapters we will relate in detail their contribution to the growing of sugar cane. This account of our pioneers in North Queensland could have happened in any colony in this great continent. Indeed, if we want to find Italians, we have to look for them in the frontier histories at the beginning of colonisation and in the heaviest work areas. The colonisation of North Queensland, in fact, was no different from that of the other Colonies and the Italians were second to none.

Among the many absurdities that have been said and written against the Italians of North Queensland, there is the specific accusation that they were not true pioneers, but simply cunning buyers of farms and of concession lands, which had already been cleared and prepared for cultivation by the labour of their Anglo-Australian predecessors. It is our task to demonstrate just how false and unfounded such an accusation is.

We will commence by documenting how the Italians first took part in the work of exploration, and then in the construction of railways and roads, working as charcoal makers, wood-cutters, miners and packers. We will record some names and events, then leave it to a famous journalist, born and bred among Italians and coming from the extreme north, to record in two articles, the events of these pioneers of ours: he is the journalist A.F. Wadell.

It is necessary to keep in mind that, for the person who has always lived in European countries such as Italy, the word "distance" has a meaning relative to his own experience. A century ago, for example, the trip from Rome to Milan, was an undertaking, upon which few had the courage to embark. To move a whole family was seen as almost impossible.

In the Australia of the 1800's, a land still not completely explored, without roads, without swift means of transport, where horses were used as transport as were stage coaches or, in certain areas, carts pulled by oxen, and where the distance between one colony and another was hundreds and hundreds of miles, the idea of embarking upon such a journey would have discouraged even the most stubborn person.

And yet, the more we research, the more we find Italians in places that even today, can only be reached after many hours in the car or aeroplane. Were these men pioneers or just fortune hunters? Perhaps a little of both, but certainly they were courageous!

In North Queensland as in the other colonies of the Australian continent, the Italian migration commenced much sooner than the official statistics indicate. The historians of the colonisation of Queensland made sporadic references to the presence of groups of Italians. These men dedicated themselves to the production of vegetable carbon and wooden cross-beams for the mines. They worked in these same mines and transported materials and foodstuffs on mules or horses.

The descendants of the Tognola and Di Muzi families, who still live in Queensland, confirm that their ancestors arrived in the colony towards 1850 and that some streets in Atherton have been named in their honour. Already in 1845, the Italian Passionist Fathers had been sent by Archbishop Polding of Sydney to Stradbroke Island to convert the Aborigines.

According to Lyng, at the time in which the district of Moreton Bay was elevated to colony status in 1859, "The Italians were an unknown quantity north of the 29th parallel." (1) An unknown quantity, but present all the same. These were the Italians who had already ventured into the tropical colony, even before it was separated from the mother colony, of which it formed a part and on which it depended for everything.

AN ITALIAN WOMAN WAS THE FIRST "FIRST LADY" OF QUEENSLAND

The wife of the first governor of the new colony of Queensland was an Italian. The writer, Glenville Pike, when reporting on the arrival of the governor, made particular mention of the fascinating beauty of his wife, in contrast to the harsh reality of the the frontier country, which Brisbane, the capital of the new colony, was at that time,

"On 10 December, 1859, the Royal colony of Queensland was constituted. His Excellency George Ferguson Bowen, an Irish-Latin, was the happy choice as first governor of the pioneering colony, although his wife, the Countess Diamantina of Rome, of scintillating beauty and daughter of a noble Italian, was completely out of her element in such a primitive environment. Without doubt she impressed the ladies of Brisbane when she presented them with her fashionable clothes and the latest models in crinolene. In truth, the Countess was probably even more amazed than her husband at the sight of the little, squalid bush town, similar to an American frontier town, and upon seeing that mixed crowd of citizens lining the wharves, while the steam-ship *Breadalbane* was puffing up the muddy river on that hot December day in 1859." (2)

In 1864 there was serious talk of organised Italian emigration. At the time the Italian Vice-consul of Sydney, Assolini, presented to the Italian government a certain plan to have Italians emigrate to the tropical colony of Queensland. (3) But the time was not ripe and, according to the Italian authorities, the guarantees given for the protection of the emigrants were not sufficient, therefore the plan did not go ahead.

In 1869 we find two families already well established - the Regazzoli family who became large producers of sugar cane, but who, in 1869, were still working in the mines, and Luigi Borghero, head of a numerous clan at Ravenswood, about 900 miles north of Brisbane, where he discovered the first deposits of gold. (4)

The discovery, immediately after, of nuggets of gold (1872) near Charters Towers and south of Townsville by an Aboriginal boy, Jupiter Mosman, who was looking for his horses who had run off during a fierce storm, produced a sudden "gold rush", attracting more than 30,000 miners, including several Italians, to the place. The Catholic priest who cared for the spiritual welfare of the miners and colonials in the early 1870's was an Italian, Fr Balangero. Later, in answer to a call by Bishop G.B. Scalabrini, Fr Balangero became a Scalabrinian missionary. (5)

THE EXPLORERS

The following year, an Italian sailor, Marco Dominico, a member of the expedition led by the famous explorer, Dalrymple, had the task of exploring all the estuaries of the rivers north of the Tropic of Capricorn to the sea, to see if they were navigable; he was also commissioned to study the nature of the soil near the rivers with the aim of eventually establishing colonies. (6)

In that same year another young Italian of 22 years of age, arrived in Queensland, according to some, to take part in the Sun Aria Festival at Townsville, but according to others to work with a family friend, Mark Christian, owner of a big sheep station. But very soon, he too, caught "gold fever" and left everything to dedicate himself to

searching for the elusive yellow metal. This young man was called Christopher Palmerston Carandini, son of the famous singers and artists, Maria and Girolamo Carandini. (7)

Soon after, having run foul of the law – according to some he was accused of having killed a Chinese, but this was emphatically denied by others – Christopher fled north of the Tropic, where he gave himself to exploration to open up new ways of communication with the interior, and to searching for gold and other mineral deposits.

In 1880 Christopher, with Mullins and McLean, opened a route across the thick bushland of the high plains of Atherton, to transport machines and construction materials from Port Douglas to the plains of Granite Creek, which were impossible to cross during the rainy season, to then climb to the high plains of Heberton.

Two years later, Christopher again left Innisfail, with two Kanakas and three Aborigines. Following the southern bank of the Johnstone River, he reached Heberton via Nigger Creek, covering 60 miles in 12 days. He explored the length and breadth of all the vast area from Port Douglas to Heberton and the Tablelands, from Cairns to the Johnstone River, from Mourilyan to the Barron Falls. It is said he employed 300 Chinese in his mines on the Russel River. He became a legendary figure in his own time and many stories about him have been passed on. (8)

He was the forerunner for the Italians of North Queensland, the first of many thousands of others who would transform those wild and impenetrable jungles into cultivated and intensely productive lands.

In 1886 Carandini returned to Townsville to marry the talented violinist, Teresa Rooney, from whom he had a daughter, Rosina, born 19 June, 1889. He dedicated some places in North Queensland to his wife, Teresa, and to his daughter.

For a short time he owned both a hotel and a shop at Ross Island, but then, on the invitation of the government, sold everything and went first to Borneo and then to Malaya, where he died of an intestinal illness, on 15 January, 1897 at the age of 45.

We also recall here the scientific expedition to Bellenden Ker, in the extreme north of Queensland, undertaken by Podenzana and Schiffini from La Spezia and led by A. Meston and three Kanakas. The expedition started in early December, 1891 and returned to Cairns on 18 January, 1892. Later, while A. Meston returned to Brisbane, the Italians pushed still further north to collect other scientific data. (9)

THE PACKERS

Before and during the construction of the railway line which was to unite all the towns such as Heberton, Atherton, Mareeba etc. to Cairns, in the interior, where many mines had been opened, the transporters of construction materials, machinery and combustible minerals came to form the so-called "packers". They were

characterised by caravans of horses, mules and at times even camels. Without them the development of this vast district would have been impossible. The older folk still remember the caravans of mules and horses which would wend their way down the sides of the mountains laden with ingots of zinc, headed for Herberton, Cairns or, later, for Marceba.

Bernardo Lesina is remembered as the packer who, with 100 mules, had the largest team of animals walking through the streets. (10)

The Lesina family numbered five children. Bernardo Jr. had his legs crushed when he slipped and ended up under the wheels of the cart that he was leading. The doctors managed to avoid an amputation, but Bernard's legs stayed crippled for the rest of his life. (11)

M. Borghero, one of the clan already mentioned, is remembered in the chronicles as having the fastest mule team in the early days of Herberton. He was also entrusted with the distribution of the mail. He knew, better than anyone, all the roads and short-cuts from Port Douglas to Montalbion.

When the Irvinebank Mining Company closed its mines and sold its prestigious mules, Borghero bought, together with other mules, the famous mule called Jumbo who could pull six hundredweight (300 k.) by himself while the others could not pull more than four hundredweight (200 k.). A team of mules, on average 48, generally managed to transport 10 tons of goods. (12) Glenville Pike, in his book, *Pioneers Country*, recalls a certain "Sam the Roman" (Salvatore il Romano), but we do not know anything else about him. (13)

A brief history of Herberton says the men were suntanned and bearded, as honest as the sun and as strong as steel. Loading and unloading 48 mules morning and evening was all in a day's work for these giants of the past. (14)

THE BUILDERS OF RAILWAYS

In 1855 the Queensland government gave permission to recruit a group of Italians from Piedmont and Lombardy, expert in tunnel and railway constructions, to construct the line from Cairns to the Tablelands, which even today is considered the most famous engineering feat of those early years. It was built on the sides of mountains, on columns of steel and through 15 tunnels along the enchanting valley of the Barron River.

We do not know exactly how many of the 300 workers on the railway were Italians, but we found reports of incidents and accidents, of some deaths including names and dates. The construction of 12 miles of railway took four years and cost the lives of 20 workers. (15)

On 24 September, 1888, a landslide in tunnel Number 13 claimed the life of Raffaele Antonia and on 26 September a certain Giovanni Zappa was killed instantly when he put a foot wrong and fell to the bed of the Barron River from a height of 500 feet (167 m.) Three

days later on 29 September, another two workers, Americo Citroni and William Rose fell into a gorge 25 feet deep. The Italian reported only superficial wounds while Rose was taken to hospital in an uncertain condition.

The following year, 1889, another Italian, Giacomo Citroni, brother of Americo, was killed instantly under a massive land-slide in a tunnel. (16)

It is said that, towards the end of the most difficult part of the railway construction, an Italian patriot climbed to the peak of the mountain and raised the Italian flag, where it remained for many years until it was ruined by the rain and weather, as a reminder of the role of the Italians played in the construction of the railway on the mountains.

When the work on the railway was finished, several Italians remained in the area and dedicated themselves to agriculture. Among them we remember the grandfather of Martin Tenni, State Minister and member for the seat of Barron River. (17)

WOODCUTTERS, COKEMEN AND MINERS

The historians do not give us much information, only brief pointers or some reminiscences, with regard to our first Italian migrants. It seems, for example, that a member of the Borghero clan worked in the mines at the start. It was, as we have said, a Borghero who, in 1869, was the first to find a vein of gold at Ravenswood.

It is certain that at the start of 1870, some Italians worked as cokemen and miners in the "*Dee Cooper Mine*" to the south of Mount Morgan. But after 1877 the work at the mine lessened and many miners were transferred to other mining centres. Several Italians remained in the place and raised cattle or horses and carted wood. (18)

The biggest deposit of zinc in North Queensland was discovered in 1883, by a group of Italian woodcutters, who sold it for £2,000 sterling and returned to Italy for a holiday. (19) In 1888 there was a group of Italian cokemen in the bush near Irvinebank in North Queensland, a gold mining area.

Already in 1890, writes G.C. Bolton, the Italians had started to take the place of the Chinese as cokemen and wood-cutters in the mining areas. In fact, at the start of the century, the charcoal for the smelting works of the Chillagoe Company at Mount Garnet, was transported by the caravan of camels belonging to Abdul Wade and teams of Italians worked for him. (20)

All around the foundry there were piles of charcoal, 20 to 25 feet high and weighing about 300 tons. Finally it happened that a group of Italian woodsmen and miners established themselves in the western part of Queensland, in the district of Cloncurry and in the Mareeba district, along the coast to the west of Cairns.

WRITINGS OF A JOURNALIST

The journalist, A.F. Waddell, in two articles published in the *North Queensland Register* on 9 August and 4 October, 1952, recalls the Italian woodcutters, cokemen, miners and carters of Irvinebank and the mining districts nearby, and the method of smelting the metals used at that time.

"In the *Campfire* - E.P.H. recently published reminiscences of certain Italian woodcutters and of their women. I believe that he was right when he said you could count the women on the fingers of one hand, because over the years I can recall, with Mrs Paganini, only two other women, Mrs Leonie and Miss Maria Mollanari.

"His comments pushed me to look again at my notes on 'wood and woodcutters', which I had collected several years ago and what follows is a brief extract from those notes.

"All we elderly folk remember very well that all the meltings of zinc, silver, lead and copper were, in those days, done with charcoal. It was only much later that the Cairns railway reached Mareeba (1893) and the Chillagoe railway arrived at Chillagoe (1901) and it became possible to transport the natural coal from the south, thus lessening the demand for charcoal.

"But, if we go backwards in time, we find the smelting of the silver and lead at Montalbion, Muldiva and Newelton or Silver Valley; the copper, silver and lead at Chillagoe and the tin at Irvinebank and likewise, the copper, silver and gold at Mt. Garnet, were all done with wood charcoal.

"However, as soon as the railway line reached Mt. Garnet, thanks to the famous camels of Abdul Wade, natural coal commenced to be used.

"Documents and old photographs still exist at Mt. Garnet, which prove the existence of at least four caravans employed in the transportation of materials and each of these caravans was formed by at least 70 camels. Later on these animals were replaced by motorised methods.

"Today, one of these vehicles still lies abandoned in the yard of the sawmill of Lawson and Son in Mareeba. Another was used in the same district to clear the land on which tobacco would be cultivated. Even it, by now a useless wreck, lies forgotten at Cattle Creek, some miles north of Parada, on the Chillagoe line.

"We note that E.P.H. says: 'Mazzichelli and Paganini were two chief woodcutters,' but I believe they were carters. Both already had pairs of horses for longer than I can remember, and I knew them very well. Another who had a herd of horses in those early days, was Giuseppe Marranta, who had the misfortune to lose some of his horses after they had drunk water from a dam. The name, Marranta, was heard at times, in Brisbane and I have no doubt that these people were descendants of Giuseppe Marranta.

"I remember another name, of a carter who used to transport minerals, Jack Moscardi, and I believe that he, too, transported materials from various mines. Much of the fire-wood in the Irvinebank district was cut into four feet six inch lengths, which was the size for the furnaces of the Cornish boilers used at the Vulcan Mine and at the smelting works.

"In the early days there were very big furnaces at Montalbion and naturally, as much as possible, wood of the right size was used. One man who performed that job for many years was Pietro Genetti. He, along with his companions at Irvinebank, continued in that work until the day he died. Photographs of the big furnaces at Mt. Garnet still exist today, but we don't know who destroyed the furnaces.

"At Irvinebank all the coal passed over rollers to render it suitable for the furnaces at the smelting works and at the blacksmiths' forges.

"When I was a boy," continued Waddell, "I remember the Italians' houses at the entrance to Target Gully and the beautiful oranges and bananas where, in later years, the Shepherd and King families settled. Later on, these places all became part of the great warehouses for the mining refuse.

"I can still remember Mrs Leoni and very often, the beautiful song which emanated from that place.

"It has been mentioned by E.P.H. that old Pietro Bombardieri, in his time, was a prominent figure and a leader, friend and general helper of his fellow countrymen. He came from Lombardy, with many other Italians who worked in the mining areas and had been woodcutters, cokemen and stonemasons in their own country.

"Also there were the youths, Pietro and Domenico Bombardieri.

"Another man from the early days was Carlo Cetinni who transported minerals to the furnaces and had shares in the famous Vulcan tin mine, which he discovered. Cetinni offered my fathers shares in the mine for £100 but my father replied that he had barely 100 pence to his name at that time. Cetinni wanted to return to Italy, he said, and that seemed to be the object of many Italians, to go back several times and to bring out their relatives with them."

"The following woodcutters and miners are remembered for many years - Carlo Carrara, Jack Mollanari and his daughter, Maria, Pietro Zampatti, Paolo Pianta, Babondi, Giacomo Bonazzi, Bartolo Ricetti, Jack Rinaldi, Omadei, Giacomo Pozzi, Con Bassi, Michele Cabassi, Della Vecchia brothers, Falchetti, Poletti brothers, Ferrari and Salvo Spagnola.

"Jack Mazzinchelli had a son called Pico, who helped his father with his team of horses, and was a good friend to our young people at that time. Three other well know men were Carlo Tonta and Bartolomeo and Andy Pedrotti. These three carted wood and were stokers at the furnace, while the Pedrotti brothers were also good marksmen.

"John Moffat's successor at the furnace, however, seemed to have taken a dislike towards these three men and sacked them without

further ado. All three returned to Italy, but later Carlo Tonta returned to his old stamping ground and related how he and Bartolomeo Pedrotti had been taken prisoner by the Austrians during the First World War and that Pedrotti had died because of all the deprivations he suffered. From the last news we have of Carlo Tonta it seems that he settled in the El Arish district, and if he is still alive, he would have to be very old indeed.

"Another Italian was the stonemason, Frank Rusconi. Some of his work can still be seen in good condition at Irvinebank and his initials, "F.R. 1907", are still very clear, carved into the stone of the railway station platform. I think that this Frank Rusconi was the same man who did some good stone work at Canberra many years later.

"Giuseppe Robello, a teamster, was well known in North Queensland. He would load his mules at Cairns and would cart many loads of fodder for horses and foodstuffs along the old mule track at Mulgrave to the mining districts. He also carted sugar from the refinery at Ripple Creek, which has since closed down.

"We must record the names of two other Italians who were hotel proprietors at that time - Antonio Severi, who had an hotel at Montalbion in the earliest times and who appears in a faded old photograph taken round 1890 with some merchants of the town, now deceased. The other was Balsarini, if my memory serves me correctly, who had an hotel at Silver Valley (Newelton) in the days in which a German company was active in the place and worked in the Lancelot mine.

"The register of those buried at the cemetery at Irvinebank includes the following names - Pietro Genetti, Domenico Benoli, Stefano Tontaini, A. Presetti, Luigi Seneni, Mrs Paganini and a child, Bertoni. We must not forget old Mr Borghero, grandfather and great grandfather of the very well known Borghero families of today.

"I remember old Mr Borghero and his children very well; the best known were Manny and Tony. Manny is buried at Irvinebank but where Tony is buried I don't know. They say that old Luigi worked in the mines at Cape River round the 1860's and in more distant times, at Ravenswood and Charters Towers. Manny was very well known at Watsonville, before he settled at Irvinebank. In certain areas where there was water and suitable land, some of these men had beautiful orchards where they also grew vegetables, cultivated passionfruit vines and, at times, raised fowls. They liked prosciutto very much, tasty cheeses and salads with a dressing of olive oil, which in those days, arrived in bottles with a rippled neck and the label, C. & E. Morton.

"Many settlements had a grinding stone and a rudimentary blacksmith's forge, which later was replaced by a portable 'Buffalo'. Big wedges were necessary to split the biggest trunks and the big links of iron.

"As wood for cutting became scarce within an economic distance for carting, many men went to work on the railway lines (in 1907), while

others went on the old age pension, as fossile charcoal gradually replaced that obtained from wood. More than 50 years ago, I remember, woodcutters were paid four shillings and sixpence a trunk and the carters received eight shillings per ton. The woodcutters helped with the loading and prepared the way for the carts to pass. "The descendants of certain Italians, 'New Australians', mentioned above, were well prepared in those days to play their part in the work of pioneering, because it was still a pioneering era and in doing this, they were assisting in the progress of their adoptive country. Today we find them in the sugar cane plantations, but the woodcutters and the cokemen who produced charcoal for the mines are things of the past." (21)

NOTES

- 1 - J. Lyng, *Non-Britishers in Australia*, Melbourne, 1927, p. 99.
- 2 - Grenville Pike, *Pioneers' Country*, Cosmos Press, Hong Kong, 1977.
- 3 - *La Fiamma*, Supplement, 29-9-1957.
- 4 - G.C. Bolton, *A thousand miles away*, ANU Press, 1942, p. 160.
- 5 - P. Giovanni Battista Balangero, *Australia & Ceylon, Studi e ricordi de tredici anni di missione*, Torino, Milano, Pavia, 1924.
- 6 - Dorothy Jones, *Huticane Lamps & Blue Umbrellas*, Cairns, 1973, p. 68.
- 7 - O. Collinson, *Early Days of Cairns*, Brisbane, 1939, pp. 98-103.
- 8 - *ibid.*
- 9 - *ibid.*
- 10 - G. Pike, *Pioneers' Country* - Cosmos Printing Press - Hong Kong, 1976, p. 68.
- 11 - *ibid.*, p. 111.
- 12 - *ibid.*, p. 68.
- 13 - *ibid.*
- 14 - *ibid.*, p. 68.
- 15 - G.C. Bolton, *op. cit.*, p. 162.
- 16 - O. Collinson, *op. cit.*, *passim*.
- 17 - G. Pike, *Conquest of the Ranges*, Pinevale Publications, Mareeba, 1984, p. 40.
- 18 - Cyril Grabs, *Gold: The story of Mt. Morgan*, Angus & Robertson, 1982, p. 8.
- 19 - G. Pike, *Pioneers' Country*, Hong Kong, 1976, p. 134.
- 20 - G.C. Bolton, *op. cit.*, pp. 285-8.
- 21 - A.F. Waddell, *North Old Register*, 1918, 4-10-1952.

18 — THE ITALIANS REPLACE THE KANAKAS

The sugar cane plants imported from the island of Mauritius were planted on Australian soil for the first time in 1861, by a certain John Buhot, who, in due course, ground them in a rudimentary fashion and extracted the first sugar from them. (1) But the first person to plant the sugar cane as a commercial venture, having cleared 20 acres of tropical bushland, was Captain Lewis Hope, who also built the first mill. In 1864 Captain Hope, because of a shortage of labourers capable of withstanding the tropical heat, had to employ 44 Kanakas, who had been introduced to the Colony as cheap labour by Captain Robert Towns, who then put them to work in his cotton plantations. (2) This proved to be so successful that soon many other plantation owners used the same labour source.

The government of the colony, as a sign of recognition and encouragement, assigned 2,560 acres of land to Captain Hope, at the same time giving him the use of Polynesian workers, who had been recruited with a contract of ten shillings a month, plus board and lodgings.

In 1865, the price of cotton on the world market fell so much that the culture of cotton was rendered economically impractical, while the sugar cane became a more and more profitable industry. In a few years all the best part of the coastal area was transformed into an immense sugar cane plantation. As a result the need for labour became ever more acute and the hiring agencies without scruples increased. However, the number of Kanakas decreased and it became impossible to find others disposed to come freely to Australia.

The system of recruitment became more and more cruel. Atrocities, oppression and forced labour using arms, became the order of the day. This slave trading was known as "black-birding".

In the space of a few years, 60,000 Kanakas were transported to the Queensland plantations and sold for £50 each to the big land-owners. The authorities and even several plantation owners realised that this state of affairs could not continue for ever. The way of recruiting cheap labour was cruel and the islands were almost depopulated of men and besides there was the danger of creating a racial problem as in the United States.

On the other hand, as we have already said, popular opinion had it that the English were not physically capable of carrying out such heavy work in the enervating tropical climate. Therefore a solution had to be found and found quickly. The only alternative remaining, if such a necessary and lucrative industry was to continue, was to find a substitute for the Kanakas amongst the white migrants, who were used to heavy work and long hours of toil, and eventually to put the industry in their hands.

In the meantime, the controversy surrounding the working conditions of the Kanakas reached the government benches in Brisbane, and in January, 1885, a Royal Commission of Inquiry was constituted to investigate the methods used to recruit workers from the islands.

In April of the same year the Commission reported to the Parliament that the natives were being enticed aboard the ships with false promises, that the method of recruitment was cruelly deceptive and clearly illegal and that in order to attract the more able natives to the work, fraud and violence were systematically and deliberately used. The Commission, without mincing words, spoke of the "terrible indictment of deceit, cruelty, treachery, deliberate kidnapping and cold-blooded murder". (3)

The government of Sir Samuel Griffith, speaking strongly on the data collected by the Commission of Inquiry, presented and had approved a law which prohibited, after 1890, the recruitment of Kanaka labourers or inhabitants of Polynesia, of any race whatsoever. As an alternative, he proposed a government programme to have assisted migrants come from Europe, migrants who could withstand the climatic conditions of the tropics and who wanted to settle in Queensland. According to the Premier, Sir Samuel Griffith, a good judge and admirer of Italians and of Italy, practically the only ones who could revitalise such a troubled industry were the Italians, who were accustomed to hard work and frugal living and were an industrious and persevering people. Moreover, the Italian worker had already gained a good reputation in the territory of Queensland, over several years.

The 1871 census gave the first faint official awareness of the Italian presence in the tropical colony. It was a somewhat numerically small presence, but certainly more numerous than that reported in the official statistics.

It is necessary to note the following characteristics of our migration to the sugar cane plantations. When the conditions were favourable, the Italians did not go there in any great numbers, but when the conditions were not considered good, they arrived there in their thousands.

In the first stages, the colonial government was well disposed towards the Italian migration to Queensland and there were not yet any anti-Italian feelings among the population. But some plantation owners were against the idea of replacing the Kanakas with the Italians and the shipping companies were apathetic. Later on the opposite was true. The government did not encourage the Italian migration towards Queensland, because it increased unemployment and because,

they said, there were already too many Italians there. By now the hostility against the Italians had become commonplace. However, some sugar cane growers were favourably disposed towards Italian workers and the shipping companies were interested in transporting them. In this second stage the Italians arrived in their thousands. (4)

For a long time the Italian migration to the sugar cane areas was the object of study, of worries and of hostilities, of pros and cons, of various proposals which were never fully realised. That notwithstanding, they were precisely the proposals to guarantee continuity of the Italian migration.

For example, at the start of 1872, the Agent-General for Immigration in Queensland was urged to suspend the recruitment of German migrants, officially giving the reason that the conditions aboard the ship used to transport them to Queensland, were not satisfactory. In reality, the true motive was connected with the prohibition by the Prussian government against recruiting migrants from German territory. (5)

Thus another plan was elaborated to replace the Germans with the Italians and the immigration agent, Dantrec, was instructed to recruit Italians from Piedmont and to take steps to see that they departed from Genoa. But even in this case, because of difficulties encountered in the initial phase of the plan, the given instructions were revoked even before contact with the Italians had been established to ascertain their availability. (6)

Therefore, when a certain Tornatis from Piedmont, wrote to the Australian authorities in the same year, saying, "I and other agriculturists almost all from Piedmont, are willing to emigrate to Queensland and to dedicate ourselves to agricultural work or to stock breeding, in populated or isolated areas", the proposal was accepted immediately.

Even on this occasion, at the moment of departure, when the contingent was already in Genoa, a contrary order stopped everything. It gave precedence to the English agriculturists who, as a result of a bad season, were hit by famine. Only in 1877 could the first contingent of Italian agriculturists reach Queensland. They were almost all from the town of Monferrato in the Piedmont region. In all probability they had been recruited by a certain Count Franceschi. It seems he had the task of acquiring vast areas of land to experiment with new farming methods. (7)

This fact was also reported by F. Gagliardi in one of his letters to the *Gazzetta d'Italia* (the Italian Gazette), on 18 December, 1877. "I have read," wrote Gagliardi, "in the colonial newspaper of Roma, dated 13 October, 1877, that a ship from Hamburg berthed at Maryborough, a port on the Mary River, 180 miles north of Brisbane, and 40 Italians disembarked who would be followed by others ... and a great colony was founded there, which aimed to introduce to Queensland a certain number of farming techniques from Southern Italy." (8)

Despite all the setbacks of the following ten years, the Italian population in Queensland was increased four fold. 1885 was a decisive year when the government condemned the recruitment of Kanakas and proposed to try its luck with the Italian migrants.

PARLIAMENTARY BILL FOR ASSISTED IMMIGRATION FOR ITALIAN WORKERS

The Parliamentary Bill proposed:

(a) to establish contact with the Italian authorities to ascertain the availability of Italian workers;

(b) to commence, on an experimental basis, a program of assisted migration, at least for a first group of 400 Italians;

(c) to give them, after two years of employment in the sugar cane plantations when they would learn the methods of growing sugar cane, the opportunity of buying plantations of their own;

(d) to provide a salary of 11 shillings per week for the first year of employment and 12 shillings a week for the second year, plus board and lodgings.

The law in itself was clear:

"These migrants had to come to Queensland with assisted passage and a contract of work. At the end of two years they could rent or buy a farm on favourable conditions. The sugar cane growers had been invited to forward their requests for labour to the agent for immigration, and to contribute to the payment of their transport costs." (9)

But, according to the Agent-General of Immigration in London, a certain Coghlan, the growers had not been consulted before the law was passed and moreover some of them were of the opinion that the Italians were not suitable at all for the work of the sugar cane plantations. (10)

According to Willard, others took the initiative of having a statement circulated throughout Europe, particularly in Germany and Denmark, which stated that the work in the sugar cane plantations was not suitable for whites and that the contracted pay would reduce the migrants to a state of servitude, thus the government plan was sabotaged. (11)

On the whole, the majority of the plantation owners declared themselves in agreement with the Bill, whilst retaining some reservations. They did not want to lose everything and clung to the ill-concealed hope of even exploiting the women and children.

From the following letter to the Prime Minister, Samuel Griffith, written by the Young brothers, who were big sugar cane plantation owners from Ayr, it appears that the government had certainly asked the cane growers to let the government authorities know what labour they required and only at a later stage had they asked their opinion on the government's immigration proposals. We report the letter in full as it was recorded by the Acts of Parliament of the government of Queensland. (12)

"Kalamia, near Ayr, via Townsville,
12th September, 1890.

We have the honour of informing you that Mr Nobt Philip has submitted a request for 50 Piedmontese to be brought out on our account. Later we were informed that you would like to receive our opinion on this matter. The reasons which led the owners of this plantation to present a request for a group of workers from Piedmont are as follows:

- The extremely economical and profitable use of groups of Polynesian workers will soon be banned.

- It is economically preferable to abandon the plantations rather than try to save them by employing the white labour presently available in the colony.

- The workers from Piedmont would find the cultivation of sugar cane profitable thanks to the low cost of the services of their women and children.

- The workers from Piedmont could, after having experienced the seasonal cultivation cycles, buy the plantations by taking out a mortgage, thus allowing the present owners to leave the sugar industry.

- We point out that we are not expecting exceptional efficiency from the Piedmontese workers in question while they are working for us. Their capabilities will adequately be put to the test when they are working on their own behalf. Therefore, we hope that they will quickly learn the principles of sugar cane cultivation and that they will provide a source of low cost workers, so that the cane can be sold to the manufacturing plants at a reasonable price.

- It is the wish of the owners of this plantation to quit the cultivation of sugar cane as soon as possible. To stop everything now and close the manufacturing plants would mean a terrible loss, because, in the first place, no longer would anyone buy plantations. To transfer the land to men who would use the low cost labour of women and children seems to us to be the best way of quitting the industry with the least possible loss.

Young Bros. & Co.
per Charles Young, Manager"

It seems reasonable to consider that this letter might reflect the opinion of the majority of sugar cane growers. They were convinced that, once having lost the Kanaka slaves, all would be irreparably finished and in ruins. As we have already said, they had neither the physical or moral strength to advance their industry. They considered employing local labour to be out of the question and that it was more practical to abandon, not sell, everything - sugar cane and property.

Therefore, the only hope for the growers lay in accepting the coming of the Piedmontese, to teach them the seasonal cycles of sugar cane cultivation and to sell their properties to the newcomers in order to exit with as little loss as possible.

"It is a phenomenon that repeats itself in different times and places," wrote Nino Randazzo, "but always with the same basic scheme. Because of their frugality and propensity for hard work, the Italians represent the ideal economic solution when an industry, or a country, finds itself out of its depth. Italians will work where others won't or can't work. They make lands abandoned by other colonies flourish; they save while others waste, they accumulate while others give up. They are, therefore, a real providence in moments of necessity and crisis.

"When it is a question of respecting the needs and social traditions of the Italians, the natives of the place withdraw the carrot and produce the stick ... That the proverbial barrel is always full and the wife drunk is a constant claim of the politics of immigration in Anglo-saxon countries. In Queensland, neither the obtuse trade-unionists nor the greedy growers walked away winners, because it was a fact that, in practice, the Italians knew how to work longer and better than the locals and in the end became owners of the most prosperous plantations, preserving and strengthening a vital industry for themselves and the nation. In Brisbane, in the 1890's, the achievements of the Italians required a high moral price and imposed many sacrifices and humiliations." (13)

But let us advance one step at a time as we report the phases of this sad migratory episode, which marked the end of an era "when Italians were considered bearers of civilisation, art, culture and science in Australia". This period gave way to one in which "the stigma of illiteracy and criminal tendencies would taint the Italian migration for the next 50 years." (14)

THE POISON OF RACISM DOES NOT RESPECT ANY CIVILISATION

Everything seemed to proceed according to the established plan. The Agent-General of Queensland and London, Ernest Hunter, took himself to Rome. On behalf of Governor Griffith he made an agreement with the Italian government for assisted passages for the first 400 Italians who wanted to emigrate to Queensland. Meanwhile C.V. Fraire, a respected Italian businessman and owner of "a drapery business of note", who had arrived in Townsville 22 years earlier, was sent to Turin "on behalf of the Queensland government and certain private persons", with the task of recruiting and transporting migrants. (15) The trade-unionists, the newspapers and the Labor Party parliamentarians, however, started a defamatory campaign against Italy. They described it as a breeding place for illiterates, secret societies, the mafia, criminals etc. It was a pitiful display of ignorance. They even forgot that the little civilisation that Australia did enjoy at that time was largely due to Italians such as Catani, Checchi, Zelman, Fiaschi, Marchesini, Simonetti, Giorza and dozens of others. "The protests, the meetings, the strikes, the denunciations in the press, became more bitter, more numerous and piled up in an atmosphere of



Life of Italians in the Australian Bush. At night they would cook their food in their own dishes

Slowly they would save enough money to return South to purchase a small part of the virgin land





During the day, the cane cutters would load the wagon, ready to transport to the sugar mill

...or they would transport it with the farm horse



A Piedmont family, dedicated to the cultivation of sugar

social upheaval, 972 residents of the districts of Croydon and Etheridge and 7,347 in the rest of Queensland signed three petitions to the government calling for the immediate suspension of the plan for assisted emigration". (16)

WHEN PARLIAMENT LOSES ALL RESPECT

The group of trade union representatives, taking advantage of the current anti-Italian opinion, that they themselves had helped to shape, raised the "Italian question" again in the benches of the Queensland Parliament, which, only a few months earlier had approved the assisted immigration scheme and the relative appropriation.

It was the first parliamentary debate on the Italians. (17) It assumed a fundamental significance in all State migration policy and subsequently in Federal policy. It paved the way for racial discrimination, at times ably concealed under various rationale and economic criteria, at other times open and extremely offensive. The most voluble spokesman in all this denigration was Charles Powers, the trade-union representative for the seat of Burrum. When moving the motion presented to Parliament, "that in the opinion of this Parliament it is not desirable to introduce migrants from Italy", in the heat of the argument he declared:

- that he had never met anyone in the colony who was not against the coming of the Italians to Queensland,
- that the Italians would not resolve the problems of the sugar industry,
- that to introduce Italians would be against the interests of this colony
- that the presence of a great number of Italians would constitute an element of social danger for the colony.

After having accused the Italians of every sort of crime, as if they were the most criminal people in Europe, of causing problems in the United States and of having been the cause of the crisis in Argentina, he concluded, "I wish to state unequivocally that no matter what happens to the sugar industry, I am of the opinion that the Italians must be kept away."

"The insults by the Honorable member to all the Italians," the Prime Minister Griffith attempted to explain, at the same time revealing his own prejudices, "because of those infamies committed by that secret society that goes under the name of the 'Mafia', are as uncalled for as the insult a European government would give if it refused entrance to a Victorian citizen because of the illegal actions of some citizens from Queensland.

"The same relationship exists between the citizens of Northern Italy and the Mafiosi of Sicily as that between the Mafia and the ordered society of Queensland. The government has given an undertaking to accept as assisted migrants all persons responding to our needs

whether they come from Germany, from Scandinavia or from Northern Italy, no further south than Livorno."

The member for Mackay, Dalrymple, also replied to the strong accusation of Powers, saying, "Nothing could be more absurd than to charge the bankruptcy of any nation to the Italians. Personally, I don't have the honour of knowing a greater and more worthy personage than that of the present Italian Bishop of North Queensland, Bishop Cani. It is monstrous to insult an entire nation."

However, another trade-union representative asked, "What will happen to the colony if we let the Italians come?" Another declared, "I have always been against the employment of Kanakas and blacks, but I would a hundred times rather see them here than teams of Italian women and children." And Black added, "I think it would be better to continue to import Kanakas, rather than run the risk of bringing in migrants who could put the interests of this colony in danger."

It is very true that the pride and conviction of belonging to a superior race can blind a person to such an extent that he can no longer see the reality before his eyes.

The Italians had worked for years at the side of the locals, a little in all fields of work. They were admired and respected for their contribution, their honesty and perseverance. The member, Smyth, who had worked in the mines with the Italians, gave the following testimony, "I don't know who the Piedmontese or the Lombards are, but I have worked with Italian miners and I can say that they are among the best miners in the world. I say, without discrediting our own race, that they are first class men." But immediately after he declared, "I hope that the Prime Minister will not permit more than 400 Italians to come until the experiment has been proven. I hope that there might still be people of our own race coming to Queensland. What do we see in our city? Almost all the fruit shops are managed by Italians. The ice-cream vendor is Italian, likewise the musicians in the streets are all Italian; they are chasing everyone else away ..."

THE ITALIANS BREAK THEIR CONTRACT

Despite all the invective, the fears and the doubts, in October, 1891, the ship *Junna* of the British India Company, berthed at Genoa, where 335 Italians - men, women and children embarked for Queensland. Frairé had not managed to gather together any more, not even the 400 who were to have made up the first group of the experiment. But the political authorities were not happy until they received a message from the Captain of the ship, from Thursday Island, where they had berthed. The message read, "All going well, we have 335 Italian passengers and six English, with a circus of monkeys, dogs, horses and a lion. Mr Frairé is also with us. The ship's officers have been exceedingly pleased with the conduct of the Italian passengers during the entire voyage." (18)

It was a relief for the authorities to receive such a message. However, to avoid any possible acts of violence on the part of the population of the place, who had even been praised in Parliament as an example of civil behaviour as benefits a superior race, the ship with its load of "dubious, uncivilised and criminal" people, was made to change course and land at Townsville, a small town lost in the tropics, instead of at Brisbane.

From Townsville the Italians were quickly distributed through the various agricultural centres - 155 were destined for Ayr and Burdekin, 115 to Ingham on the Herbert River and 65 to Bundaberg. Having arrived at their destination the Italians heard talk that the pay they would receive in a week, the others could earn after one day's work. Likewise, those who worked in the mines or as woodcutters were earning from £3 to £3.10 a week. A group of them broke the contracts they had made in Italy and went to Cairns, 150 miles away.

They arrived in such a miserable state that they had need of immediate medical attention. At Cairns they were received with suspicion and hostility by the local workers. A miners' strike had not been successful in August of that same year because, it was claimed, some Italians who were resident in the place and who were not trade union members, had accepted to work for lower wages. It was feared that the same thing would be repeated at Cairns with the new arrivals. (19)

On 12 February, 1892, the Prime Minister Griffith, having just returned from an inspection tour of North Queensland, gave orders to resume temporarily the traffic with the Kanakas, because the Italians would not "fill the shoes" of the Kanakas, that is to say, they would never become slaves of the English owners in the tropics, not even for a period of only two years. (20)

According to an enquiry, the weekly cost of a Kanaka to the employer, above the price of engaging him, which was really the price that the owner paid to buy him, plus board and lodging, was 12 shillings and fourpence at Mackay and 13 shillings at Cairns which corresponded to about 40% of the cost of employing a white worker. For the Italians the contract stipulated a wage of 11 shillings a week for the first year and 12 shillings for the second year, plus board and lodging. A free worker, working on a contract basis, could earn up to 11 or 12 shillings in one day.

For everyone the lodgings consisted of corrugated iron huts; the food varied little because of the diet to which the locals were accustomed. The real difference was only that after three years, the Italians were free and could, if they had the money, acquire some small property and set themselves up.

The Italians were willing to work hard, for long hours, but on the same conditions as the other whites and were only claiming a just remuneration for their labours.

Therefore the experiment aborted, not because the Italians did not want to work, or wanted to work for less money or against the rules

set down by the trade unions, but only because they would not agree to become, like the Kanakas, slaves of the plantation owners.

"After some months of experience a good number of these Italians returned to work on the plantations, some to work for so much a week, others to lease land." (21)

Despite all this initial mistrust and hostility, in a short time they were able to gain the esteem of the plantation owners by their work and their honesty.

Even without the help of the government, Italians continued to emigrate to Queensland. At first it was a movement brought about by the reunion of families but then it changed to chain migration with a broader scope which reached a peak in the period after the First World War up until the Depression.

One historian conveys to us the success of that famous and deluded group of migrants of '91; "The Italian migrants, whose arrival in December, 1891, had seemed like the arrival of birds of bad omen, turned out to be, through their own initiative, strenuous workers and successful colonists."

"Having obtained land along the Herbert River and later in the districts of Cairns and Innisfail, they acclimatised themselves and adapted to the surroundings. In the space of a few years they found the means to bring out their relations and friends, thus founding an Italian community which played such a prominent part in a development of the sugar industry in North Queensland.

"We should add that the Italian migrant, generally without funds, but with the innate determination to find security for himself and his family, accepted poor conditions and lodgings without complaint, simply to keep himself in work.

"And, in general, he was liked as a worker and in many cases was preferred, just for those qualities which drew the most criticism. Even during certain economic recessions, the Italian worker was never long out of work, because he knew how to adapt and to do a little of everything.

"That quality of being 'a Jack of all trades' that annoyed the employment agency clerks so much and at times even the employers, is an inborn quality of the Italian. He may be a person without qualifications or financial backing, who lives in the midst of 1,000 difficulties, but he is willing to learn and then to succeed." (22)

NOTES

- 1 - Hector Holthouse, *Cannibal cargoes*, Melbourne, 1970, p.9.
- 2 - *ibid.*, pp. 9-10.
- 3 - Queensland votes and proceedings, 1885, 11.
- 4 - D.R.G. Packer, *Italian immigration into Australia*, Uni. of Melbourne., pp. 67-8.
- 5 - *ibid.*, p.68.
- 6 - Coghlan, *Labour and industry in Australia*, vol.11, p.945.
- 7 - *La Fiamma*, Supplement, 26.9.67, p. 106.
- 8 - F. Gagliardi, *Lettere alla Gazzetta d'Italia*, 18.12.1877.
- 9 - N. Randazzo, *Gli italiani in Australia*, Ricordo del Santuario di S. Antonio, Melbourne, 1969; p.80 Cfr. G.C. Bolton.
- 10 - Coghlan, *op. cit.*, vol. 111, pp. 1305-6.
- 11 - M. Willard, *History of the White Australia Policy* - Melbourne, 1923.
- 12 - V. & P., 1891, p.5, Young brothers to colonial secretary, 12 Sept., 1890.
- 13 - N. Randazzo, *Gli italiani in Australia*, *Il Globo*, Supplement, 26.9.77, p.88.
- 14 - Pino Bosi, *Blood, sweat and guts*, Sydney, 1970.
- 15 - G.C. Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away, A History of North Queensland to 1920* - Aus. National Uni. Press, 1972, p. 202.
- 16 - N. Randazzo, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
- 17 - Cfr. Queensland Official record of the debates of the Legislative Assembly, p. 73.
- 18 - N. Randazzo, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
- 19 - G.C. Bolton, *op. cit.*, p. 203.
- 20 - *ibid.*, p. 203.
- 21 - *ibid.*, p. 203.
- 22 - *ibid.*, p. 238.

...or cleared the land for farming.

300



ITALIAN MIGRATION TO QUEENSLAND BETWEEN 19 – THE TWO WARS

After the interruption because of the 1914-18 World War, Italian migration to Queensland resumed quickly and was more numerous to Queensland than to any other State in the Federation of Australia. These new migrants had lived through the terrible experience of war. Many of them had witnessed the destruction of their villages and the plunder of their land, and in more than a few cases even the massacre of their loved ones by the German forces.

But the war, whilst it took them away from the isolation of their towns and from their countryside, taught them to suffer and to live together in a life of comradeship in which one had to depend on the other even for their survival. At the resumption of migration there were no more than 2,000 Italians in Queensland. In 1925 alone 1,344 arrived of whom 1,152 were men, mostly bachelors and 192 women. After 1925 the influx of Italians decreased. In fact from 1926 to 1930, only 1,938 Italians arrived in the State. Between 1931 and 1936 1,212 arrived and in the years leading up to the Second World War, 1,407 came. The Italians who moved to Queensland from the other States in the Federation are not included in these figures. The seasonal migration to Queensland was always more numerous.

For a certain time there was little or no opposition to their coming, neither from the cane growers or from the cane cutters, because the sugar industry was enjoying a period of prosperity and there was no unemployment. The continuation of the embargo on sugar had increased considerably the demand for the local product, so that many areas which had remained uncultivated for years, were once again put under cultivation. Such a situation gave the opportunity to a certain number of Italians to buy their own agricultural holdings and to others, to put together enough capital to be able, eventually, to also become cane growers.

Quite soon, however, the population of Northern Queensland was faced with a new situation. New apprehensions arose, and, as was to be expected, the usual hostilities started up again, although the current situation was a result of the different circumstances of the time. For the people of the place the Southern Europeans, who took the place of the coloureds who had been eliminated by the White

Australia Policy in order to protect the standard of living, constituted a new danger. Therefore it was considered necessary to control and limit their coming and to force those who were residing in the place to observe the conditions of work laid down by the trade unions. Their apprehensions increased still further when the United States imposed a quota on Italian immigration and as a result migration to Australia jumped to about 4,000 in 1925.

The fear of a real invasion by Southern European migrants pushed the Commonwealth Government to negotiate an agreement with the Italian Government to limit the issue of passports only to "sponsored migrants", that is, only to those who were requested by relatives or friends already residing in Australia and to those who possessed a liquid capital of at least £40 sterling.

Moreover, as a result of the lowering of sugar prices, the State Government of Queensland tried to place a limit on the numbers of new sugar cane growers.

The government had not made any arrangements to welcome the non-English migrants, nor to house or find work for them. No form of assistance was available to them either from the government or from private sources. Many had to cross the whole continent, on the advice of a friend, in search of any type of work, and often only to find himself accused of being the cause of unemployment and of ruining the economy of the country.

It was the price the migrant had to pay for the simple fact of having emigrated. He had to overcome the unequal treatment, the conflicts and the adversities, and to work hard if and when he had the good fortune to find work straight away.

Osvaldo Bonutto, in his book, *A Migrant's Story*, relates his first experiences as a migrant. He arrived in Sydney on the Christmas Eve of 1924, with hardly a penny to his name, and went to a fellow countryman's house in Lithgow, who had sponsored him as a migrant. Here he heard that the possibility of finding work at that moment was somewhat remote, but that things would certainly be better the next year. After having tried everywhere for weeks without success for any sort of a job, he took the train for Queensland, together with another migrant called Giuseppe. When they arrived in Brisbane they found the situation no better. With no work and little money, they were forced to sleep under the stars in public parks.

During their enforced stay in Brisbane, they met an Italian and, on his advice, they decided to go further north to the district of Isis, where they hoped to find work in the sugar cane industry. But their friend added, "The sun is so strong you can cook an egg in the sand. The flies abound in swarms; they get in your eyes and cause infections; they attack your food as you're eating it; the rivers are infested by crocodiles; there are enormous lizards (goannas) who come out at night and even enter the houses; there are snakes that can swallow a whole baby or a lamb!" (1)

And, as if he had not said enough already to frighten those two poor souls half to death, he concluded, "Believe me, if you value your life,

don't go north. Go back before it's too late. During the night you will toss and turn in bed soaked with sweat and if you don't have a net to protect you from the mosquitoes, they will eat you alive." (2)

Despite the heat, the mosquitoes and flies, the crocodiles and snakes and all the other horrors, the two migrants with their last remaining shillings bought tickets for the train to Childers, a place in the district of Isis, about 350 miles from Brisbane.

When the train stopped at Kowbi, some miles from Childers, an Australian traveller pointed out a vast sugar cane plantation not far away, where they could look for work. When they arrived at the place, however, they were told that the owner was not taking on further workers. Some Italians who were working for him told them that not far from there, there was a group of Italians who were cutting wood for the saw mill and making sleepers for the State railways.

The two migrants received instructions on how to reach the camp and started walking with their luggage on their backs, across paddocks barely cleared, through bush and waterways. After having walked for some hours they threw themselves down on the verandah of a little country school to pass the rest of the night there and fell asleep with fearful thoughts of the terrors that their friend in Brisbane had described to them.

In the morning, hungry and stiff, they set out walking once more. After some hours they started to hear the first sounds of axes striking wood. They had arrived. At the camp they found their first work in Australia.

"Finally I had found work and a house. At that moment I was probably the happiest man in the world. I would have regular and plentiful meals, even if they were not much to my taste, and I would earn a little money without the humiliation that I had suffered in Lithgow. I had never held an axe in my hands before then and I said as much to my employer. He told me not to worry as I'd learn in a hurry. And indeed I learnt so well that I became an expert wood cutter and acquired an expert knowledge of wood. Cutting wood to measure is very hard work, much harder than I'd thought. Cutting wood is hard work at any time and in any circumstances but in our case it was doubly hard, because none of us knew the trade. We were all new and unskilled wood cutters, brought together by circumstance. However, the conditions in Australia then, convinced me that the person who gave his all, who was prepared to work and wanted to work, would never die of hunger in this land." (3)

Besides accepting whatever happened, the migrant had to accept to live in a primitive manner, devoid of every elementary commodity.

"Our tent was set up on sandy dunes near a river. The first night I slept in the tent I felt that something was biting me and stabbing me in every part of my body. At first I thought it was mosquitoes ... then that it was ants. In the morning my companions laughingly told me that they were fleas and that the ground was infested with them. There was nothing to do but accept the situation and not to worry too much about those hungry little monsters." (4)

"The Italians," wrote Jones, "were never long without work." (5) And it is true. They have never been a drain on government finances and have never crowded the agencies for social assistance. They have always undertaken some kind of work. At times they have worked for board and lodgings only, waiting and hoping for a more remunerative job to come their way. Some have cleared bush land preparing it for the planting of sugar cane, and waiting until after the first crop to receive remuneration for their labours.

The first unrest occurred in 1922 when on the occasion of the arrival in Queensland of the cruiser, *Libia*, commanded by Captain Enrico Burzalli, some thousands of Italians went enthusiastically to greet it in the tropical ports. The Australians, on seeing so many Italians, started to ask, "How come there are so many Italians all of a sudden?" "The government," explained the members of the Labor Party, "must have negotiated a secret pact with Italy to have us over-run by 'dagoes'!"

The Premier of the State hastened to clear the situation in Parliament. "The Italians are not encouraged as the British are not discouraged. There is no official treaty nor secret pact with Italy. The Italians who came to Queensland migrated under their own free will and at their own expense." (16)

Many Italians had gone directly to Northern Queensland at the request of relatives or of fellow countrymen who had been living there for a long time. Others had gone there because they had heard that it was easy to find work there. Innisfail, where the Chinese had abandoned the banana plantations leaving the land free for sugar cane cultivation, also attracted a considerable number of Italians. (7)

Another district favoured by the Italians was Ingham, where an Italian collective was already established. Some people living in the place started to comment that Innisfail and Ingham were becoming two European towns in a foreign land. Between 1920 and 1924 the numbers of English plantation owners at Ingham rose from 174 to 192, while the numbers of Italian owners increased from 114 to 179. At Innisfail the English population increased from 251 to 362 and the Italians from 143 to 254. At Cairns the English population grew from 265 to 436 while the Italians increased from 29 to 69.

Of the cane cutters at Ingham the numbers of English men dropped from 61 in 1921 to 13 in 1925, while the Italian numbers increased from 153 to 575 in the same period.

In the Johnstone River, district, the English cane cutters numbered 151 in 1924 while "the others" numbered 626. (8)

The Townsville Chamber of Commerce deplored the reluctance shown by the Australians of the place to dedicate themselves to the cultivation of sugar cane, thus leaving the country open to foreigners, whose will to defend the extreme north from invaders was deemed very doubtful.

Soon after, the Australian Workers' Union made it officially known that the unions were disposed to accept the Italians in the sugar cane plantations, provided they had had previous experience in cane cutting and that they were union members. (9)

Through fear of economic recession, but more than that, through fear of being replaced by the new arrivals who worked very hard, the unions again tried to contain the numbers of Italians in the cane plantations, denying them membership of the Australian Workers' Union. (10)

Moreover, they negotiated an agreement with the employers to employ only those who were union members, also 75% of the positions in the plantations and in the mills had to be reserved for British migrants and the rest for Southern Europeans. The Innisfail Chamber of Commerce also passed a motion in which it condemned the influx of Italians into the district. (11)

As if this was not enough they commenced to divide the Italians into two groups, those from the north and those from the south.

Actually, as we have already seen, it was the Brisbane Parliament in 1891 which divided Italy into two parts, creating in the public mind the idea that all the good came from the north and all the bad from the south; all the northern Italians were "honest, frugal and hard workers" while those from the South were "good-for-nothings, mafiosi, criminals who always had a knife up their sleeves". (12)

But it is interesting to note that in reality, they could not distinguish the Italians coming from the north from those coming from the south. Here we relate what happened to a certain Salvatore, one of the more prominent cane growers in the district of Innisfail, who had emigrated from the province of Messina in Sicily.

"He told me," writes G. Luciano, "that a very important personality of the district confided to him one day that he had a very low opinion of Sicilians. Salvatore asked the gentleman if he knew who the Sicilians were in the district and he mentioned a dozen names. Some were from the north, others from Sicily. 'Fine,' said Salvatore, 'and what do you think of so-and-so, and this other and that other?' to which the gentleman replied, 'They are some of the best elements in the district. Northerners, naturally!' 'Naturally they are not northerners,' said Salvatore, 'they are Sicilian and perhaps you would be surprised to hear that I too, am a Sicilian!' I would not have wanted to be in that gentleman's shoes," concluded Luciano. (13)

THE ROYAL COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY (THE FERRY REPORT)

The "anti-foreigner" sentiment and anti-Italian laws prevalent in 1924, burgeoned into violent unrest in the following year. The Italians continued to buy land and the available man-power commenced to exceed the demand.

Anti-Italian meetings and campaigns were organised, at which union members and returned servicemen, supported by the press, occupied prominent places. They wanted to prohibit the sale of properties to Italians and to prevent the cane they produced from being accepted and ground by the mills. In fact the workers at the Plane Creek, Sarina mill, refused to handle cane grown by the Italians and accused them of lowering the level of prosperity and conditions in the sugar cane industry.

This state of affairs forced the Labor Government to institute another Commission of Enquiry which was also known as the "Ferry Report", to investigate and report on the social and economic effects of the considerable increase of foreigners in the sugar cane districts. The enquiry was to include all the foreigners in the tropics, but, as the spokesman for the enquiry, Mr Ferry, noted, "The question of foreigners in Queensland is essentially an Italian question." (14)

At the outset the enquiry found that the numbers of Italian cane cutters were far greater than those of the Anglo-Australians in the Herbert and Johnstone districts. On the other hand, the majority of plantation owners were still of English origin, but even in this sector the numbers of Italians were increasing rapidly and had already become the majority in the Ingham district.

The report recognised, although somewhat reluctantly, that overall, the Italian workers were conscientious, sober, trust-worthy, keen to work and to save for their own agricultural property and thus acquire independence.

It revealed, moreover, that in certain cases the Italians were exploited by the land owners. In exchange for the promise of a contract of work to cut the cane, plus board and lodging, they employed them in clearing new areas of bushland. The report then passed on to refer to the antagonism and conflict between the Australians and the Italians, declaring that these problems arose because the Italians wanted to work from dawn to dusk, Saturday and Sunday, without respecting the rule of the eight hour day established by the unions, therefore everything rose from economic factors and economic competition. But the report also recognized that the Italian workers, once they were cognisant of the laws of the place, observed them and became good union members.

However, some leading union members of the Australian Workers' Union stated to the Commission of Enquiry that, in their opinion:

(a) the Italian worker knew how to defend his rights, he worked well and was as good a union member as any other worker,

(b) the Italian members of the Australian Workers' Union were loyal to the union, in solidarity with other union members; they knew how to conduct themselves well and their tenor of life was equal to that of the English,

(c) the Italians did not accept a lower rate of salary from that established by the sugar industry unions.

The same report, however, revealed deep prejudices, criticising the Southern Europeans harshly and excluding those from northern Italy.

"It is worth noting," the report says, "that those coming from the cold valleys and high plains of Piedmont and Lombardy are much superior to their fellow countrymen from the southern regions and, in general, from all the Mediterranean races. Unfortunately the majority of the new migrants who have arrived in Queensland come precisely from southern Italy and many from Sicily. The Italians coming from the southern provinces are more inclined to group together than to mix in and become part of the general population of the State." (15)

"A close examination," says Borrie, "indicates clearly that fear, rather than a deep analysis of the situation, was the driving force that prompted many of the findings of the Commission of Enquiry, fear that many of the migrants coming from the south could not be assimilated." (16)

Ferry, therefore, made some statements and arrived at conclusions which were based more on prejudice and simple-mindedness than on evidence based on the facts. His report reveals his ignorance of the migratory history in Queensland, more than evidence of fact. He could not have been unaware that the southern Italians, so harshly criticised, were passing through the first migratory phase and that necessarily the poorest, while those of the north, so praised by him were in the third or actually, the fourth migratory stage. In a few words, they had had plenty of time to organise and integrate themselves into the population and head calmly towards economic prosperity.

Ferry, rather than stating point blank judgements founded on pretensions of racial superiority, attributed defects that were only his personal convictions, to those considered inferior by him. He also exaggerated the number of southern Italians present in Queensland, with the aim of demonstrating, indirectly, his theory that the southerners were more inclined to group together. (17)

Despite his arbitrary statements and his inexactness, the Ferry Report was accepted and it influenced the migratory policy in the years to come and imposed severe restrictions on those admitted into Australia, excluding those who were not able to offer valid guarantees of their ability to integrate rapidly.

What was most important to the migrants was the attitude of the population with regard to them. This varied from one place to another and from one minute to another.

"In practice," writes Bolton, "racial hostilities were contained until the thirties, partly because in 1925 an agreement between the Australian and Italian governments restricted immigration by the Italians, because of the act of sponsorship and the possession of a capital of £40 sterling." (18)

THE STRIKE AT SOUTH JOHNSTONE

In June, 1926, at South Johnstone, north Queensland, another centre of the sugar industry, the Australian workers declared a strike. According to the press it was to protest against the use of foreign labour, especially Italian and Greek labour, in the sugar plantations and in the refineries.

In reality the strike had quite different origins. It was caused by the conflict between the unions and the management of the South Johnstone mill. The management had passed from State control to a cooperative of growers. The new management, for economic reasons, believed the time was right to reduce the number of personnel employed and to replace about 30 workers. The unions demanded that the substitutions be made with workers who had been employed at the mill the year before.

Therefore, the Italians had nothing to do with the quarrel with the unions, "also because none of them was working in that mill." (19)

However, after having given assurances that there would not be "any discrimination because of the nationality of the worker involved in the dispute and that everyone would be helped and protected in the same way", the Australian Workers' Union insisted that if Italian cane cutters did not participate in the strike they would lose their union membership. (20)

The arbitration court had to decide on the question of whether the manufacturers at South Johnstone could employ workers who were not union members.

But on the evening of 6 July, 1926, some workers, members of the union who were picketing the mill to prevent the entrance of "scabs", happened to quarrel with an unknown person who, by his accent seemed to be a foreigner. The fellow, thoroughly scared, fired some shots from his pistol, killing one of the strikers. The frightened worker then fled into the bush and remains unidentified even to this day.

Word spread that the killer was a Maltese and the strikers started to seek out the Maltese. The government sent police reinforcements and ordered the confiscation of fire-arms, munitions and explosives within a range of 20 miles.

The Italians remained calm. The arbitration court rejected the demands of the manufacturers, who immediately made it known that they were resolved to resist the union proposals. The strike continued. A week passed, then all the month of July and the situation had not changed at all.

On 22 August the Australian workers at South Johnstone held a meeting during which the great majority decided to continue the strike. The old grudges against foreign labour reared up again. In a short time the union struggle changed face and it turned with renewed vigour against the foreign labourers employed in the sugar

cane plantations. Thus the eternal problem was rekindled in full, the problem which has always exasperated the hearts and minds of the various ethnic groups and the relations between them, all to the detriment of the economic well-being and social relationships. The campaign of hate was unleashed with great violence, aimed at the Innisfail region, which included South Johnstone.

There was a great outcry for the dismissal of foreign workers employed as cane cutters, of whom the majority were Italians. However, the growers did not want to accede to these requests. Therefore the unions decided to extend the strike to include the railway workers, who now refused to load the cane from the Innisfail plantations. In the meantime the Prime Minister, MacCormack, had returned from London. An energetic and decisive man, he did not hesitate to impose an ultimatum on the railways union. If the workers did not heed the advice of the authorities, "the entire railways personnel would be dismissed," except for those who had signed a declaration pledging themselves "to follow the orders of the authorities elected by the government." (21)

The railways union refused to obey the injunction by the government and so 17,000 railway workers were sacked paralysing all Queensland. But immediately all the clerical staff and then the railway workers themselves signed the pledge to obey the railway authorities. Finally, by 13 September, all the railway workers had returned to work and the plantation workers decided that same day to resume work immediately with 368 votes in favour and 11 against.

The Australian newspapers were not backward in claiming a victory for the government and State authorities.

INTERVENTIONS BY THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT

Following this wave of hostility, the Italian government declared that, "with regard to emigration to north Queensland, chain migration will be granted only to relatives, such as parents, children, brothers, etc. By this means we hope to avoid, as unfortunately happened in 1925, simple, irresponsible workers signing sponsorship agreements for acquaintances or even strangers, as soon as they arrived. This was sometimes done for profit and sometimes to please the recipient, although they were aware they could not fulfil the obligations undertaken". (22)

The Queensland Consul, in a typically Fascist way, in giving the news to the Italians, expressed it thus, "Let it be known to those concerned, that through the explicit directive of the Royal Government of Italy, emigration of Italians to Australia, is definitely closed. The coming to Queensland will be permitted only and exclusively to persons who are sponsored by their own relatives and linked to them by the closest of relationship ties and always provided that the person sponsoring satisfies special conditions, such as, for example, that he is capable of maintaining the sponsored person, of guaranteeing work

for him, etc. Excluded from such category however, are the cousins and the brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, so that in the future only a few dozen Italians can be considered able to come to Queensland. Moreover, the requests from those fellow countrymen who intend to return to Italy will be supported and favoured.

"The provisions relate not only to the no longer tolerable exploitation of the Italian migrant in general, but in particular, to the barely friendly welcome reserved for the same, to the most avoidable obstructionism meted out to him, to the lack of esteem in which the Italian worker is held, although with his sweat, with his sacrifice, with his self denial, he has enriched and rendered immense areas of land productive in Australia, and especially in north Queensland ...

"From today Italians guaranteed contracts of work, will only set out for those nations, in which, although much more populated than Australia, the Italian element is wanted, requested with insistence, welcomed as a brother, while here in Australia he is considered almost as unfair competition and singled out by the disparaging term of 'dagoes'...

"I wish that all Australians could have the same love of work, the same tenacity, the same attachment to the soil as those Italians whom they call 'dagoes'. This term, reflecting less than the most elementary norms of hospitality, was pronounced a few days ago in Richmond, Queensland, when I was on the point of leaving that city. Considering that I had gone there to institute a migration centre... I was surprised to hear that my presence in Richmond could be 'approved' for a night or two, that the Italian was a dangerous element to the Australian worker and that they had had enough of 'dagoes'.

"These statements gave me some idea of the great incommensurable ignorance of those who made such pronouncements and was an example of the unjustified aversion towards the Italian community." (23)

LOCAL REACTIONS

Many voices were raised in defence of the Italians on that occasion. Among the most authoritative and significant was that of the Archbishop of Brisbane, Bishop J. Duhig. As reported in an interview with a representative of the newspaper, the *Brisbane Courier*, on 18 December, 1925, he said, "No nation which has any self-respect can do this. The Italians who migrate here must have equal rights with those of other migrants."

His Grace stated that "he had read with concern the article published yesterday morning in the *Courier*, which said that the Italian government had adopted measures which practically mean the closure of Italian migration to Australia." He considered that it would be unfortunate for Australia if these measures were put into practice, because Italian migrants, together with the English and those of other nations were accomplishing great work for the well being of Australia.

"There is such a variety of work to be done in this country," Archbishop Duhig continued, "and evidently it can be done by various people. This country will never be able to be fully developed until there is a large increase in the population. It is absolutely wrong to consider that an increase in the population will impoverish the country. The labour market will probably be saturated momentarily, but the result will be an increase in production to supply the needs of the increased population. America, the largest nation in the world, would never have become what it is today if it had, in its early stages, severely restricted immigration.

"We cannot wait for Italy to go down on its knees and beg us to take her people," His Grace added. "No nation with any self-respect will do that. Italy has the right to have her migrants treated equally with those from other countries, when they arrived in Australia. It was natural for a preference to be accorded to the English, given the special conditions and arrangements for migration, but when Italians disembark here, at their own expense, they must enjoy the same rights that other migrants enjoy." (24)

FROM THE DEPRESSION TO WORLD WAR

Towards the end of 1929 the already mentioned economic depression commenced with consequent widespread unemployment, which in 1931, touched 37.8% of the population. Of the Australian States, Queensland had the lowest rate of unemployment. In fact, in 1932, while the rest of Australia had an unemployment rate of 34%, in Queensland the rate averaged around 18.8%.

The protectionist laws on sugar imports ensured a constant demand for the local product and the price remained rather high.

There was sufficient work for the residents of the place and during the Depression the cane cutters were considered the aristocrats of work. They were able to earn more than £10 per week, when the ordinary farm-hand was being paid ten shillings per week plus board and lodgings. Therefore, thousands of unemployed workers poured into northern Queensland, from every corner of the country, with the hope of finding work.

The continued influx of new migrants and the high proportion of Italians into the districts of Ingham, Innisfail and Cairns, combined with the consequent competition with the Anglo-Australians for the same work, led once more to an explosion of open racial conflict. Once more there was talk of alien penetration, once more giving rise to suspicion, intolerance and prejudice.

In this new hate campaign, three groups in particular could be distinguished:

(a) *The Australian Natives Association* started to blame the Italians for possessing agricultural holdings already under cultivation and thus becoming a danger. Moreover, because of them, the "white man" would have to work hard for an equal number of hours to compete.

One of the bosses, a certain Murgatroyd, even suggested that every foreigner should undergo an English education test and that those who did not pass it should be deported or punished in a manner to be determined. (25)

(b) *The British Preference League*, which came into being as a result of the English policy of giving preference to products made in Britain, became a driving force in the atmosphere of labour unrest and in the expressions of intolerance towards foreigners, especially against the Italians. At that time it gave vent to all its rage. (26)

(c) And finally, as was to be expected, the *Returned Soldiers' League* put its weight behind the Preference League. It supported the policy of always giving preference to the British in every circumstance. For example, in May, 1930, the R.S.L. branch at Innisfail approved a petition to the State Premier, requesting that foreigners be prohibited from buying sugar cane plantations. On that occasion, one member of the R.S.L., Mr Morgan, declared, "This land is our natural heritage, yet we find that certain concessions of land are given to foreigners and are refused to our "diggers" and to others of our race." (27)

Such declarations by the R.S.L. caused indignant reactions from the Italians. In a letter to the *Johnstone River Advocate*, they expressed their feelings against the R.S.L. saying, "It would be a very good idea if the members of the R.S.L. asked the Italian government to send a large Italian ship to Innisfail to carry all the Italians back to Italy. The members of the R.S.L. would then have the opportunity of taking over all the agricultural properties of the Italians, less expenses of course. This could be done, but then, would they be able to cope?" (28)

Three weeks later, strongly supported by the R.S.L., 100 British migrants met in the municipal hall at Innisfail and founded the *Far North Queensland Branch of the British Preference League*. The aims, once again full of discrimination and racial hate, were stated thus:

- (a) to request the replacement of foreign (Italian) workers by British migrants in the cultivation and cutting of sugar cane,
- (b) to support the policies of the League in all their endeavours,
- (c) to support the League in the professional, commercial and industrial life of Australia,
- (d) to ensure the implementation of the White Australia Policy.

They decided, moreover, to insist with the Federal government that migrants be not granted Australian citizenship if, after at least ten years of residence and a rigorous test, the candidate could not demonstrate an adequate knowledge of the English language. (29)

Finally they forced an agreement with the plantation owners of South Johnstone that 75% of the cane cutters had to be Anglo-Saxon. (30)

These discriminatory and wholly arbitrary sentiments were a traditional characteristic of industrial relations in northern Queensland, but the economic crisis of 1929 and the attendant wave of unemployment, brought them into the open, in all their cruelty.

The Italian community and its representatives reacted spiritedly. In the first few days of June, 1930, the Italian cane cutters met in Innisfail and asked the authorities to concede to them, from the moment they were permitted to settle in Australia, the same treatment as was given to the Anglo-Saxon workers. They also pointed out that, in the case of those naturalised, they had the same rights by law that the British and other Australians had by birth.

At the same time, C. Danesi, instigator of the meeting, urged the Italians to oppose, always in an orderly manner, the British Preference League, so that their economic interests might not be damaged. (31)

In 1930 the racial tension, already high, was aggravated even further when contracts for cane cutting were renewed. In the district of Goondi, of 277 cane cutters, 208 were Italian and the others were all southern Europeans. No Englishman was taken on. The British Preference League, beside itself with rage, telegraphed Prime Minister Scullin, reporting the situation.

The League expected that the government would maintain the defence of the extreme north with native British citizens, thus ensuring that the sugar industry would remain completely in the hands of the Anglo-Australians, but the cane sugar cutters continued to work at Goondi and in other northern areas.

The British Preference League received its worst blow in 1932 when the plantation growers of South Johnstone threw out the agreement of 1930 between the Australian Sugar Producers Association and the Queensland Cane Growers' Council which stipulated that 75% of cane cutters in that district had to be Anglo-Saxon. (32)

This racist tug-o-war continued for a further few years. The openly hostile feelings increased still further when the Australian Workers' Union requested that all cane cutters be members of the union. Clearly that was an attempt to limit the Italian influence in the sugar industry and a direct attack on their economic position in the area. The *Foreign Cutters' Defence Organisation* reacted immediately with a circular in which it stated that a grower had the right to employ any person whosoever that he pleased, that cane cutting had to be left free to any person whosoever was capable of such work and that the British Preference League was acting in an improper manner, damaging all the ethnic groups and causing racial hatred. (33)

Some wanted to resurrect the two episodes of racial hostility in which the coat of arms from the Consular residence of the Italian Vice Consul, G. Luciano, was removed. The first occasion was during the Christmas celebrations of 1928. The crest was later found in front of an old Chinese shop. On 21 January, the crest was put back in its place. On the second occasion the coat of arms at Innisfail was removed from the building one night between 18 and 29 May, 1930, and once again protests were made to the Queensland and Federal governments. Some days later the crest was found, damaged, in a bush along the banks of the Johnstone River and was returned to the Italian Vice-Consul, who put it back in its place.

Many Italians considered such happenings as insults to Italy. The Vice-Consul, G. Luciano, stated, "To remove the Consular coat of arms is an insult to the Italian nation because it is the official insignia of Italy." Such actions aggravated still further the divisions. (34)

But even the Italians, in one sense, contributed to the tense atmosphere or, rather, they aroused the suspicions of the people of their host country. This was brought about by the creation of an Italian Club, which gave rise to the suspicion that the Italians wanted to segregate themselves, to maintain their own customs, traditions and language and that they did not mean to have contact with the British.

The *Italian Progressive Club*, also called the Alessandro Volta Club, was founded at Mourilyan by a group of Italians to give moral and economic assistance to our fellow country men and to foster good relations between Italians and Australians. Quite soon it became the most authoritative mouth piece, and for a long time the only one, in defence of the Italians in northern Queensland.

We recall some occasions, among the many, when C. Danesi, S. Pagano or E. Ciampi spoke out in protest against perceived wrongs, in defence of the Italians. In 1925 they protested against a motion approved by the Chamber of Commerce of Innisfail, against the influx of Italians into the district. Again in 1929 they protested against the accusation that the Italians were all Fascist; in 1930 they were again engaged in a long struggle against the British Preference League; in 1932 they founded the Foreign Cutters Defence Organisation. (35)

The Australians became even more suspicious because that was the time in Italy when Fascism was advancing rapidly. People were concerned that the Italian club would become an outpost for Italian Fascism, thus becoming a fifth colony.

On the other hand, the policies of the Fascist government, with its statutes for branches abroad, were trying to preserve and strengthen the national conscience of the Italians and to discourage any desire they may have had for requesting citizenship of the countries in which they resided. This served only to arouse further reservations in the minds of the Australian authorities, worried as they were about the possible social consequences of Fascism.

The consular and diplomatic representatives, eager to carry out orders from Rome, opened Fascist branches among the Italian community and tried in every way to restore the ties of the migrants with their fatherland, encouraging them not to renounce their Italian citizenship. In this way they contributed to furthering divisions among the migrants and creating further suspicions among the people who hosted them.

It is necessary to point out, however, that the Italians now had, for the first time, someone to defend them, their interest and their reputation.

The Italian Fascist representatives in fact, often made their voices heard in defence of their fellow countrymen, even if, at times,

they mixed problems of work and prejudice with political problems. They re-awakened in the Italians their dignity as men and Italians, while helping them to assert their rights. For example, in 1927, the Italian plantation owners in the Mackay district ran the risk of seeing the cane rot in the fields because the mills refused to grind it. The Italian Consul intervened immediately, preventing any loss for his fellow countrymen. Moreover, he obtained the satisfaction of having apologies presented to him by the Queensland government.

With the inauguration of the Fascist branch at Innisfail in 1929, the Italian club and indeed, the whole community, became once again the objects of suspicion. On that occasion, G. Luciano, Consular agent, declared that all Italians in the district were Fascist or sympathisers with the Fascist ideal.

The Anglo-Australians replied with an announcement that read, "The Italian Consul organises Fascism in Innisfail. Italian workers, we do not want Fascism here!" (36)

THE BLACK HAND

Crime is to be condemned always by every good citizen who respects the law, but especially when it is perpetrated against innocent people. However, it is also necessary to avoid condemning a whole community or ethnic group because of the criminal acts of some individuals. It would be absurd, for example, to accuse all the Irish people of being a criminal race, only because the bushranger, Ned Kelly, was Irish. Unfortunately, right here in Australia, the popular conviction has been created that Italians have criminal tendencies.

The causes can be attributed to:

(a) the tendency to generalise about the few isolated crimes committed by Italians in Australia,

(b) the great contribution brought about by certain detective novels and thriller films, where the American gangsters bear Italian names.

It is true that, in some cases, the heads of these delinquent organisations were of Italian descent, but it is necessary to remember that, for the main part, they were products of that very same American society. For example, even Al Capone, like many others, was just a babe in arms when brought to America by his parents and what he became was the fruit of the American situation.

In Australia the medium of social communication has much to answer for, in inculcating preconceived opinion and encouraging racial prejudice. For many years the Italians had to suffer because of motives devoid of comprehension by the press.

Many Italians still remember with disgust the regular anti-Italian attacks by *Smiths Weekly*, now, thank heavens, dead and buried. The most trivial transgressions committed by Italians made front page news, in capital letters, with all the publicity possible. So too, in the daily newspapers and in magazines, just a suspicion was enough, or

even the colour of the hair and the stature of a person, to hurl accusations, exaggerate facts and circumstances and to generalise, accusing the entire Italian community of misdeeds.

And yet, it is common knowledge that the rate of criminality among Italians is one of the lowest when compared with other ethnic groups and with Australians.

What we have said to date does not aim to excuse the crimes which were perpetrated by some Italians to the detriment of their fellow countrymen in Queensland between 1925 and 1928. We condemn, without reservation, the crimes committed by them, but at the same time, we want to make known that it is just these deeds which have shown that the average Italian does not have an inclination towards criminality and that he does not bow easily to it.

The Italian victims of some such outrages lost their lives because they did not want to give into blackmail, to threats, to the loss of their livelihood or their crops. Here are some examples of what happened.

The activities of the "Black hand" commenced near Innisfail. It seems that for three years a small organisation extorted sums of money from some rather wealthy farmers in the area, who were afraid of reprisals.

In 1928 a certain Alfio Patané received, three times, a notice to pay a certain sum of money and three times Alfio refused. On 11 August, while he was returning home, he was mortally wounded by a lucky shot, and the day after, he died in hospital. Three years later his widow married a certain Di Salvo. She too, in 1933, received a request to pay £500. Di Salvo did not bow to the request. One night a rifle shot, fired from behind a bush, wounded him in the face. Soon after came another request to Di Salvo to pay up or else, but he refused again. The following day his horses were found dead, poisoned in their stables.

Instead of surrendering to these new demands, Di Salvo decided to finish with this band of criminals once and for all. However, on 5 January, 1934, while he was working in his sugar plantation, both he and his wife were gravely wounded by two rifle shots fired from a short distance away. Even this time Di Salvo managed to save himself and his wife and from that day on they were not disturbed any more. But the families of the area lived in fear of their lives. (37)

The next victim was a certain Giovanni Iacono. He was accosted on 11 February, 1934, by three members of the "Black hand", Nicola Mamone, Giuseppe Beuti and Giuseppe Parisi and asked to write intimidatory letters to the rich farmers of the area. Iacono refused to write such letters and Mamone, after a violent struggle, cut off his ears with a razor. Iacono recovered in hospital, but refused to reveal the names of his attackers to the police, claiming he did not know them.

When he was discharged from hospital he waited for the right moment to avenge himself. The occasion came when one day he came across Mamone in a crowded street in Innisfail. Right in front of the eyes of the passers-by he fired six rifle shots, leaving Mamone dead on the footpath.

During the Second World War the last act of injustice against the Italians was committed. Many of them were interned indiscriminately. So, because of the war, they were stripped of their prominent positions in the sugar industry.

In conclusion, the period 1921-1940 was a troubled time in the history of Italians in northern Queensland in the long and difficult struggle to establish themselves economically on a level with the Australians.

THE ITALIANS ACQUIRE THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

At the start, the new arrivals were not even considered as settlers but only as a substitute source of cheap labour. Certainly it was never their intention to remain dependent for long on the Anglo-Australians, working simply as farm-hands. They had set out with the conviction that there was so much land in Australia there had to be a piece for them too.

In passing we note that during this period, up until the First World War, the Italian emigrants were almost exclusively all Piedmontese, from the provinces of Alessandria, Asti and Cuneo and Lombards from Sondrio and Brescia. Before and after the war, they arrived from Monferrato and from other provinces of Piedmont and from Mantova in Lombardy.

In fact, "another interesting group comes from the commune of Ostiglia (Mantova) on the River Po. This province is primarily a rice producing area. It also produces sugar beet, grain and cattle and the land is divided into large properties. Most of these migrants have established themselves in the areas of Ingham and Halifax and cultivate sugar cane". (38)

Immediately after the war, a certain number of Italians came from Barese and from Naples, actually a certain number had also come from these places before the war. Others came from Calabria, from the towns of Gizzeria, Sambiase, Palmi, Farlerna and Rosarno, thus a strong migratory chain came from these towns. The Sicilians, however, came in particular from the province of Catania and arrived in Queensland at the start of the century. From 1920 on they arrived from other provinces, particularly from the province of Trapani.

Finally, before the end of the Second World War, emigrants from the Abruzzi region, from the provinces of Pescara and L'Aquila, started to pour into the sugar cane areas. (39)

They all started their Australian adventure as sugar cane cutters. To those who do not know or have never seen how cane is cut, we can say right away that it is very tough work. It requires very strong stamina, persons accustomed to working under the sun in a temperature that goes from a minimum of 30°C to a maximum of 45°C in the shade and it requires endurance and speed to work in teams. For these reasons not everyone manages to be a cane cutter. The work was carried out in teams of four, six

or eight men, and these teams continued to work in the rain and most suffocating tropical heat, to maintain the flow of cane to the mills. The work was mostly done under contract and in general was based on terms and conditions laid down by the State Arbitration Court. The owner paid so much per ton, more or less according to the condition of the cane in the field. The cane cutters were obliged to cut the cane, clean it, load it and secure it on the carts, ready to be transported to the mills. The earnings were divided into equal parts among the members of the so-called "gangs" and the cook, if one was employed.

But besides the difficulty of the work, cane cutting presented other dangers, not the least, that of extremely poisonous snakes. Moreover, because of the climate and other factors, the cane cutters were often afflicted by troubles such as stomach aches, fevers, parasites, "Weil's Disease" and often even cases of appendicitis. "Weil's Disease" is an illness caused by a germ transmitted to men from mice in the cane fields and the cane becomes so infected that the cane cutters contract this debilitating disease, without even being aware of it at the time. Giuseppe Luciano writes, "I saw four of these poor unfortunates with yellowish skin. One was married with a wife and three children in Italy and I couldn't help but feel distressed for these poor fellows. Their health was ruined and a very gloomy future awaited them." (40)

But through tenacity and the will to succeed, the Italians did not let slip the good prospects that the sugar cane industry offered. So, with hard work, long and monotonous hours, at times even excessively so, with saving and frugality, at times with a cooperative system either crop-sharing or contract, they commenced the climb to economic equality with the Anglo-Australians.

The process of acquisition by the Italians was already in full swing in 1914. Several had already become owners of big farms. In that year the manager of the Sugar Experiment Stations, according to the annual report, affirmed that many Britons were selling their properties to Italians and to other foreigners who wanted to own a sugar farm, and that it was not an exaggeration to say that 99% of the sales in the Herbert River district went to Italians.

"The cane farms at Herbert and Johnstone," wrote G.C. Bolton, "were gradually falling into the hands of foreign migrants, particularly those of the Italians. In 1916, in the districts of Herbert and Johnstone, 316 farms were owned by Britons, 103 by Italians and 42 by other nationalities. Among the cane cutters, from whose ranks came the new owners, there were 169 Britons and 621 foreign, of whom more than half were Italian." (41)

Thus, with the numerical increase in the Italians, the following was ascertained - the diverse places from which the Italians came, the increase in sugar cane plantations and thus of sugar. From a production insufficient for the needs of the nation, sugar became, after the war, a secondary export product. Finally the areas of sugar cane plantation where Italians were most densely settled, started to be defined.

The northern area that has Cairns as its capital, is the biggest and the most densely populated by Italians. It extends from Ingham on the Herbert River in the south to Mossman in the north, and embraces the districts of Hinchinbrook, Cardwell, Johnstone, Mulgrave and Douglas.

The first emigrants from Piedmont arrived there in the eighties and for a long time they were the most numerous. After almost 50 years (1925), at the time of the visit of P. Mambrini, they were still the most numerous in the Hinchinbrook district - 757 from Piedmont, 641 from Lombardy, followed by 381 from the Aeolian Islands, 365 from Sicily and 71 from the Veneto. (42)

They were a select group of farmers who, in general, were agriculturists from birth and many had great success as land owners. In his report of 1898, the Agent-General for Queensland observed, "We remember when in 1890 a group of farming families from Lombardy and Piedmont were brought to Queensland by Mr Frairé of Townsville, and how they settled in Wide Bay and in the Herbert River district. These farmers established themselves so well that they brought out their families and friends and, as a matter of fact, there are about 40 requests in the process, requesting direct passage from Italy, thus avoiding the cost of a voyage from London." (43) And further, "From 1892, their well-constructed houses with doors, windows and window-sills painted in bright colours, were in direct contrast to the nearby bush and further still to the huts and tents in which many Australians lived." (44)

From the Herbert River area they spread like a bush fire to other northern districts, often at the request of cane growers in those localities. From Ingham they spread, almost immediately, towards the north to the district of Cardwell. For example, Eugenio Regazzoli, a long time emigrant, had a property at Cairns Creek and then at Murray. He was the first Italian to pay taxes in that district. Between the two wars, 90% of the cane cutters and a third of the growers were Southern European, almost all Italian.

From Cardwell, between 1912 and 1915, they commenced to flow back to Johnstone which became the district, most densely populated by Italians. But already in the early nineties, the first Italians from Piedmont and Lombardy had settled there. Names such as Filippo Binghelli and G.B. Lazzarini appear in the lists at Goondi as tenants.

At the start of the century Carlo Della Vedova, S. Pagano, Persini and Guerra were already owners of large plantations in that district. Antonio Tonta had emigrated to Australia in 1896. After a brief holiday in Italy, in 1907 he and his son Matteo were pioneers at Morsby, where they bought a property of virgin bushland. They cleared it and put it under cultivation and in 1910 they brought out Antonio's wife and the rest of the family.

It has been said that the Italians were not pioneers and that they preferred to buy farms already cultivated. This way of thinking is undoubtedly due to the fact that in later years the majority of Italians

who bought land had, through necessity, to buy land already cultivated. But it cannot be questioned that in the early years the Italians cleared and tilled virgin land at Herbert River and in the Cardwell, Mourilyan and Mulgrave districts. For example, at Tully, of 36 farms Italians ploughed up 29 of them. (45)

"But not only is it due to the Italian woodcutter that the sugar industry has been developed, from the twenties to the present position of providing a living for 80,000 persons engaged in the cultivation, harvesting and milling and all the other activities connected with the process, it is also due to the role that the Italian has filled as a grower that has helped to maintain the most important industry in the State of Queensland to the present level. Already in the fifties, the industry occupied 365,000 acres and more than 14% of the total was under cultivation. The gross value of the production, at that time, was £16,900,000. The growers numbered 7,819 and the majority were Italian or of Italian origin." (46)

"The Italians were successful because they were prepared to work hard, they were full of initiative and ready to wait, even for a long time, for a just wage. Moreover, they managed to develop the culture of many products which have become an important factor in the agricultural economy of Queensland." (47)

The period between 1921 and 1945 was a stormy period, the long struggle by the Italians had the aim of proving themselves and of reaching the same economic level as the Australians. And they succeeded.

In conclusion, we wish to affirm that much, in the past and even in recent times, has been discussed and written about the Italian migration to Queensland. The immigration experts have made it the object of sociological research, the doctors of research on adaptation to life in the tropics, the political men on their tendency to live near each other in well defined areas and the unions on their influence on the rest of the working population and on their standard of living.

There have been government Commissions of Enquiry to investigate the misdeeds, the customs and the way of living of these strange people from Southern Europe.

We just hope that one day, in the not too distant future, someone may write the history of the Italians in the sugar cane plantations from the human and psychological points of view.

NOTES

- 1 - O. Bonutto, *The Migrant's Story*, Brisbane, 1963.
- 2 - *ibid.*
- 3 - *ibid.*
- 4 - *ibid.*
- 5 - D. Jones, *Hurricane Lamps & Blue Umbrellas*, Cairns, 1973, p. 354.
- 6 - N. Bandazzo, *Ricordo del Sant. di S. Antonio*, Melbourne, 1969, p. 88.
- 7 - D. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 318 (Cfr. G.C. Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away: A History of North Queensland to 1920*, A.N.U. Press, 1975, p. 332.)
- 8 - G.C. Bolton, *op. cit.*, p. 310.
- 9 - *ibid.*, p. 332.
- 10 - D. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 354.
- 11 - *ibid.*, p. 357.
- 12 - Queensland Legislative Assembly: Votes & Proceedings, 1860-1901.
- 13 - G. Luciano, *Italians as they are*, Sydney, 1959, pp. 18-9.
- 14 - Queensland Parliamentary Papers: Sessions 1925, Vol. 111, T.A. *Ferry Report*
- 15 - *ibid.*
- 16 - W.D. Borrie, *Italians and Germans in Australia*, Melbourne, 1964, p. 109ss.
- 17 - *ibid.*
- 18 - G.C. Bolton, *op. cit.*, p. 333.
- 19 - J.M. Bertel, *Innisfail*, Thesis, 1959, pp. 36-37, (Cfr. D. Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 344ss)
- 20 - *ibid.*
- 21 - *ibid.*
- 22 - F. Pascale, *Tra gli Italiani in Australia*, Roma, Accademia, 1930.
- 23 - *ibid.*
- 24 - *Brisbane Courier*, 18-12-1927.
- 25 - D.R.G. Packer, *Italian Immigration in Australia*, Thesis University of Melbourne p. 105.
- 26 - D. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 356ss.
- 27 - *Johnstone River Advocate*, 9-5-1930.
- 28 - *ibid.*, 27-5-1930.
- 29 - D.R.G. Packer, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
- 30 - *ibid.*
- 31 - D. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
- 32 - Bertel, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
- 33 - *ibid.*, pp. 39-40.
- 34 - D. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 357.
- 35 - *ibid.*, p. 357.
- 36 - *ibid.*
- 37 - Information provided by Mr Di Salvo.
- 38 - C.A. Price, *Southern Europeans in Australia*, SOCPAC, ANU, Canberra, 1979, p. 36.
- 39 - J.A. Hempel, *Italians in Queensland*, some cuts of post-war settlement of Italian immigrants, A.N.U., 1959, p. 25ss.
- 40 - G. Luciano, *Italians as they are*, The Italian Press Pty. Ltd., Sydney, 1959, p. 39ss.
- 41 - G.C. Bolton, *op. cit.*, p. 310.
- 42 - Mambriani Fr. A., 'Two months' visit to the Italian settlement on the Herbert River 4 oct., 1923 (Typescript, Mitchell Library)
- 43 - H.T. Easterby, *The Queensland Sugar Industry, Historical Review*, Brisbane, p. 164.
- 44 - *ibid.*
- 45 - D. Jones, *Cardwell Shire Story*, The Jacaranda Press, Brisbane, 1961, p. 335ss.
- 46 - J.M. Bertel, *Innisfail*, (unpublished Thesis, 1959).
- 47 - *ibid.*, p. 56.

III

Professional and Religious Contribution.

Over the years Italians have made a notable contribution to, and have had a considerable influence on, the life of this continent.

They have worked with great vigour and efficiency in the canefields, and have been outstandingly successful in the fishing, tobacco, fruit and vegetable industries.

*Their contribution to art has been outstanding and in opera the Italian influence can be seen both among Australian singers who have studied **bel canto** under migrant Italian teachers, and the Italian singers who have contributed so enormously to opera in Australia.*

(Warwick Daily News - 27/9/1967)

THE ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION TO MUSIC AND THE FIGURATIVE ARTS - PAINTING, SCULPTURE AND 20 - ARCHITECTURE

In general the Italian migrant in this country has always been considered, and not without a suggestion of contempt, a "peasant migrant", a worker migrant, rough, ignorant, barely civilised, who does not know anything else but how to use the shovel.

Without referring to what Italy has produced in the fields of science and the arts, in music and in the whole gamut of human knowledge, a richness that perhaps, no other nation in the world can equal, we see that, on the cultural level, the Italian contribution to the development of Australia has been, without doubt, impressive.

"With regard to music," writes J. Lying, "the contribution rendered by Italians is truly great; it could be said with a measure of truth, that the Italians have introduced music to Australia. One has only to recall the multitude of bands that used to play in the city streets which, together with the German brass bands, used to fill the streets with music. But, apart from these humble street musicians, many notable Italian artists came to Australia." (1).

Classical music and opera, in particular, had an uncertain beginning, when, for the first time, "Clari" by Sir Henry Bishop, was presented at the Theatre Royal in Sydney. (2)

Attempts were also made to launch Coppin's opera, but were not successful. (3)

The Italian operas performed in Australia for the first time were: "The Barber of Seville" (1843), "The Sonnambula" (1844), and "Cenerentola" (1845). The first Italian, in time and importance, to appear on the Australian stage, was Girolamo Carandini, tenor and ballet dancer. Girolamo Carandini, Marquis of Sarzano, with Ciro Menotti, imprisoned by the Austrians, following the betrayal of the

Count of Parma, managed to flee, taking refuge first in France then in England, where he taught languages.

Being a good tenor and ballet dancer, in 1842 he agreed to join with the Clarkes in a touring group in Australia, where he stayed. He taught languages and classical dance at Queen's College in Hobart. (4) On 11 March, 1843, in St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Hobart, he married Miss Maria Burgess, who was to become the prima donna of the Australian stage for half a century. Having made her debut in Hobart on 21 August, 1843, (whereas her husband commenced as a ballet dancer in the following August), Maria Carandini sang her first pieces of opera during the variety concert season.

After the birth of a baby girl (1855), she appeared again in Sydney, where Girolamo danced in the presence of George Coppin and his wife performed various arias.

In 1849 Maria gave a series of concerts in Hobart and in 1850, again in Sydney, she sang with the famous Sara Flower. (5) In 1852 she sang in "Norma" by Bellini, and the public liked it so much it was performed 28 times. (6)

After the birth of another baby girl (1855) she performed again in Sydney and then in Melbourne in the "Sonnambula" by Bellini, in "Lucrezia Borgia" and in "La figlia del Reggimento" by Donizetti, while in 1858 she sang the part of Leonora in "Trovatore" by Verdi, through at least 27 performances. From 1860-1870 with their daughters, Walter Sherwin and others, the Carandinis formed their own opera company and travelled extensively throughout all the colonies.

Girolamo Carandini had, in the meantime, been pardoned by the Italian government. But, having returned to Italy to regain his heritage, he died of gastritis and pulmonary inflammation on 18 January, 1870. Maria Carandini, after a little while, retired with her daughters to Richmond Hill, near Bath, where she died on 13 April, 1894. (7)

In Melbourne in 1854, a certain Mr Vitelli founded the musical firm of Allan's, which today is still going strong. In 1855 Camillo Del Santo, having arrived in Tasmania, opened a concert hall in Harrington Street.

In 1860 Stefano Cutolo arrived in Australia. A Neopolitan, he was the pupil of Mercadante of the Conservatory of Music in Naples and was considered one of the best soloists of his time. At the age of 34 he joined with Garibaldi and became very friendly with his sons, Menotti and Ricciotti.

After the campaign of 1860 he left Italy and opened a school of violin and pianoforte in Sydney. In 1867 he gave a famous concert for the poor children's Institute at Randwick. His reputation spread so much that in that same year he was offered a teaching post in Melbourne. But while he was travelling on the *Alexandra* on the way to Melbourne, he was tragically killed by the collapse of one of the ship's masts. He was buried in the Melbourne general cemetery under an obelisk erected by his admirers. (8)

The first Italian light opera company to complete a tour of Australia was that imported by the entrepreneur W. Lyster in 1868. Miss Lucia Barrati joined it as prima donna, also the tenor Neri, the baritone Merini and the bass Leondi. Then in 1870 at the festival of music held at the Sydney University, the most famous Italian singers took part; they included the soprano Lucia Barrati, the tenor Neri, the baritone Contini, the bass Donati, Mr and Mrs Coy and Mr Cecchi. (9)

One important event in the history of music in Australia was the arrival in 1871 of a musical company composed of 24 Italian artists, under the direction of Messrs Pompei and Cagli.

After having finished a very successful tour of Asia, this company came to Australia without having been formally invited. The company established itself in Melbourne but undertook long tours in Australia and abroad. (10)

In 1870 the celebrated teacher Albert Zelman Sen. came to Australia. He was born in Triest and completed his studies at the conservatory of Milan. While still very young he taught and directed in Calcutta. In Australia he settled in Melbourne, dedicating himself to teaching and composing. He was director of the *Liedertafel* in Melbourne and became a prolific composer of orchestral music, music for Masses and for the violin. He died in 1907 leaving two children, who, in their turn left their mark on the cultural life of Australia, Alberto in music and Vittorio in painting.

In 1871 during the absence of Lyster, the company of Pompei and Cagli took part in the annual opera season in Melbourne, under the direction of Maestro Marazorati. Two of the operas produced very successfully were "Lucrezia Borgia" and "Il matrimonio segreto". (11) While this company was performing in Sydney, Paolo Giorza, another great Italian teacher, arrived to settle in Australia.

In 1872 the entrepreneur Lyster, having returned from overseas, launched a new Italian-English company with Pompei and Cagli, and presented to the public a programme rich in music and popular opera. Maestro Giorza was asked to lead the Italian operas and also taking part were the famous sopranos Ciuti, Robottero, Orlandino, Susini and Cecchi.

Hazon, who had been director of the "Del Verme" theatre in Milan for many years, founded the amateur philharmonic society in Sydney in 1892, from which came artists of international fame, like Paderewsky and Teresa Carrera.

On 14 November, 1876, the Royal Theatre in Sydney opened the first season of Italian operatic music. The company, still led by Lyster, was composed of fourteen of the best opera singers. The conductor was Maestro Paolo Giorza "the best musician ever to come to Australia", who also enjoyed great success with a choir of seven voices, on the occasion of the International Fair, held in Sydney in 1880. (12)



A statue of Captain Phillip, by an Italian sculptor, Achille Simonetti



Three particular statues found at the base of the statue

*...and which symbolize agriculture, commerce,
navigation*



...and the marine industry

1880 is remembered in the history of Australian operatic music as the year of the death of that great entrepreneur, Samuel Lyster. For 20 years, in the midst of so many artistic and financial difficulties Lyster had given to his country the best of operatic music and drama. His death heralded a period of decline in the field of operatic music in general and of Italian opera in particular. (13)

However, the undisputed leaders, Alberto Zelman and Paolo Giorza, remained on the scene and they were joined by Robert Hazon in 1887. Hazon was to become an important part of the musical life of New South Wales for 20 years.

We want to remember also the violin-cellist and conductor of opera, Count Biscaccianti, resident of Melbourne, who left to settle in Honolulu in the Sandwich Islands, for health reasons. There he was treated courteously by the King and his court, who were old friends of his, but not finding the solace he hoped for, he went to San Francisco. He returned to Melbourne where he died on 19 April, 1879. (14)

J.C. Williamson, who was brought to Australia in 1875 with the dramatic company of Camillo Urso, formed *Williamson's Opera Company*, after the death of Urso.

The following year he presented to the public, "The Pirates" with Alice Ross, Howard Vernon, Tommaso Riccardi and Mr Verdi. Thereafter he dedicated himself almost completely to operetta, leaving the grand opera to *Simon's Opera Company*, which brought to the stage rather unknown operas, such as "Ernani" and "Lucia di Lammermoor", under the direction of Maferoli and with the involvement of singers more favoured by the public, such as Cuttica, Emilia, Giuditta Melossi, Dimitresco and Lablache.

It is necessary to record here another artistic event that left an indelible impression on the history of the artistic life of Australia - the tour of the famous theatrical actress Adelaide Ristori in 1875. Madame Ristori, married to the Marquis Romano Del Grullo, organised a tour round the world with her own company consisting of 32 elements.

After having performed in every corner of the United States, Central and Southern America, the company came to Australia, where it remained all the winter of 1875. Madame Ristori performed in Italian, French and English. Her success, especially in Sydney, was enormous. After each of her performances she was escorted in triumph by an immense crowd to her quarters. No singer or actor had ever won such acclaim. (15)

In 1893 Williamson, returning to the Lyster tradition that had accustomed the Australian musical community to an annual season of operatic music, engaged for the first time an Italian opera company. This company presented "L'amico Fritz", the "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "I Pagliacci" under the direction of Maestro Guerrera. (16)

The principal singers of the cast were, for the female roles, Italia Del Torre, Fiorella Giraud and for the masculine roles, Fresea, Russell and the Englishman Charles Saunders. (17)

The next operatic season was not until 1901. This time the J.C. Williamson company brought to the Australian public five Italian operas. "Aida", "La Boheme", "Otello", "Fedora" and "La Gioconda". The most popular singers were Basich and Dani, together with Vera Sapio, Giulia Rovogli and Mr Rozzoli. The conductor was once again Maestro Hazon and this season was the most successful with a record of 216 performances. (18)

In 1916 another Italian operatic company arrived in Australia. For 12 months it gave very successful performances including "Otello", "Madame Butterfly", "La Boheme", "Mignon", "La Gioconda" and "Il Barbiere di Siviglia".

Conductors included the Gonzales brothers, Ernesto and Giovanni and among the female singers were Gonzales, De Revers, Visoni and the male singers included, Cappelli, Dagradi, Filippini, Scamuzzi, Cacialli and Padovani. (19)

A long interval elapsed after the Great War then Williamson-Melba performed in Australian theatres with Toti Del Monte, Cappelli, Borigoli, Piccaluga, Granforte, Azzoli, Carozzi, Scavizzi, Concato and many others. There were two conductors, Paoloantonio Chiavoni and Frank St. Leger. (20)

Four years later the same entrepreneurs again presented an excellent repertory with "L'amore di tre re", "Thais", "Lodoletta", "Gianni Schicchi", "Il Tabarro", "Suor Angelica", "Turandot" and many other works. The cast consisted of two conductors, Bavagnoli and Fagazzolo, and 26 singers, amongst whom were some already very popular names like Dal Monte, Scavizzi, Rettore, Granforte, Tornari, Minghetti, Lombarsi, etc. (21)

This tour was to be remembered for another event - the marriage between Toti Del Monte and the tenor Enzo De Mauro Lomanto, celebrated 23 August, 1928, in the Cathedral of Santa Maria in Sydney. 25,000 people crowded into the cathedral and the adjacent park, to be able to attend in some way, the wedding celebration of these two very popular opera singers. (22)

This was the last tour of the great Italian opera singers. Italian singers were to come again to entertain the Australian public before the Second World War, but individually, no longer in numerous groups. The tour that Tito Schipa completed in 1937 has remained famous. The Italians found themselves united more than ever and discovered also new friends and admirers in the most unexpected quarters of Australian society.

At the Sydney Town Hall, where Tito Schipa was performing, he was warned personally before the start of the program, by Mayor Grant, that he was absolutely forbidden to give his usual Roman salute to the audience. Tito Schipa gave the Roman salute not once, but five times to the stalls, who gave the same salute in return. In the

excitement that accompanied some arias, even Ernest Truman, instead of clapping his hands, gave the Roman salute repeatedly. He was photographed in that pose and appeared the next day in the daily newspapers, which quoted in the sub-titles, declarations by Grant, who was beside himself with rage, "We have been treated to a Fascist demonstration. Schipa has demonstrated that in a Fascist State all cultural forms must be subjected to the dictatorial political gesture of the barbaric Roman salute." (23)

Another great Italian musician was Albert Zelman, son of Alberto Zelman Snr. Isabelle Moresby writes of Alberto Zelman, "If there is one name that should be written in letters of fire in the history of music in Australia, it is that of Alberto Zelman, brilliant violinist and conductor, who accomplished so much in his all too brief life." A great man of exceptional personality, he was the first Australian to hold a position of leader in music in Australia. No-one except a genius, could do what Alberto Zelman has done for music. With very little help he became the best violinist in the country. He founded and conducted the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and for 16 years was the conductor of the Melbourne Philharmonic Society. Moreover, he founded the Orchestral League, the Melbourne String Quartet, the British Music Quartet and was President of the Musical Society of Victoria and a member of the Council of Melbourne Musical Societies and of the Community Singers' Association. (24)

Alberto Zelman, born in Melbourne in 1874, made his first appearance in a concert at the age of six, playing the violin. At 17 years of age he made his first tour of Tasmania and New Zealand, visiting more than 100 places, usually together with the singer, Amy Sherwin. For about 20 years he conducted various operetta and even "Sweet Nell of the Old Drury" with the famous Nellie Steward. After this period it is somewhat difficult, if not impossible, to follow his many activities and the overwhelming rhythm of his artistic life, facts which are not within the scope of this work.

In 1912 Alberto Zelman married the famous soprano, Maude Harrington, and in 1922, accompanied by his wife, made a tour of Europe, visiting France, Belgium, Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. In many of these countries he was invited to conduct the most famous national orchestras.

Before concluding we want to record another fact that allows us to understand even better this extraordinary genius. "Well mannered and simple, he did not have time for anything but his music. By temperament, daring and emotional, Alberto Zelman used to play in a generous, flowing style, with a tone singularly pure and beautiful. He was the man of the highest ideals and had an integrity without fear or favour; he was kind and generous, happy and enthusiastic and a splendid friend." (25)

He died in 1927 in the "Savage Club", of which he was an honorary member. A lamp of remembrance is always lit and bears the inscription, "his light abides", (26)

FIGURATIVE ARTS

Italians have also distinguished themselves in the field of figurative arts – painting, sculpture and architecture. During the years 1870-80, when the difficult colonial life was passing through the period of cultural transformation, the Italian contribution was invaluable, not only because of the enrichment that the Italians brought to the artistic heritage of the country, but also because they taught so many Australian artists the use of the brush and the chisel.

It is to the credit of these good artists that within a short time schools were opened, academies and art exhibitions.

In Sydney, E.L. Montefiore was one of the founders of the Academy of Art in New South Wales. In 1871 the first classes organised by the Academy were entrusted to two excellent Italian masters, the painter, Giulio Anivitti and the sculptor, Achille Simonetti.

These two young artists arrived in Australia at the invitation of Bishop Quinn, the first Catholic Bishop of Brisbane, who came to know them during his stay in Rome for the First Vatican Ecumenical Council.

They were both from Rome, where Simonetti was born in 1838 and Anivitti in 1850. The father of the former was sculptor and the father of the latter was an engineer.

Both had studied at the Academy of Art at San Luca, where Achille Simonetti had his father as the teacher, while Giulio had the excellent Alessandro Capulti.

In Australia they remained in Brisbane for three years then moved to Sydney. Simonetti opened a grand studio in Balmain and worked at St. John's College at the University of Sydney. Among other works he modelled the bust of Governor Sir Hercules Robinson. At the exhibition organised by the Academy of New South Wales, he was awarded the first silver medal for "Sculpture of modelling".

The following year he won the first prize in sculpture at the exhibition organised by the Agricultural Society of New South Wales and a gold medal at the Academy's annual exhibition, where he continued to win prizes up to 1880. In 1875 he became the instructor of sculpture and modelling at the new school of art at the Academy.

In 1879 he took part in the international exhibition in Sydney with his "Venere del Sud", winning the praises of many. The year after he took part in the International Exhibition in Melbourne, submitting two busts.

Already by 1880 Simonetti had become the most fashionable sculptor in Sydney. He modelled busts for many notable people in high society, including the bust of Sir John Challis, which is displayed in the great hall of the University of Sydney.

In 1891 the Governor commissioned six allegoric statues to form part of the facade of the residence of the Secretary of the colony. In that

same year he finished sculpting the statue of Bishop Quinn, his friend, and this was considered his finest work.

The last of his great works was the monument to the first Governor of Australia, Captain Phillip, sited in the botanical gardens in Sydney. He took almost ten years to complete the work. The monument cost about £14,000, the highest price that had ever been paid for a sculpture in the colony. Erected by the Galli brothers, the statue was 15 feet high. The statues at the base represented agriculture, commerce, Neptune (navigation) and Cyclops (mining industry). Simonetti died on 23 March, 1900, at only 62 years of age, because of a cardiac collapse. He was a prolific and talented artist. He left behind numerous superb works. (27)

Giulio Anivitti, the painter, had hardly arrived in Sydney when he was asked in May of 1875 to teach painting and drawing in the first school of art, initiated by the Academy of Art of New South Wales.

The Academy had been instituted in 1871 with the purpose of promoting fine arts in the colony and of giving to its members the opportunity to exhibit their works. In that same year Anivitti won the gold medal with a portrait of Charles Badham. (28)

By 1876 he already had 30 students and the reports of the Academy expressed satisfaction with the work of Maestro Anivitti.

Among his pupils were Amandus Julius, W.T. Butlet and Percy William. As Simonetti was for sculpture, so Anivitti was for fashionable portraits in Sydney. Among the many portraits of personalities more or less well known, those that we can still admire today include the portraits of Professor Badham, Canon Allywood, the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Polding, and Rev. W.B. Clarke. (29)

Anivitti died very young on 2 July, 1881. His landscapes and portraits are on display at the Sydney University College and at the Royal Society of New South Wales. His real greatness, however, was in knowing how to teach the use of the brush and colour to others. (30)

Another two excellent sculptors who are remembered by Federico Gagliardi in his writings are Del Vescovo and T. Sani ... "I have to announce," writes Gagliardi, "the arrival from New Zealand of the great sculptors Del Vescovo and Sani. They have opened a studio here in Melbourne and are working on the bust of the consort of our Consul, whose unfortunate early demise is lamented by all".

"When our esteemed sculptors, Del Vescovo and Sani," continues Gagliardi, "arrived in New Zealand in August 1876, a public testimony of affection in memory of Doctor Featherstone was being planned. Doctor Featherstone, who had already received part of his education in Italy, had moved to New Zealand for health reasons and there quickly became one of the most influential men in the colony. He was elected to Parliament and was twice a Minister. From April 1853 to April 1871 he was superintendent of the province, now the district of Wellington, and from that time on General Agent of the Colony in London, where he died.



The beach of Port Melbourne, a sight at St. Kilda, by an Italian painter, Girolamo Bellotti - Nerli

A beautiful picture by Ugo Catani.
(From a private collection of J. Flexmore)



"The two sculptors, Del Vescovo and Sani, set to work immediately and presented a model in clay, which was accepted and so they were commissioned to carry out the work. The inauguration was carried out with great pomp in the presence of all the chief authorities of the colony, together with many of the public." (31)

We have no other information on Del Vescovo and do not know whether he remained in Melbourne or if he returned to Italy.

Sani, instead, after having taken part in the International Exhibition in Melbourne in 1880 with a statue called "Welcome" (Benvenuto), moved to Sydney where he worked as a sculptor for 35 years. He sculpted the much discussed statues on the facade of the General Post Office in Sydney, the Aesculapius for the school of medicine at the University of Sydney, and the Mercurio in bronze for the building at the *Evening News*.

He had a period of decline until the Legislative Council of the colony declared the statues at the G.P.O. to be works of art. After that he resumed his activities in full. He prepared a bronze statue, "The Footballer", for Centennial Park, and the statues of A. Cunningham, W.V. Wentworth and others. (32)

Tommaso Sani was a man of talent and culture, accustomed to a modern style of architecture. His sculptures were generally in a realistic style with a touch of humour, that rendered the sculptor unpopular.

Another fine artist was the Marquis Girolamo Bellotti-Nerli, pupil of Ciseri. Born in Siena in 1863, he emigrated to Sydney in 1886, and later to New Zealand, where he assumed the task of director of the Institute of Fine Arts in Dunedin.

When he was visiting Sydney he took note of the development of the new art that was taking place in Europe – impressionism. The portrait that he did of Robert Louis Stevenson in Apia in 1892 has remained famous.

An artist in the Bohemian sense of the word, was the sculptor from Puglia, Porcelli, who arrived in Australia in 1896 and settled in Perth, where he sculpted two famous statues, that of the explorer and statist, A. Forrest, and that of the engineer, Y. O'Connors, who built the grandiose aqueduct from Perth to Kalgoorlie. (33)

Carlo Rolando, Florentine and son of an artist, was a great master of the use of colours, also a great landscape artist. After having studied art in his city of birth, he moved to Liverpool in England in 1870, where among his best remembered frescoes are numbered those from the local Catholic church. In Liverpool he married Frances, sister of the well-known portrait artist, George Webb, who had lived in Adelaide and Melbourne for many years.

1883 the couple left Liverpool to settle in Australia, but stopped over for two years in South Africa, where Rolando was awarded the first prize in an art exhibition, thus he received numerous further commissions.

In 1885 Rolando and his wife arrived in Melbourne and immediately Rolando commenced to paint Australian landscapes. The following year he became a member of the Australian Association of Artists. In 1887 he presented a personal exhibition of 28 oil paintings, ten water colours and many drawings, to the public of Melbourne and to other main centres in Victoria. His takings were £900. He opened a studio and an art school in St. Kilda, a fashionable suburb of Melbourne. He took part in the annual exhibition by the Victorian Society of Artists in May, 1888 and in the international exhibition for the centennial of Melbourne in August of that same year. Rolando was an artist with "a rapid and easy style and great dexterity in execution, with an excellent sense of colour and a feeling for atmosphere and light, combined with the uncommon quality of being able to discern various forms and hues in the green of the Australian landscape." (34)

Other Italian sculptors and painters are worthy of mention. In 1885 the Marquis Girolamo Nerli arrived in Melbourne. Born at Palazzieri Pecci in Siena, he had studied painting in Florence from Maestro Antonio Ciseri. His mother was the sister of Thomas Medwin, Shelley's biographer and the author of *Conversations of Lord Byron*.

Nerli became popular because of his free style of painting. Although his works were not well received in Melbourne by his contemporary critics, he started to make his mark on the tastes of Sydney.

According to James Green, "The Marquis Nerli, Italian by birth and European in his professional training, was the first to introduce the independence of the new continentalism of the south, with his disregard for generally accepted obstacles and with his frequent substitutions of simple sketches as completed works, his unfinished "Baccanian orgy" in the Monticelli style, were "pearls for the pigs", and the boldness of his Salome, like a symphony in black and yellow, suggests the "Riposo" with which the artist took away the breath of the public of Sydney." (35)

Ugo Catani, a painter from Florence, from the Florentine school of art, came to Australia in 1886.

Giovanni Fontana, from Parma, worked for several years in Sydney and Adelaide. In 1890 he sculpted the bust of Henry Parkes for the civic buildings at Parkes.

Giovanni Ferranini, born in Parma in 1846, lived and worked for a long time in Sydney until his return to Rome. Some of his pictures were displayed in the National Gallery in Melbourne. He was a landscape impressionist and was well received by the public.

Dattilo Rubbo was another famous painter and teacher. Born in Naples in 1870, he studied at the Royal Academy in Naples under the guidance of the teacher, Domenico Morelli. He arrived in Sydney in 1897, where the year after, he founded a school of art which he maintained for 43 years. He taught in the Royal Art Society for 26 years. He was a member of the Council of the Royal Art Society from 1900 and of the War Memorial Advisory Council from 1919. Many of his

works now hang in the art gallery in Manly, a Sydney suburb, but they can also be found in Adelaide, Brisbane and New Zealand (Wellington and Dunedin). He was made Cavaliere of the Order of the Crown of Italy in 1932. (36)

NOTE

- 1 - J. Lyng, *Non-Britishers in Australia*, Macmillan & Co., Melbourne, 1927, p. 96
- 2 - W.A. Orchard, *Music in Australia*, Georgian House, Melbourne, p. 146.
- 3 - *The Australian Encyclopaedia*, Vol. VI, p. 220.
- 4 - Geoffrey Serle, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. VI, (1851-1890).
- 5 - *Ibid.*
- 6 - W.A. Orchard, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
- 7 - *Ibid.*
- 8 - G. Serle, *op. cit.*
- 9 - *The Australian Enc.*, Vol. VI, p. 221.
- 10 - W.A. Orchard, *op. cit.*, p. 1484.
- 11 - *Ibid.*
- 12 - *The Australian Enc.*, Vol. VI.
- 13 - W.A. Orchard, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
- 14 - F. Gagliardi, *Lettere alla Gazzetta d'Italia*.
- 15 - B. Galletti, *Attorno al mondo con la Ristori, note di viaggio*, Rome, 1876.
- 16 - *Australian Enc.*
- 17 - W.A. Orchard, *op. cit.*, p. 154.
- 18 - *ibid.*, p. 155.
- 19 - *ibid.*, p. 157.
- 20 - *ibid.*, p. 158.
- 21 - *ibid.*, p. 159.
- 22 - Pino Bosi, *Blood, Sweat & Guts*, pp. 47-48.
- 23 - Nino Randazzo, *Italians in Australia*, 1967.
- 24 - Isabelle Moresly, *Australia Makes Music*, Longmans & Co., Melbourne, p. 43.
- 25 - *ibid.*, p. 48.
- 26 - *ibid.*, pp. 44-49.
- 27 - G. Serle, A.D.B. *op. cit.*
- 28 - B. Smith, *Australian Painting, 1788-1970*, Oxford Un. Press, 1974, pp. 128-29
- 29 - Alan McCulloch, *Encyclopaedia of Australian Arts*, Hutchinson of London, 1968.
- 30 - G. Serle, A.D.B. *op. cit.*
- 31 - F. Gagliardi, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- 32 - D. Pike, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol.2, 1851-1890, 1-2
- 33 - *Ibid.*
- 34 - *Ibid.*
- 35 - B. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
- 36 - A. McCulloch, *op. cit.*

THE PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE 21- ITALIANS DOCTORS

DOCTORS

In the field of medicine, too, Italians have made their contribution, especially in the period in which doctors not only were few in number, but also were little disposed to practise their profession in the smaller centres, far from the cities.

Doctors whose origins were not English, were certainly not attracted to migrate to Australia, because of the legislation of the colonies regarding qualifications. A doctor had to be a graduate of an English university, or had to undertake new examinations before obtaining permission to practise his profession.

Besides, those who did come, were not generally welcome in the cities. "Except in Western Australia, in fact," writes the Consul, P. Cortè, "where the practice of medicine is reserved for graduate doctors of English universities, or of other Australian universities, the Italian doctors could practise their profession freely in all the colonies, providing they pass an examination and become registered with their degree ... The doctors can find good positions if they resign themselves to living in the country. In fact, providing they understand a little English, they can compete with the well paid doctors employed by the local authorities, practising their profession among those people not associated with the Masonic Lodges and not living in the municipalities which pay the local doctors' salaries." (1)

"As regards the practice of medicine," continues the Consul, Camillo Bertola, "I know that there are about 30 Italian doctors in the South-Eastern States, who seem to earn enough to have established permanent residences. Others are found to still be experimenting, now in one place, now in another, according to the offers they receive from the intermediary agents, generally in little centres, where the local associations assure them of a set annual sum, to help the people who belong to them. Here the doctor leads a life of privation and discomfort, since he must often travel very considerable distances on horseback, in all sorts of weather, to answer all calls, without ever being able to refuse, without ever having any relief or avenues of relaxation. In the city it is very difficult for an Italian doctor to obtain a clientele." (2)

The Italian doctors who came to Australia in the second half of the last century were quite diverse and some of them have become famous.

Among these was Doctor Gregorio Vincenzo Marano (1850-1924), M.D., CH.D., who graduated from the University of Naples in the seventies and then emigrated to Australia. Having established himself in Sydney, he became famous as a surgeon and as a specialist in respiratory therapy, about which he wrote various articles in the *Medical Journal*.

For many years he took over the task of Italian Vice-Consul for the State of New South Wales. In this position in 1881, he became interested in the Government, because it gave refuge in Australia to the surviving Italians of the ill-fated expedition of the French Marquis De Rays. When the survivors finally disembarked he did all he could, along with a certain Doctor Day and without payment, to care for the many sick people among them and to alleviate the sufferings of the others. (3)

In 1887 another young man arrived in Australia. He, too, had just graduated in medicine from the University of Naples - Dr Natale Sisca. In order to practise his profession he had to abandon the city and move to Mt. Egerton, near Ballarat. After some years he moved to Hawksburn, a suburb of Melbourne, and finally to the city. During the time in which he practised in the Ballarat district, Dr Sisca became very interested in "miner's disease" *silicosis*, in its causes and cures. (1890)

The Consul, P. Corte, when reporting the news, writes, "... the 'miner's disease', so well studied by our esteemed fellow countryman, Dr Natale Sisca, is a chronic bronchitis mixed with chlorosis to the general weakening of the system." (4) In 1920 Dr Sisca brought the problem of *silicosis* to the notice of the legislators and the public.

Still in 1889, he did research on "Chronic indigestion and biliousness and management of children," and moreover, on "Management of children in health and disease: children to mothers. Parts of management of pregnancy, of healthy children or sick children." (5)

In 1889, two other doctors arrived, Ageslao Gaetano Iovine, who graduated in Naples in 1890 and settled in Melbourne and Michele Carbonara, who also graduated in Naples in 1891 and who settled at Tambo in Queensland.

In 1906 Giuseppe Enzo Marolli arrived, having graduated at Pavia. He was assigned first to Tibbooburra in New South Wales and then after the First World War he opened a surgery in Newcastle.

Dr Spina was already practising his profession in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, in 1908, while another three Italian doctors were practising together in Perth. There was also another of Italian origin.

In 1918 Giuseppe Romeo, who graduated in Naples, settled in North Fitzroy and in 1924 Tullio Balboni, who graduated in Naples in 1922, established himself at St. Kilda.

The list could be continued, but we want to focus on the activities of at least three of these Italian doctors in Australia. It is true, at any rate, that all the doctors mentioned, and also those whom we have not named, have made their contribution to this country.

Dr Giuseppe Marchesini, born in Osimo in 1875, emigrated in 1900 to Australia, as soon as he had graduated in surgery. He commenced practising at Henty near Wagga Wagga where he remained for 18 months, then he moved to Rutherglen, a town in Northern Victoria, until his death. Dr Marchesini was the first doctor in Australia to operate on varicose veins and the uterus.

The *Wagga Wagga Chronicle* of March 1, 1902, wrote, "A very important operation was carried out ten days ago by Dr G. Marchesini. The patient was the well known John Graham, who was operated on for varicose veins. It was the only operation of its kind to be carried out in the States." Dr Marchesini also wrote a book entitled, *Anatomy*. (6)

Dr Tommaso Enrico Fiaschi was one of the greatest Australian surgeons and without a shadow of doubt he is the finest figure and the most outstanding of all Italian migration. He was a complex personality; a professional, a soldier, a writer, a polyglot and an oenologist. Born in Florence on 31 May, 1853, from an old Florentine family, at only 20 years of age he embarked on a merchant ship headed for Australia. He disembarked in 1875 at Cooktown in Northern Queensland, at that time full of gold seekers, mostly Chinese, among whom malaria was reaping many victims. There being no other doctors, the young Fiaschi remained in Cooktown for about four years, experiencing a hard initiation into the life of a doctor.

In 1879 he moved to Windsor, a few miles from Sydney, where he became the most renowned surgeon of his time. In 1883 he became the honorary surgeon of the city's hospital and the first president of the medical school of that hospital. In 1889 he was elected President of the British Medical Association of New South Wales and as such had many articles published in medical journals.

In 1891 he enlisted in the Lancers Battalion of New South Wales, with the task of coordinating the health services of the Australian armed forces, a service still in its infancy.

In 1896 he served as health officer in the Italian army in North Africa and was among the first of the Corps who made the expedition into Abyssinia. For exceptional services he had conferred upon him the Crosses of the Order of St. Maurizio and of St. Lazzaro and that of the Order of the Crown of Italy.

Again in 1898, during the war against the Boers in South Africa, the organisation of the first field hospital for the Australian expedition was entrusted to Dr Fiaschi.

For his dedication to duty (he was in fact described as "a fanatic for work regardless of the sacrifice") the General in command of the English forces, Lord Roberts, whom Fiaschi had refused to accompany on a tour of inspection because he had to take care of the wounded,

conferred on him the medal of "Distinguished Service Order". When he returned to Australia he was transferred to the Commonwealth Armed Forces with the rank of Colonel. In 1911 he was promoted to medical officer to the Second Military District.

At the start of the First World War he was put in charge of the "No. Three General Australian Hospital" in Lemnos. Later, he asked and obtained permission to lend his services to the Italian Army and took charge of a military hospital in Trentino, until the end of the war.

He was a polyglot. He knew and spoke correctly English, Latin, French and German, as well as Italian. In Sydney he was the founder of the Alliance Francaise and of the Dante Alighieri Society, of which he remained president until he died.

He had an innate passion for viticulture and for the production of wine. He was president of the wine merchants' association in New South Wales. He held conferences and wrote treatises on viticulture and winemaking.

He took an important part in the spreading of the wine industry in Australia. He was the owner of two famous vineyards, one in Windsor, which he called "Tizzana" from the Italian town in Pistoia from which his family came, and the other at Mudgee.

He retired from his profession in 1926, because of illness, to dedicate himself to his winemaking. But at Mudgee, at the end of harvest time, he was struck by pneumonia and in Sydney, on 17 April, at the age of 74, he ceased to live. (7)

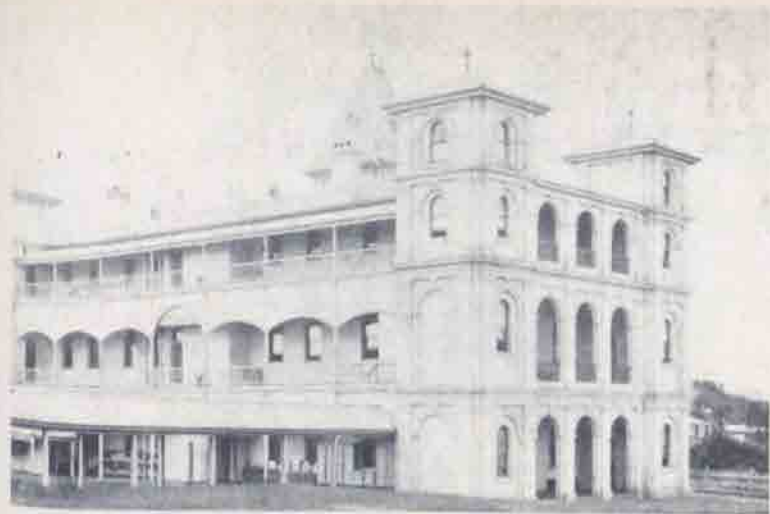
"Fiaschi," recalls his friend, Professor Baccarini, "knew how to combine, like no-one else, his jealous love for Italy and his open loyalty to the country where he had been able to manifest the gifts of his real genius.

"He was an example to the Italian migrant and to the migrants of every nation, of how to keep alive one's own ethnic tradition and how to express that tradition by the way one conducted oneself.

"Language and behaviour are civilisation. Fiaschi knew how to offer this richness to the new country; he knew how to serve his native country and also to defend it when the occasion arose." (8)

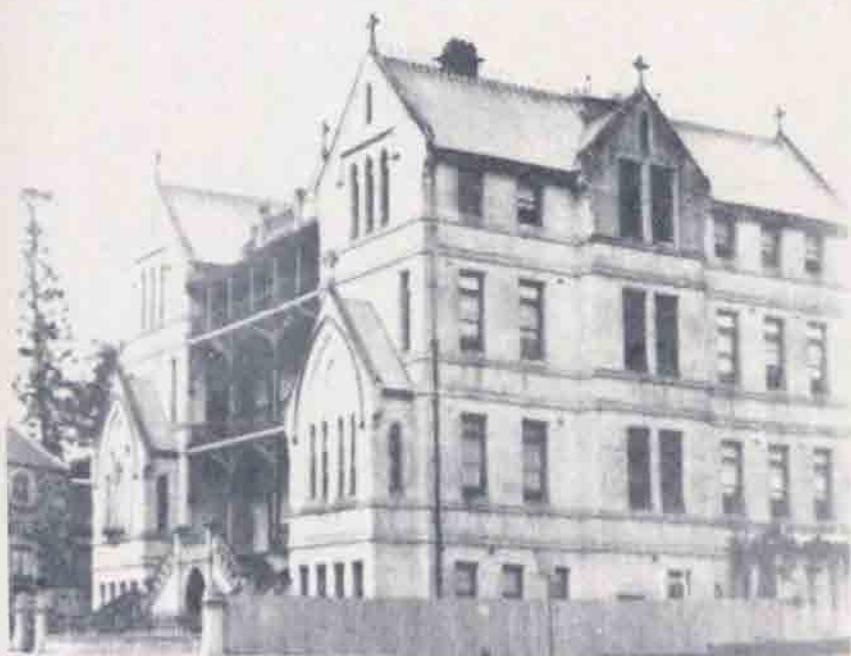
The famous Dr Raffaele West Cilento, born in Adelaide on 2 December, 1893, merits particular mention. Dr Cilento is the great grandson of a certain Salvatore Cilento who, at eighteen years of age, embarked on the steamship, *Telegraph*, in order to flee reprisals at the time, of Ferdinand II of Bourbon. He arrived in Adelaide in 1855.

The great grandson, Raffaele West, brilliant of mind, obtained various scholarships and graduated in medicine in 1917. The following year, as a military doctor, he was sent to New Guinea. Here he fell in love with the tropics and commenced to involve himself in the study of tropical diseases. He enrolled for this purpose at the World Institute of Tropical Diseases and Health, where he obtained various prizes and a medal.



The "All Hallows" school in Brisbane, planned and constructed by the Architect A. Stambuco in 1882

The Industrial school of S. Anna in Brisbane, another project by Architect A. Stambuco





Scientist Luigi Bernacch with his parents and his family

He married a doctor colleague and both served in Malaya and New Guinea as health administrators. With Dr Anton Breini he was recalled to Queensland, where he founded the Institute of Tropical Medicine at Townsville. Then he was elected Director General of Health in the State of Queensland. In this position he bettered the conditions of the workers in the sugar cane plantations; he wiped out the terrible illness called "Weils Disease" and cured "Bookworm" and also "Deuga", which illness had already taken a toll of many lives, including many Italian cane cutters.

He also studied law and became a lawyer. He was made a Cavaliere by the King of Italy. He founded the school of medicine at the University of Queensland and introduced the free hospital system, the first of its kind.

During the last war he served in Germany under the League of Nations and prepared a plan of assistance during the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. When he returned to Australia, he did not slacken his activities. Together with his wife, Lady Phillis, he wrote numerous articles and books on tropical diseases, and with J.S. Jack he wrote the book, *Triumph of the Tropics*, 1968.

He was president of the Queensland National Trust, president of the Royal Australian Society and of the Historical Society of Queensland. Besides that he was a member of the Dante Alighieri Society for many years.

Cilento was one of those men of great vision and truly fond of study and, as a member of his family said, "Dr Cilento is a truly great man and he is one who didn't arrive yesterday." (9)

Whilst still young he found work in the Commonwealth Public Service and for four years he served in New Guinea as director of Public Health and Quarantine.

Let us conclude this brief review of some Italian doctors, among the many in Australia, with a look at Dr Francesco Castellano who died recently, and was called the "Franciscan doctor".

He arrived in Australia from his native Bari in 1930, with a government contract as doctor for the Italian hospital in Ingham, North Queensland. In 1933 he moved to Cairns where he remained until 1940. Then he was interred during the war like so many other Italians. A prisoner among prisoners, he was a blessing for many Italians, to whom he gave help, be it physical or moral, without sparing himself.

When he returned after the war to his place of work, he was informed that there was no longer a place for him in the hospital at Cairns. If he wanted to continue to practise his profession he would have to shift elsewhere. There were two alternatives, either the Northern Territory or Western Queensland. Dr Castellano chose this last and remained there until 1946, the year in which he moved to Brisbane, where he remained until he died on 11 December, 1976.

His surgery was called St. Francis' house, where everyone, but especially the poor, were helped, even financially. Dr Castellano had three hobbies, culture, sport and music. (10)

TWO SCIENTISTS - ONE AN ASTRONOMER AND THE OTHER A METEOROLOGIST

In the field of science two illustrious Italians deserve to be remembered - the noted astronomer, Pietro Paolo Giovanni Ernesto Baracchi, from Tuscany and the almost completely unknown meteorologist Luigi Carlo Bernacchi from Como. After having studied mathematics and astronomy at the school of the remarkable Professor Giovanni Antonelli and having graduated in civil engineering at the University of Florence, Pietro Baracchi arrived in Australia in 1876 with his two friends Carlo Catani and Ettore Checchi.

A man of profound culture, he spoke three languages perfectly and knew how to write another two. He was extraordinarily versatile; he was a mathematician, an astronomer, a physicist and a meteorologist. He had hardly arrived in Australia when he joined the Victorian Lands Department and was sent to carry out a survey of the Moorabool River in the West of the State. In 1880 because of his capabilities and his demonstrated professional attitude, he was entered in the register of the *Victorian Land Surveyors*. (11)

But two years after in 1882, following his natural inclination and his passion for the study of space, he joined the Observatory of Astronomy in the State of Victoria. As his first job he directed an expedition to Darwin, on the Northern coast of the Australian continent, and from there he measured the longitude of Australia, by means of telegraphic signals from Singapore, two years before the international accord with Washington that would fix the Greenwich meridian for the standardisation of longitudinal calculations.

In Singapore, at the other end of the telegraph, Mayor Darwin was collaborating with Baracchi, son of the celebrated naturalist, Carlo. (12)

On his return from Melbourne in 1883, he was put in charge of the great telescope. He stayed in Melbourne for ten years. The work of observation and classification of the stars of the Southern Hemisphere, carried out by him in this period, was perhaps the first and the most important form of cooperation with a scientific purpose, in which Australia had ever taken part.

In 1887 he led another two expeditions in the observation of solar eclipses, one in the South Pacific and the other in Tasmania. He also took part in an international project for photographing the stars of the Southern Hemisphere, contributing two monumental volumes of pictures and detailed notes.

In 1895 Baracchi was nominated Deputy Director of the Melbourne Observatory of Astronomy and in 1900 astronomer for the Victorian Government, the highest authority in the Southern Hemisphere. (13)

In 1910 the Federal Government invited Baracchi and three others to study and choose a suitable location between Yass and Canberra for the construction of an Observatory of Astronomy.

He retired to private life in 1915 and in 1922 visited Europe for two years. He returned to Australia, but died of cancer on 23 July, 1926. (14)

The other scientist, mentioned earlier, was Luigi Carlo Bernacchi, son of Angelo. Born in Lazza, in the province of Como, he migrated to Australia from England with his parents in 1870 and settled in Tasmania. Luigi specialised in studies in the magnetic field, meteorology and physics, and in 1895 worked with Pietro Baracchi at the Melbourne Observatory. (15)

In 1898 he was chosen to represent Australia on the first English expedition to the Antarctic. He was the first Australian to spend a winter at the South Pole.

The expedition arrived in Robertson Bay, near Cape Adare, on 17 February, 1899, after 43 days of arduous navigation through the icy seas. The same Bernacchi gave a vivid account of his experiences in his book, *To the South Polar Regions* (London, 1901.). "The camp was set up on stony land, at the foot of the high Cape Adare and we prepared to spend the winter there. It was the first time that man had spent a winter at the Antarctic Pole." (16)

The adventures and difficulties are described thus by Baracchi, "Life in the Antarctic is a life of sacrifice, of privation, monotony and isolation, but at the same time, it has a beauty, a hidden warmth that can't be defined and you relive in your memory those days, so recent and indolent, spent in geographic and scientific research at the Pole ... Wrapped in a limitless world and covered with a layer of ice and snow that oppresses you, the unique message of the Antarctic is one of a silent world." (17)

The expedition, notwithstanding its limited resources, achieved much, if the pioneering aspect is taken into consideration. Meteorological and magnetic observations were made and the magnetic point of the South Pole was established. Different insects and new species of flora and fauna were discovered. For the first time dogs were used.

However, a tragedy marred the expedition. On the 14 October, 1899, the zoologist, N. Hansen, died of an internal illness. He was buried on the top of Cape Adare and on that occasion Bernacchi wrote, "There in the midst of a profound silence and peace, there is nothing to disturb the eternal sleep except the flight of marine birds. In the long, black night of winter, the brilliant polar aurora sweeps across the sky and forms a glorious arc of light over Cape Adare and the tomb. In summer the brilliant light of the sun is always shining over them. It seems a strange quirk of fate that Hansen, born and bred at one end of the world, had to come to the other extreme to die." (18)

So the great, eventful Borchgrenink expedition ended, but the London authorities gave the impression of not appreciating it very much. Another expedition was therefore prepared, 1901-1904, all English,

led by the famous explorer, R.F. Scott. There was great interest in Australia. Bernacchi was again selected to take part in Scott's British Antarctic expedition. He was decorated with the medal of the Royal Geographic Society, the King's Antarctic medal and the French Cross of the Legion d'Onneur for his research and scientific writings. (1906) (19)

On his return from the Antarctic expedition he undertook a long voyage to Africa and in 1906 he married Winfred Edith Harris in England. That same year he explored the source of the Amazon. For family reasons he was not able to take part in the second Antarctic expedition, in which Scott perished.

After two vain attempts at a political career, in 1910 he made some investments in the rubber plantations of Malaya, Java and Borneo. During the First World War he served in the Royal Navy (Volunteer) Reserve as a Colonel. He worked in the Navy Staff of Admiralty and later with the United States Marines.

At the end of the war he returned to work for the Royal Geographic Society and, from 1928-1932, for the British Science Guild and the British Association for the advancement of Science, in the capacity of adviser.

In 1930 he was director and organiser of the display of instruments and photographic material used in Antarctica, a display that was organised in Cambridge for the Scott Polar Research Institute. He always retained an interest in Antarctica, which, in his writings, he called South Victoria Land. In 1925 he investigated the possibility of using tractors in the polar regions. Later he wrote two important books on the exploration of Antarctica, *A Very Gallant Gentleman*, 1933, and *The Saga of the Discovery*, London, 1938.

He died at home in London in 1942, leaving a wife, two sons and two daughters. (20)

After 85 years, in 1983, another Italian, Robert Cechet, a graduate in physics and meteorology, journeyed to the Antarctic as a member of the scientific expedition to the Australian Territory. At only 24 years of age the young Italian scientist is an expert in much that concerns our planet, in the fields of geomagnetism, geophysics and meteorology. The direction of the Seismic Observatory and of geomagnetic concerns in the Antarctic have been entrusted to Cechet. More-over he has the task of preparing and maintaining all the new instruments that the expedition brought with it and checking daily the variations of the terrain.

It is comforting to see that the Italian ethnic contribution has always given, still continues to give, and becomes more and more qualified.

ENGINEERS AND ARCHITECTS

Among the Italians who have given a professional impetus to Australia, we remember Carlo Giorgio Domenico Enrico Catani and Ettore Checchi, both Tuscan.

They set out from Hamburg on the *Fritz Renter*, together with Baracchi, as ordinary workers at the time, headed for Wellington, New Zealand. Not finding work as professionals, they re-embarked as miners on the *Alhambra* headed for Australia, arriving in Melbourne on 27 September, 1876. (21)

All three, helped and advised by Marinucci, the Consul General of Italy, were taken up by the Department of Lands and Survey as draughtsmen. After some time the three separated and each followed his own chosen career. So Baracchi, as we have seen, dedicated himself to astronomy, Catani to public works and Checchi to irrigation and the supply of water.

Carlo Catani in 1880, was registered as a Surveyor, according to the Land Act. Two years later he was transferred to the Ministry of Public Works, where he was employed as an engineer draughtsman. He attracted praise and respect for his work of draining the swamps of Kooweerup, where, first as second-in-charge and then as head of Public Works, he effected the first big drainage projects. But the drainage works did not prove to be adequate because during the season of heavy rains, the canals did not succeed in carrying all the water away.

Catani worked out a new, more effective plan which was less costly. At the same time, anxious to start a colony of settlers in the drained part of the land, he sacked all the workers taken on by the former management and took on new workers, choosing from the married men enlisted at the employment agency in Melbourne, and to each of these he gave 20 acres of land.

400 Families came to take possession of 8,000 of the 52,900 acres to be drained. Every month the settlers had to work for two weeks to excavate the secondary canals, receiving £5 at the most, as pay. For the other two weeks they had to work on their own properties.

In 1894, according to a relation of Catani, the experiment commenced to show its first positive results – the number of animals increased, every family had at least a pig – and was already producing 3,000 tons of potatoes.

Catani was well known and respected by the drainage workers. It did not matter how long or how small the drainage canal under construction might be, Catani insisted on checking to see how the works were progressing. He knew most of the men by name and often sat with them on the banks of the canals for a bite to eat.

At times these checks required long rides on horseback, or on foot, but for Catani it was all part of the job.

As second-in-charge of the Ministry of Public Works, from 1880-1890, he also worked on some programmes for expansion of the ports of Victoria and for strengthening and remodernising the equipment and services at the marine wharf in Melbourne.

Moreover, he transformed the marsh land along the banks of the Yarra River into a glorious treed avenue, Alexandra Avenue, which

follows the course of the water flanking Domain Park and the Botanical gardens, reaching as far as Toorak. He planned and brought to fruition the entire project of the boulevard at St. Kilda. He also carried out the work of the boulevard at Brighton. He realised the tourist potential of Mt. Buffalo, where he made possible the first resort for winter sport, rendered accessible by the construction of a panoramic road, where his name is perpetuated in the area by a picturesque stretch of mountain water called Lake Catani. (22)

Catani's life was spent with a sense of purpose and responsibility towards the progress of the State, that he had made his own. He was honoured by a bronze bust in his likeness, placed under the clock tower at St. Kilda, in the centre of a pleasant complex that he himself, designed and realised, with the passion of an artist.

The inscription on the monument says it all, "To Carlo Catani, a great worker for the State - (Florence 1852, Melbourne 1918)"

Ettore Checchi was also from Tuscany and he graduated in mechanical and civil engineering and joined the Lands Department, but straight after entered the Department of Public Works. In the capacity of assistant engineer he took part in the works at the port and in 1888 was transferred to the Department of Water Supply. He drew up plans for the Victorian Government for the Hume Weir and was the first to explore and make a survey of the Upper Murray River. Besides this, at the end of the century, he prepared some of the most important irrigation schemes at Mildura and in the Goulburn Valley.

In 1911 he accompanied two Italian experts in irrigation matters, Luigi Banderali and Antonio Parapini, sent to Victoria with the task of studying the possibility of an Italian agricultural settlement.

Checchi was always highly respected as an engineer, a mathematician and a gentleman. He retired voluntarily from work in 1926, to dedicate himself to his hobby of making guitars. In his spare time he had already built a yacht for competitions at Albert Park Lake. Checchi died at home at Hampton on 19 July, 1946. (23)

Among architects we cannot overlook Enrico Caselli, from Ballarat, who in 1860, had already designed a new Presbytery for the Parish of Bakery Hill, Ballarat, with the characteristic gothic triple front. Two years later he designed the United Presbyterian Church in Ebenezer and in 1864, he drew up the plans for St. James Church in Little Bendigo. The Welsh Presbyterian Church in Sebastopol was also designed by Caselli, in 1865.

In 1872 he designed, for a cost of £5,000 the Catholic Church at Bacchus Marsh, dedicated to St. Bernard, and the church in Ballarat East made of stone. In 1873 he designed the beautiful octagonal bell-tower in Stanwell. (24)

Another two Italian architects were Carlo Spadacini and Andrea Stambuco, who commenced their careers in the State of Victoria and were then transferred to New South Wales.

Carlo Spadacini was born in Florence in 1820 and arrived in Victoria in 1861. In 1869 he was chosen, together with Andrea Stambuco, as

diocesan architects by the Bishop of Goulburn, Bishop Lanigan. The two Italians designed and built the cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul in Goulburn. Work commenced in 1872 and it was consecrated by Cardinal Moran on 26 June, 1890. Spadacini and Stambuco also designed many old Catholic churches in the diocese of Goulburn.

While Spadacini was engaged in work on the Convent of Our Lady of Mercy at St. Michael's Chapel in 1891, Stambuco was designing St. Patrick's College in Manly. The first stone of the building was blessed in 1873 by the Archbishop of Sydney, Bishop B. Polding, and the main part was blessed and opened by the same Archbishop on 1 February, 1874.

Stambuco also designed the Elizabethan style house of the custodian at the Victoria Park Recreation Ground, which is still in use at Goulburn.

Spadacini moved soon after to Perth, Western Australia, where he died on 6 February, 1907. (25)

A. Stambuco, instead, went to Brisbane, perhaps at the request of Bishop Quinn, where he designed the school, "All Hallows", and the industrial school of St. Anne. (26)

MECHANIC - CLOCKMAKER AND INVENTOR

Finally we must take a look at the work of Angelo Tornaghi. Born in Milan in 1831, he arrived in New South Wales at 24 years of age. Due to his skill and dedication he made a name for himself as a scientist, of which he could be proud, reaching a position that put him on equal footing with the most important men in this country.

The firm for the production of scientific instruments, founded by him, became the greatest in Australia, and his instruments remain among the best and most prized. A true scientific genius and mathematician, he is remembered today as one of the most eminent scientists of the period in this country.

He made various instruments for the Sydney Observatory and for the Surveyor-General's department. Several scientific institutes approached him for their equipment. The care of all the clocks on the towers of government offices in New South Wales, was entrusted to him. He designed the clock for the Sydney Post Office and personally supervised its installation. This clock is among the best and most elaborate in the world, and was fitted with a special apparatus that renders the face visible day and night, which was rare at the time.

Tornaghi also invented and patented a special circumferentor which facilitated the work of topographic calculations and which quickly met with wide acceptance.

For the Sydney Observatory, he made various tide-gauges, standard barometers, self-registering barometers, microscopic eye pieces for binoculars and a great number of other important instruments.

Thanks to his artistic inclination and to his ability to give concrete shape to theoretic plans, he excelled also in the execution of works of art. One of his most important works consists of two groups of statues, which represent Humanity, Dignity and Strength. These bronze statues, of exceptional dimensions for those times, were constructed, using a method known among scientists by the name of electrometallurgy. Because of his far reaching vision, his purity of design and perfect finish, these statues give a touch of nobility to the elegant buildings of the Mutual Fire Assurance Company at the corner of Pitt and King Streets in Sydney.

The central figure stands out because of its height (14 feet) and the beauty of its design, which attracts the admiration of all.

While he was engaged in making these statues, Tornaghi planned a monument to commemorate the centenary of the colony of New South Wales. This monument was to be erected in the grounds of the Garden Palace which was destroyed by fire in 1882. The monument was never constructed, thus depriving the city of Sydney of a work, according to the description of a contemporary, that was truly exceptional.

The "National Monument" was to stand on a granite base of massive proportions. At the approach to four great flights of steps were four family groups of indigenous people from Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand and Fiji in attitudes of amazement at the sight of the new race. The whole work gave testimony to those races now almost disappeared.

Between the steps were four great bas-reliefs, all of which were faithful likenesses of their subjects. The first represented His Excellency, the Governor, at the inauguration of Parliament, the second represented Captain Cook as he was setting foot on this land, the third depicted the destroyed Garden Palace while the fourth honoured famous colonists who had distinguished themselves through their contributions to the progress of this country.

Beside the steps were another eight bas-reliefs, which indicated the great explorers of this country, Tasman, La Perouse, Sir Thomas Mitchell, Leichhardt, Bourke and Wills, among others. On the platform at the top of the steps and around the central work, were eight big statues, which represented eight colonies, New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. Under each colony was a shield with the respective emblem and a panel where all the particulars and dates of each colony were incised. Added to the figures already mentioned were another eight allegoric figures which represented Science, Art, Astronomy, Navigation, Commerce and Architecture, etc.

Four great pillars and 16 columns supported a structure which represented the rising Sun surmounted by the Globe. The great figure at the top (42 feet in height) represented Australia, turned towards the colonies in an attitude of inviting unity, her left hand placed on a volume containing the laws and the history of the colony (Australia).

during the hundred years of its existence, and a multitude of symbols which represented the products of Australia. Between the rising Sun and the columns were eight panels on which were recorded the dates of historic happenings or that could be used every time there was an important event.

In fact, the monument itself represented the progressive history of this great country, and all the work was to be carried out on the site. At the centre of the colonnade there would have been a great fountain, whose water would have flown under the four great bas-reliefs to represent the four great rivers of this country.

After this detailed description of a work of Tornaghi's which remained at the planning stage and was never carried out, it is our duty to describe another work brought to completion. We refer to the clock at the Sydney General Post Office, already mentioned, one of the greatest works of its kind in Australia.

After he gained the contract to construct the clock, Tornaghi left for Europe to see and observe personally the latest improvements in the field of clock making. He demonstrated such enthusiasm for the task he had undertaken that he declared he would renounce the fee due to him, if the clock was not up to his expectations.

In the course of his life and through his works, Tornaghi has shown himself to be worthy of the highest respect, becoming one of the most well known citizens of Hunter's Hill, where he lived for several years. For 13 years he formed part of the local community council. He was Mayor three times. In 1884, after an absence of 35 years from his country of origin, he left Sydney to go to Europe for a holiday and for business reasons.

Before he left Australian soil, his fellow citizens invited him to a banquet in his honour to show him how much they appreciated his presence among them. This gesture had an even greater significance if one reflects that it was directed at someone who was not Anglo-Saxon, but who had come to the colony from Italy, a stranger in the midst of strangers, one who had succeeded in making a prestigious position for himself in his adopted land.

During his stay in Italy, the King conferred on him the decoration of the Italian Cross. A charitable and magnanimous person, he demonstrated in a particular way, his generosity on the occasion of the arrival of the survivors from the ill-fated expedition of the Marquis de Rays.

Tornaghi, on this occasion, was untiring in his efforts to help his compatriots, who had suffered almost beyond endurance and it was in recognition of these services that the Italian Cross was conferred upon him. Right up to the time of his death he remained an active and valued member of the community. (27)

NOTES

- 1 - P. Corte, *Il continente nuovissimo*, Turin, 1898 p. 23
- 2 - C. Bertola, Report: *Notizie circa le condizioni degli immigranti in Australia*, June 1905, p. 546.
- 3 - Report of J. Milbourne Marsh, Italian Immigrants Inquiry Board (1881), p. 3.
- 4 - P. Corte, op. cit., p. 93.
- 5 - Cyclopaedia of Victoria, Vol. I, Melbourne, 1903.
- 6 - Ibid.
- 7 - The Australian Encyclopaedia, p. 56.
- 8 - Dr. Baccarini - (cfr N. Randazzo, Tommaso Fiaschi, il personaggio di maggiore spicco nella storia dell'emigrazione Italiana in Australia - Il Globo.
- 9 - Information provided by Dr. Cilento.
- 10 - La Fiamma.
- 11 - The scientific Australian - A popular quarterly journal devoted to the Arts and Industries, 20-12-1896. (Cfr. G. Serle, A.D.B.).
- 12 - Ibid.
- 13 - The Cyclopaedia of Victoria, Vol. I, Melbourne, 1903.
- 14 - G. Serle, Australian Dictionary of Biography.
- 15 - R.A. Swan, *Australia in the Antartica*, Melbourne: Uni. Press, 1961, pp. 94-95.
- 16 - Louis Charles Bernacchi, *To the South Polar Regions*, London, 1901.
- 17 - Ibid.
- 18 - Ibid.
- 19 - G. Serle, A.D.B. op. cit.
- 20 - Ibid.
- 21 - Ibid. (Cf. The Cyclopaedia of Victoria, Vol. I, Melbourne, 1903).
- 22 - Neil Gunson, *The Good Country*, F.W. Cheshire, Melbourne, 1968, p. 202ss.
- 23 - G. Serle, A.D.B. op. cit.
- 24 - W.B. Withers, *History of Ballarat*, Ballarat 1887, pp. 269, 271.
- 25 - R.T. Wyatt, *The History of Goulburn N.S.W.*, Sydney, 1972, pp. 316ss.
- 26 - Yvonne M. McClay, James Quinn - *The First Catholic Bishop of Brisbane*, Armadale, Vic. 1979, pp. 153, 160.
- 27 - *Australian Men of Mark*, Vol. II, pp. 226, 230.

22 — THE RELIGIOUS CONTRIBUTION

When writing the history of Italians in Australia and of their contribution to the development of the country, one could not neglect to record a group of men who, urged on by a mysterious but real impulse, were among the first to arrive in these distant lands.

They are those priests and missionaries, religious and secular, who, from 1843 on, have given the best of themselves, to bring and keep alive the Faith among the peoples of the Southern Hemisphere, at the cost of many sacrifices.

Here, we are not able to present as thoroughly researched and detailed a work as these good persons would merit. One chapter is not enough to present the true worth of these men of God. But their inclusion ought to be at least sufficient to let it be seen that the token recognition afforded by certain historians is incomplete, superficial and preconceived. It is really simplistic to sweep aside a whole part of the history of the Church in Australia with a few sentences like, "they haven't made any conversions" or "they were a mixed bag, above all the 16 Italians, some of whom were defined by Murray as 'desperate ruffians', while others were mostly interested in what money could buy for them." (1)

The Orders, the religious congregations or the single Diocesan priests who made themselves available to the Propagation of the Faith, or to other groups for foreign missions, were quite diverse. Having been invited by the local Bishops, especially by Polding, Quinn and Brady, they accepted to exercise their ministry in their Diocese.

Some of them came and remained in that field of work to the end. Others, after a period of time, were recalled to their homelands by their superiors or assigned to other lands. Some, finally could not stand up to the stress, the solitude, the autocratic and despotic systems of some Bishops and Irish priests and so, disillusioned, they left the field of work and returned to the fatherland.

Of those who remained two became Bishops in Australia and another was consecrated Bishop of Hong Kong and there was even a martyr, Giovanni Mazzucconi, of whom we will speak in greater depth, later on. There were some extremely zealous priests and some approached the spiritual perfection of sainthood.

The first priests arrived in Australia at the invitation of His Excellency, Bishop Bede Polding, first Archbishop of Sydney and

Apostolic Vicar of Australia, Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) and the nearby Islands.

Bishop Polding took possession of his Diocese on 13 September, 1835, but returned to Europe in 1840 in search of priests and funds to start the first mission for the conversion of Aborigines. He was convinced that the faith could be preached with success to the Aboriginal tribes who had not had contact with Europeans and who were considered by him to be sources of corruption.

These Aborigines, according to Bishop Polding, appeared "intelligent and happy". In Europe, Bishop Polding applied, first of all, to the Superior of his Order to have some Benedictines, but these declined the invitation quite decisively. That was most upsetting to the Archbishop, who wanted to keep Australia under the influence of the Benedictines.

With the help of the Venerable Domenico Barberi, superior of the Passionists in Great Britain, and well known for his zeal and his sanctity, Bishop Polding then applied to the Superior General of the Passionist Order, from which he obtained four priests for the mission among the Aborigines, Fathers Giuseppe Snell (40), Luigi Maria Pesciaroli (36), Maurizio Lencioni (28) and Raimondo Vaccari (41). (2)

Bishop Polding had met Fr Raimondo Vaccari in Rome in 1841 and Fr Vaccari was so impressed by the enthusiasm of the Archbishop, that he voluntarily offered himself for the difficult mission. However, his Superior General judged him to be unsuitable because of his complex and difficult character and refused him permission.

Fr Vaccari, however, had many influential friends among the laity, the clergy, the cardinals and other ecclesiastical dignitaries in Rome. With their help, the priest not only obtained permission to go, but was put in charge of the group and, unknown to the Archbishop, was appointed Apostolic Prefect.

The four Passionist Fathers left Rome for London and Liverpool, where on 2 May, 1842, together with the Archbishop, eight priests, three brothers from Christian schools and seven seminarians, they set out on the *Templar*, headed for Sydney.

Archbishop Polding had clearly told Rome that the Fathers had to remain under his jurisdiction, as did all the other priests in Australia. But the secretary of the Congregation of Evangelisation, Cardinal Cadolini, unknown to the Archbishop, had obtained Papal letters which placed the Passionist Fathers, as apostolic missionaries, under the authority of the newly elected Apostolic Prefect, Fr Vaccari.

It meant that the mission among the Aborigines was not under the direct jurisdiction of Bishop Polding, but under Fr Vaccari. For his part, Bishop Polding continued to conduct himself as if he had full jurisdiction over the Passionists, notwithstanding the remonstrations of Fr Vaccari, who, armed with the nomination to Apostolic Prefect, obtained from Rome, was trying to exert his rights. The Archbishop simply ignored the Pontifical documents and took Fr Snell with himself, to Stradbroke Island, Queensland, where, on the 24 May, 1843,

he founded a mission for Aborigines, leaving Fr Vaccari and the other two priests in Sydney.

The other priests, including the Apostolic Prefect, Fr Vaccari, arrived later, accompanied by Bishop Polding's secretary, the Benedictine Fr Henry Gregory. The Archbishop, now resident in Sydney, remained absolutely opposed to giving a working fund to the Fathers, even for the most immediate necessities. Everything had to be ordered from Sydney. For anything whatsoever the Fathers had to apply to Bishop Polding, at times having to wait for months. They had also to discuss with the Archbishop all the details of their mission, such as the place in which they were starting, the method of apostolate, etc.

Fr Vaccari was in open disagreement with the Archbishop, who required every slightest particular. He tried in vain to point out that the Pope had appointed him as Apostolic Prefect and, as a result, only he was the true and responsible head of the mission. The division between the two compromised greatly the success of the mission among the Aborigines.

Stradbroke Island was an untamed island, dry, sandy and barely fertile. The only existing buildings were two huts without roofs, which had been abandoned by the convicts who had built them some years earlier. The Passionist Fathers were not discouraged. They set about repairing the huts, transforming one into a dwelling for the missionaries and making the other into a church.

The Aborigines lived in the most primitive conditions and lived on wild game and fish. They belonged to three or four tribes and each tribe spoke a different dialect. The missionaries tried to learn a little of these dialects, enough to understand the bare necessities of life. They quickly learnt that there was little hope of converting the adults. They were only interested in blankets, clothes, flour, tobacco and sugar.

Supplies were always scarce and did not always arrive on time from Sydney. Often the Fathers found themselves without food and so they were forced to follow the Aborigines who moved continually from one place to another on the island, to hunt and fish. In that way they came to know their customs and rites and to identify themselves with the Aborigines' way of living.

After six months Fr Luigi Pesciaroli wrote to Cardinal Pianetti describing in detail the customs of the Aborigines. "Every tribe consists of 30 or 40 or, at the most, 50 individuals. They don't even remain in the same place for more than eight or ten days and then they move again. They live in the open and make themselves temporary shelters from the bark of trees, then they leave, sometimes even the next day." Fr Luigi continued his letter saying that he did not dare express an opinion on the possibility of converting the Aborigines to the Christian faith.

Convinced that they could not do anything with such a primitive people, always on the move, the missionaries made the decision to take about 20 children into their house to have them live with the Fathers and to educate them and lead them to Christianity.

Bishop Polding did not approve of such a project and even less of financing it. The three Fathers, however, wrote to their Superior General and informed him of the break between Fr Vaccari and Bishop Polding. They presented a pessimistic picture of the mission and accused the Archbishop of Sydney of having sent them to a practically deserted island, and of making them suffer without any hope of being able to do some good. It was as if they had been banished to a place of exile.

In Rome, the Superior General of the Passionists met the newly consecrated Bishop of Perth, Bishop Brady. When he came to know that Brady was trying to establish missions for the Aborigines in Western Australia, and not being satisfied with the mission at Stradbroke Island, he decided that the four missionaries should leave the island and make themselves available to Bishop Brady. Bishop Polding was not pleased at the news; he opposed the move and tried to delay the issue. The Father General was forced to write directly to the Archbishop telling him that he had decided that the missionaries should go to Perth without delays or postponements.

Fr Giuseppe, Fr Luigi and Fr Maurizio departed from Stradbroke Island in the month of June, 1846. Fr Vaccari submitted his resignation as Apostolic Prefect and decided to remain at the mission, hoping to be contacted by Fr Magagnotto, superior of the Passionist Fathers in Belgium. He tried to go ahead with the mission, continued to celebrate Mass, to instruct the children he had been able to baptize and to cultivate the little garden from which he extracted enough food to survive. But the solitude, the silence from Rome, started to influence his physical and mental state. The Aborigines were no longer receiving any support and so they, too, abandoned him.

In 1847 the situation worsened and even his life commenced to be in danger. An Aborigine whom he had helped previously, threatened to kill him, if he did not receive food. Other Aborigines destroyed his garden, carrying away all that the poor Father had planted for his food supply. Many times he had asked the authorities in Brisbane and also his confreres for help, but in vain.

Finally, seeing that he had been completely abandoned, he decided to leave the mission. Having reached Sydney towards the end of 1847, he met the Franciscan, Fr Bassi, and set out with him on the ship, *Speed*, for Valparaiso. For 13 years nothing more was heard of him. In 1861 an English Benedictine, who had known Fr Vaccari in Sydney, arrived in Rome with the news that he had seen him in Lima. The General immediately wrote to Fr Peter Magagnotto, who was in California, requesting him to go immediately to Lima to investigate the matter. Fr Magagnotto managed to trace Fr Raimondo (Vaccari), who was working as a gardener in a Franciscan monastery under the name of Wilson.

Fr Raimondo explained that the ship on which he had embarked had been shipwrecked and he had lost all his documents. Therefore, it was impossible for him to be recognised as a priest, and without money, he had chosen to work as a gardener as a way of living.

Fr Magagnotto wrote to the Superior General saying that Fr Raimondo was much loved in Lima and that the Archbishop wanted him to remain in his diocese, also that the Franciscans would have great pleasure in receiving him into their Order. Fr Raimondo was released from his vows made to the Passionist Order and on 10 December, 1861, entered the monastery of the Franciscan Fathers as a novice.

The fate of the other three companions of Fr Raimondo was not less dramatic. Following the directive of the Superior General they left Stradbroke Island and headed for Western Australia. After a brief stay in Sydney, they embarked for Adelaide, which they reached on 1 September, 1846.

In Adelaide, devoid of funds, they were not able to continue the trip towards Western Australia. They turned to two priests in Adelaide, but they were not able to help them. The Bishop had not yet returned from Rome. No-one was in a position to offer them hospitality. Without losing courage, the three Fathers rented lodgings and tried to earn enough to live on; Fr Giuseppe Snell in teaching French and English, Fr Maurizio Lencioni with music and Fr Luigi Pesciaroli as a cook for his confreres also for the colonists, who wanted to taste a plate of spaghetti or such, prepared by a Passionist priest.

Now too, for the three priests, things became drawn out and complicated. Bad news arrived from Western Australia, the mission for the Aborigines was going badly through lack of funds and therefore their presence was no longer required.

Bishop Murphy of Adelaide discouraged them from remaining in Adelaide and dissuaded them from the idea of founding a Passionist monastery. Their position was becoming more and more difficult and orders had not arrived from Rome.

Finally the Bishop decided to employ the Fathers in a country locality. Fr Giuseppe was assigned to the Parish of Morphett Vale, Fr Luigi was sent as assistant to Mt. Barker and Fr Maurizio was called to the Bishop's residence.

The following year a letter arrived from the General, in which the Fathers were censured for lack of obedience. But while censuring them, the Father General gave them a choice of what to do - they could serve Bishop Murphy as apostolic missionaries, return to Sydney and make themselves available to Fr Magagnotto or return to Europe. They decided to remain in the Adelaide diocese, but Fr Luigi was not able to learn English sufficiently well, and he considered his presence at Mt. Barker to be unjustified, so in 1849 he returned to Italy. He died at Corneto on 10 September, 1874.

Fr Giuseppe, too, found difficulty at the beginning, so much so, that on the occasion of Fr Luigi's departure he wrote to him saying, "Oh, how I envy you. God alone knows how much I would like to go with you to England. Don't think I am happy; I am not. It doesn't matter what the others think." But he adjusted to the circumstances and

continued in his apostolate at Morphett Vale. In 1861 he went on holidays to Victoria for health reasons and died at Carisbrook on 13 July of that year.

Fr Maurizio by now was alone, and he too, tried to return to Europe. He found, however, much opposition from the Bishop, who did his utmost to have him remain in Australia, where he was much loved because of his gentle and devout character.

In 1863 he was permitted to return to his homeland. He commenced to make preparations for the voyage. On 31 March, 1864, he went to farewell some friends at Mt. Barker. He was already suffering from a bad cold, but then caught pleuresy and died on 16 April. His funeral was held in the Cathedral of Saint Francis Xavier in the presence of a huge crowd of Catholics and non-Catholics.

The two newspapers of the city of Adelaide reported the occasion thus, "Adelaide has changed a lot in the course of 17 years, but the affection Fr Maurizio had for the city and its people was never changed. One could truly say his sentiments have been returned, because the old colonists loved him to the end. He made new friends continually, without ever losing an old one. Only those who had the privilege of enjoying his confidence can know what they have lost." (3)

The poor, among whom he was pleased to pass a good part of his time, wept openly and followed their Father, their adviser and their benefactor to the grave. (4)

Fr Maurizio was buried in the Catholic cemetery on West Terrace and lay there for 84 years, until the Passionist Order was established in South Australia and his confreres obtained permission to re-bury him in their cemetery at Glen Osmond. He lies now under the pleasant hills of the city he learned to love, and over his mortal remains stands the fine monument that the Catholics of Adelaide wanted to erect in the West Terrace cemetery, but which followed him to Glen Osmond. (5)

BISHOP BRADY AND THE BENEDICTINES OF NEW NORCIA

While the situation of the Passionists in Queensland was going from bad to worse, the new Bishop of Perth and Western Australia, Bishop Brady, who was in Rome to be consecrated a Bishop, let it be known that he wanted priests for his new diocese. Some Spanish Benedictines, resident at Grottaferrata, offered to return with the Bishop. There were also some Italians with them - Fr Angelo Confalonieri from Riva del Garda, a student of Propaganda and the Anconian Canon, Fr Raffaele Martelli.

Fr Confalonieri and two Irish catechists were assigned to open a mission for Aborigines in the extreme north of the continent, at Port Essington. They set out for Sydney on 1 March, 1846, and from Sydney on 8 April, but disaster awaited them in the Torres Strait. (6)

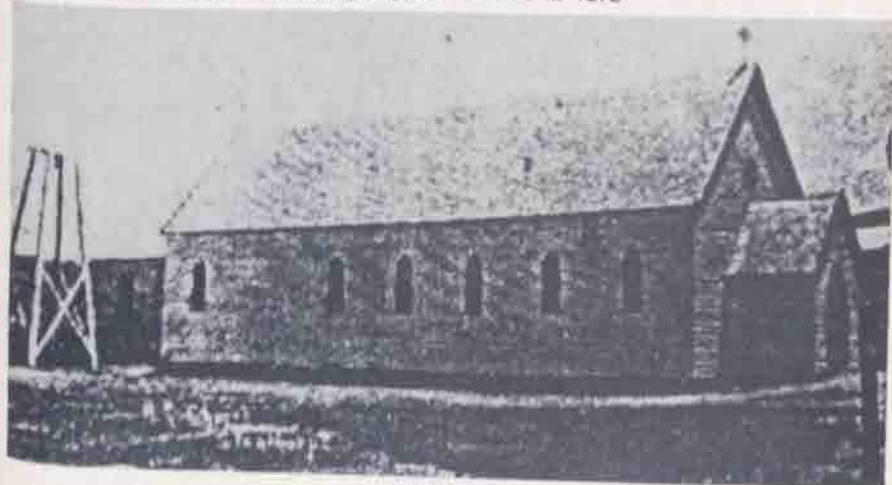


*The first bishop of Rockhampton:
Mons. Giovanni Cani*



*F. Girolamo Davadi called the Father of the
fruit industry*

The Catholic Church of Stanthorpe opened for use in 1872



*F. Benedetto Scortechini, priest of Beaudesert
(Queensland)*



E. Pietro Capra

F. Giuseppe Canali, architect and engineer,
ordained a priest to the "S. Stefano"
Cathedral of Brisbane in 1979. He was called
the Apostle of Brisbane



The gates of the "All Hallows" school, planned by F. G. Canali





Mons. Vincenzo Coletti, private secretary to the Archbishop of Sydney, Mons. Bede Polding

Dr. Ottavio Barsanti O.F.M.



Mons. Eleazaro Terreggiani, Cappucin, second bishop to the diocese of Armidale, N.S.W.

"I had just finished conversing with my companions, James Fagan and Nicholas Hogan," writes Confalonieri, "when we smashed against a coral reef. In a few minutes the vessel foundered and everyone perished, with the exception of the Captain and myself, and I couldn't swim. The Captain helped me as much as he could, but he was injured and exhausted. We reached some rocks, from which we were rescued the next day by the crew of a long boat, who brought us to Port Essington, where the Commanding Officer and the people of the place cared for us." (7)

Fr Confalonieri settled alone, at the entrance of the Port, about 12 miles from the town in a place called Black Rock. The Aborigines helped him to build his dwelling. His ministry was directed almost exclusively towards the Aborigines, to whom he commenced to teach the first prayers of the Church.

By the end of 1846 Fr Confalonieri had visited almost all the Goburg peninsula, where he had met and classified seven different tribes of Aborigines and prepared maps of the region, copies of which are kept by the Royal Geographic Society. He even prepared a small dictionary of the dialects used by the Aboriginal tribes of the peninsula.

Fr Confalonieri also wrote a manuscript of prayers, which included the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Creed and a brief catechism of the Christian Doctrine including the 10 commandments, in the dialect used by the tribes. Moreover he translated part of the New Testament.

In 1841 he was found very ill with a fever, by one of the soldiers from the garrison at Port Essington. He was taken to the town to be cared for, but there were no signs of improvement and he died after some days.

Captain McArthur wrote to Archbishop Polding, "We have buried him with full honours. All the inhabitants of the colony took part in the priest's funeral." (8)

A few Italian priests went to Western Australia, and they were among the first Italian priests to arrive in this country. Towards the end of the century, they were the ones who were engaged more specifically in assisting the Italian migrants spiritually.

Canon Raffaele Martelli, instead, made himself available to the Bishop. At the start of 1850 he was appointed Parish Priest of Toodyay. Canon Martelli, short of stature, swift of speech and impulsive of manner, was a learned man who spoke five or six languages perfectly. People of every religious denomination were conquered by his generosity and humility.

Canon Martelli was accustomed to riding on horseback from Toodyay to Northam, York and Bindon for the celebration of religious services. From time to time he would return to visit the Benedictines of New Norcia and he would regularly break the long trip on horseback by stopping overnight with the Higgins family at Bolgart, until the Higgins sold their property in 1856 to Squire Phillips.

In 1860 Canon Martelli became an Australian citizen. In 1862 he was sent as Parish Priest to Fremantle. Here he struggled to have the right to assist spiritually the inmates of the local jail.

In 1868, exhausted by the struggle, he retired to the Benedictine monastery of New Norcia, where he continued to dedicate himself to various activities. For example, in 1871 he organised a library for the poorer people of the district, and immediately after, he had a school constructed on the banks of the Moore River. In 1872 he was re-appointed to Toodyay and Northam, where he was elected to the Northam Board of Education. In the years 1877-79 he was instrumental in the building of the first church at Northam. He remained as Parish Priest of Toodyay until 1880, when, sensing the end, he retired again to New Norcia where he died soon after. (9)

Two years later a relative of Canon Martelli, Fr Luigi Martelli, arrived from India, where he had spent 20 years. He worked for seven years in the Cathedral Parish and then was appointed to Fremantle as Parish Priest. His untiring activities among the local populace and the Italian migrants lasted many years. He died in Perth in 1925. (10)

ITALIAN PRIESTS IN QUEENSLAND

On 10 May, 1861, the first Catholic Bishop of Queensland, Bishop James Quinn arrived on the steamship, *Wonga*. *Wonga* and so to his vast diocese of 1,170,000 square miles. The population of the new colony, according to the census of that year, was 30,059 all told, of which 7,696 were Catholic, with two priests, four churches and four Catholic schools. (11)

An Italian priest, Fr Giovanni Cani, was also travelling with the new Bishop. The two had met in Rome when they were attending the university there. Fr Giovanni Cani was the first of a large group of Italian priests, 25 in all, whom the Bishop had invited to exercise their priestly ministry in his diocese. Several of them found the work of their ministry too hard, first of all, because of the language, but also because of the pioneering conditions and the severe climate and above all, as we will see, because of the unfavorable conditions in which they found themselves. The majority of them were learned men, zealous and wanting to carry out their mission in the best way possible.

In certain summary judgements, made also by historians, who labelled them as "frustrated vagabonds" or "disaffected Italian priests" or even "mixed bags," all the prejudice, and we would say, expressions almost of contempt for anything not Irish or Anglo-Saxon, were immediately visible. (12)

As soon as he arrived in the diocese Bishop Quinn made a name for himself as a despot and an autocrat. His authority was and had to remain, absolute and indisputable.

"I am a sacred person," he declared, "I have been ordained and I have received the Holy Spirit; he who attacks my personage commits the most heinous and sacrilegious act." (13)

Clerics and laity who dared criticise his administration were reminded of the "Catholic spirit". Fr McGinty, Parish Priest of Ipswich, who disagreed with the Bishop about the administration of his Parish and was backed by a group of lay people, was threatened with suspension and excommunication. The quarrel between the Bishop and Fr McGinty reached the Parliament in Brisbane. In the end, Fr McGinty left the Parish and went first to Rockhampton and then to Bowen. (14)

But "the case of McGinty" according to O'Farrell, "taught nothing to Bishop Quinn (15) who continued to govern with meticulous severity, and to impose rules *ad infinitum*; he even forbade smoking. The transgressions were punished by severe sanctions, the priests were deprived of the right to administer the sacraments and the laity of receiving them. The rules were so severe that in 1867 six of his priests left the diocese for good without even seeking his permission. Quinn claimed that they left because they were living too well. According to him, "they were enjoying an oversupply of money, of horses and of every commodity..." (16) According to them instead, they had no means and were suffocated by rules. They accused him, moreover, of using religion as a machine to make money. The German Fr Kaercher, the Frenchman Fr Renehen and the Italian Fr Ricci were suspended *a divinis*. In a disastrous bout of accusations and counter-accusations, neither the Germans nor the French nor the Italians were spared. But let us look at them one at a time.

Giovanni Cani, who accompanied Bishop Quinn to Australia, was born at Castel Bolognese in 1836. He had attended the University of Sapienza in Rome, where he received his degree in Theology. He was ordained a priest in 1857, but he preferred the missionary life to that of a teacher. In Australia he was made Parish Priest of Warwick, where he built the Catholic school and the convent for the nuns. He was appointed Vicar General and became the administrator of the Cathedral of St. Stephen in Brisbane.

At the same time Fr Robert Dunne was appointed Parish Priest of Toowoomba and vicar for the area of Darling Downs, an office that had been vacated by the Vincentian, Fr Scully, because of a disagreement with the Bishop.

The two new vicars experienced difficulty in collaborating with Quinn. Many times Quinn rebuked Fr Dunne for his "uncatholic sentiments" (17) and for "violations of the regulations of the diocese". (18) In 1870, while Bishop Quinn was attending Vatican I, Cani, as Vicar General, administered the diocese. An active and energetic worker, he found funds for the various diocesan works and for the building of the new Cathedral. He also became very popular with the Sisters of Mercy and the lay community. (19)

In 1877 Dunne and Cani were removed as Vicars General. (20) The reason, according to many, was because of their refusal to endorse a letter written by the Bishop (and other priests) in his defence against certain written accusations to Rome by some Italian priests. Both Dunne and Cani denied any connection with the aforementioned priests.

From 1878-1881 he was Pro-Vicar Apostolic of North Queensland, replacing Bishop Fortini, who had little success as Apostolic Vicar. Upon the death of Bishop Quinn in 1883, the Archbishop of Sydney, Bishop Vaughan, appointed Cani administrator of the Brisbane diocese.

The reaction of the Irish was immediate and severe. Most of the priests of Brisbane, organised by M. Quinn, brother of the deceased Bishop of Bathurst, protested against the appointment of Cani. Feelings were so aroused that Archbishop Vaughan proposed to Propaganda Fide to give the Diocese to the German Benedictines. Instead, Robert Dunne was chosen, while Cani was assigned to the new Diocese of Rockhampton.

There was talk of an Anglo-Italian conspiracy to defame the Irish priests and to destroy their faith. The Parish Priest of Ipswich wrote, "It is very clear, to a true Catholic, that all the (non-Irish) Bishops and priests are rapidly destroying the faith of the Irish people in this country." (21)

In 1883, in an anonymous little book, published in Melbourne under the title of *The mystery unveiled: being an exposure of the agencies at work for the world wide defamation of the Catholic Irish Australian clergy*, it was affirmed that an Anglo-Italian plot was underway, led by Vaughan and Cani and supported by the Propaganda Fide, with the aim of making a clean sweep of Irish Bishops and priests in Australia. "It is strange," continued the anonymous author, "that one couldn't find an Irish priest in the world suitable to become the Bishop of Rockhampton. It is to be hoped that Christ might have a better opinion of his Vicar of the people of the Irish race and its priests." (22)

For them, in other words, all that was not Irish, be it English, Italian or even the Papacy, was an enemy.

In conclusion, Bishop Quinn of Bathurst, three nephews, the Horan brothers, who were Parish Priests of three important Parishes in the Diocese of Brisbane, and their spokesman, Fr J. O'Reilly, gave birth to a whole heap of protests and slanders with regard to Cani, and all because they were convinced that the hierarchy in Australia had to be Irish and only Irish.

Bishop Cani had difficulty in governing his Diocese, mostly because of the hostility and the open opposition of the Irish priests and Bishops.

However, he always retained a good relationship with Bishop Dunne, J. Quinn's successor in Brisbane. He was always kind, he always loved the sick and poor, which made him quite popular. He had an orphanage built for the abandoned infants, he gave his Bishop's residence to the Sisters, contenting himself personally with a modest little house. He initiated the construction of the cathedral.

He died on 3 March, 1898, at only 61 years of age, because of a cerebral haemorrhage and dengue. (23)

It is difficult to trace the movements of some of the other 25 Italian priests. But their moving around does not serve to demonstrate that they were vagabonds or a dissatisfied people. For example, in 1874, the superior of the Fathers of St. John of Jerusalem, Fr Carmelo Pateragmani asked Propaganda Fide to induce Bishop Quinn to send back, at his own expense, the three priests whom he had imprudently enticed to go to Australia." (24)

We will see other cases later on. Most of the Italian priests arrived in Australia during the time in which James Quinn was Bishop of Queensland.

Fr Pietro Capra and Fr Michele Antonini arrived together on the *Silver Eagle* in 1871. Fr Capra, according to *Pugh's Almanac*, lived in Georgetown in 1873, in Ethridge in 1874, in Ipswich in 1874-78 and in St. George in 1880-81. In 1882 he was sent to Roma, Queensland, where he remained until he died, on 4 May, 1907. Father Capra, Milanese and a graduate in Theology, remained as Parish Priest of the little town of Rama for more than 20 years.

Archbishop Duhig, in his book, *Crowded Years*, writes that Fr Capra was a Doctor of Theology, but no-one called him by his title and he had little need of it in his long walks in the bush. He possessed an extraordinary memory for names, faces and events. He enjoyed an excellent constitution; he could take a nap in any place whatsoever. He had the simplicity of a dove and the cunning of a serpent. He managed to solve the most complicated problems regarding church affairs, and then he could enjoy sweets like a child. When a Sister, who used to make cakes and sweets regularly and send them to him in the Presbytery, was transferred, Fr Capra told his assistant that her transfer was a "grave loss", and when a doctor, who used to put half a crown on the collection plate of a Sunday, left the Parish, Fr Capra said it was a "terrible calamity".

The Archbishop concluded, "The dear old priest, so well known in Western Queensland, where his smile was so familiar, died an edifying death in May, 1907, assisted throughout his final illness by Fr Tom Nolan." (25)

Fr Capra's companion on the voyage out and in his apostolacy in Australia, was Fr Michele Antonini from Envie in Piedmont where he was born in 1845. He had attended the Don Bosco school in Turin; he received his degree in Theology and Canon Law in Rome. Having met Bishop Quinn, he followed him to Queensland. The journey on the *Silver Eagle* lasted four months and eight days. After a brief period of rest in Brisbane, he was sent to Rockhampton, where he soon became known as a good preacher and "Bushman" who knew no fear.

He used to ride on horseback for hours in the bush, across virgin terrain, in search of Catholic families, scattered far from town centres and never before visited by a Priest.

He was known everywhere in the vast territory. Even non-Catholic families would welcome him with open arms and offer help. One

time, after having ridden for 80 miles under the hot sun and over a vast plain of virgin country, he was almost at the end of his tether when he arrived at the home of a German-Lutheran family, who offered him refreshments and the only bed they had. The Priest wanted to pay them for their kindness, but the owner of the house replied, "Doctor Antonini, I have had the pleasure of meeting you personally. I have heard so much about you and it is an honour to be able to do something for you. I hope that you will honour me again with your presence, on your return." A local newspaper called him, "the fearless traveller" and he proved it with numerous anecdotes, including crossing rivers in flood, or infested with crocodiles. Fr Antonini not only took care of his 500 Catholics scattered far from the city, but he also found the time and courage to care for the Aborigines.

Towards the end of October, 1875, after returning from a long journey on horseback (of 2,000 miles, more than 3,000 km.), the priest was forced to take a complete rest. He was exhausted.

His English teacher, Henry Desmond, on the occasion of his farewell party, read the following speech to him, "Most Reverend and dear Doctor Antonini, it is with the deepest regret that we have received news of your departure. This sorrow is felt even more keenly, because the reason for your departure from us is your precarious state of health. Certainly you are loved by us all, because you are a minister of God and because we are losing a friend and adviser, whose goodness has made him loved dearly by us all."

On 1 November, 1875, he embarked for Italy, but the ship's Captain advised him to stop off for some months in Hong Kong to recover his health a little, if he wanted to arrive alive in Italy.

The Dominicans looked after him and he had hardly commenced to recover a little when he became a military chaplain to the English speaking Catholic soldiers of the colony. He taught English and Spanish to the Dominicans and learnt the language of the place. He was asked to go to Macao to reorganise the seminary and he also had the chance to go on a pilgrimage to San-cian where Saint Francis Saverio was buried.

Finally, in 1870, he was requested by his immediate superior, Bishop Puecher to return to Italy to take up a post in the Vatican (26). Between 1872 and 1874 several other priests arrived in Australia, including Frs Girolamo Davadi, Benedetto Scortechini, Giuseppe Romani and Eugenio Ricci.

Fr Davadi passed his early years at Warwick and then went to Stanthorpe where he remained till he died. At Stanthorpe, Fr Davadi became an important part of the life and development of the town. Recognising the excellent quality of the soil, he planted and encouraged others to plant, vines and fruit trees. He also taught how to make wine. He himself, transformed the land that used to serve as pasture for his horse, into vineyards. He planted another vineyard at the foot of Mt. Marlay, known thereafter as *Vichie's Vineyard*. He acquired other land near caves and planted apricot and peach trees on it.

These fruit trees grew so well that, at harvest time, railway sleepers were placed across their branches, to assist with picking. Many of these trees are still in existence today, standing out in their gnarled dignity and showing their old age.

Another piece of land near the Church at Sugarloaf was known as Davadi's Paddock. But Archbishop Dunne, convinced that Fr Davadi was neglecting his pastoral duties, wrote to him, "I hope that your personal interests are not interfering with your duties as a priest. I hear there is no movement in the Stanthorpe district towards the construction of a Catholic school and that, at present, lessons are being held in the public house, Old Globe. Moreover, I hear tell that there is no movement towards those things that concern the Church ..."

But even if he was out of favour with the Archbishop, the priest had conquered the hearts of the Sisters and all the people of Stanthorpe. For almost 30 years he looked after his flock, remaining an example of industriousness and moral rectitude. He knew how to infuse a sense of dignity in honest toil so necessary to maintain a family. But his tragic end was near. Struck by a brain tumor in 1899, Fr Davadi died on 22 January, 1900 at the age of 54 years. (27)

Before passing to another outstanding figure of a priest and scientist, we want to make mention of Fr Costantino Rossolini. After having spent nearly ten years at Gayndah, as Parish Priest of Mt. Penny, he was made Parish Priest of Bundaberg in 1881, where he remained until his death in 1893. He was an excellent priest and had also an extraordinary physical resistance.

Another very important figure in that group of four (Frs Davadi, Scortechini, Romani and Ricci) was Fr Benedetto Scortechini. On his arrival in Brisbane, he was sent to the parish of Stanthorpe as assistant, where the Parish Priest was Fr Stephen McDonough. (28)

In 1875 he was appointed first Parish Priest of a vast zone that extended from Brisbane towards the south as far as the Tweed River. Logan Village became his base camp. At the start Fr Scortechini used to celebrate Sunday Mass in Hanlon's Ferry Hotel in Yatala. Then he acquired a building at Beenleigh which became his first church. At the end of the year Bishop Quinn blessed the church at Yatala, which had been converted from a Masonic Hall.

When he had finished organising the centre, Fr Scortechini turned his attention to other localities, that he had been attending regularly. In 1878 he opened churches in Nerang, Upper Coomera and Tallebudgera and in 1882, in Southport.

On the first day of the year 1879, he celebrated Mass for the first time at Boonah. Four families were present. In June of that same year Fr Scortechini became the victim of an incident that shocked all the people of Logan. The *Brisbane Courier* reported the incident on 11 June, 1879, under the heading of "Attempted murder at Logan". The correspondent wrote, "It is a long time since the population has been as upset as yesterday, when it was revealed that

Fr Scortechini had been seriously wounded in a murder attempt. The reputation, in general, of the Priest as a man of pleasant character, probably makes him more likely to be exposed to such an atrocious act.

"What happened was an irate Irishman, whose dying brother had left something to the church in his will, thought that all his brother's inheritance had gone to the church. In fact, as the press had immediately ascertained, including £10.00 left to the Sisters of St. Joseph, the sum left was not more than £20 or £30. All the rest, which had been valued at round £2,000 was left to his wife."

The Irish Catholics of Logan took up a collection among themselves and presented 57 florins to the Priest as a sign of their loyalty, gratitude and best wished for a speedy recovery.

Fr Scortechini was also an eminent botanist and his long walks through the bush gave him the opportunity to collect a great amount of material for his favourite studies. He collaborated with the magazine, *Colonial Botanist*, and with other famous scientists in that field, in a particular study of the flora of the Logan district.

The priest was invited by the Governor of Malaysia to compile a list of the flora of that country. So, in 1884, after nine years of hard work in the Parish of Logan and with the permission of the Archbishop of Brisbane, Bishop Patrick Dunne, he accepted the invitation. He was accompanied by another eminent scientist, Fr Tennison Woods.

At the finish of the work entrusted to him by the Governor of Malaysia, it was the intention of Fr Scortechini to continue his journey across India and on as far as London, where he wanted to publish the results of his studies in botany. But he contracted a mysterious disease in Calcutta and died on 4 November, 1886. When giving the news of his death, *The Australian* described him as a zealous and learned priest, a keen student of the physical sciences and an exact teacher in the field of botany. Even the Royal Society of Queensland paid enthusiastic tribute to the man and his work. (29)

Another fine figure of a priest and missionary was Giovanni Battista Balangero. After he had completed his studies at Brignole-Sale college in Genoa and had been ordained a Priest in 1871, the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda Fide appointed him to the colony of Queensland as a secular priest in the immense and new diocese of Brisbane. "I immediately accepted this appointment," writes Fr Balangero, "and I prepared myself for departure. It was the custom at the college to have a farewell function in Church on the occasion of the departure of students for the missions. For me, this ceremony took place in a little village in the Ligurian Alps, where the residents of the college passed the summer. In the public church my superior delivered a brief speech overflowing with affection to me, gave me a crucifix and embraced me. Then I received an embrace and farewell from all my superiors and companions.

"That same evening, 15 September, 1872, I embarked from Genoa, headed for Livorno, then Rome, then Australia."

In Australia Fr Balangero was appointed to Ravenswood, a mining area, where he lived a truly adventurous missionary life. "Two years had passed since my arrival in Australia", continued Fr Balangero "and everyday that passed seemed to tighten the chains that tied me to those places and those people. I had become familiar with the language, with the customs and habits of the Anglo-Australians; I had become accustomed to the somewhat eventful life which was nevertheless, free and happy; in short I had come to love my new, adopted country and the work that I encountered, when, unexpectedly, the proposal to change missions was put to me, to move from Australia to Ceylon ... Such a proposal quite disturbed me and put me in a perplexed frame of mind, but the ideal of the apostolic missionary life would be better attained in Ceylon, where it would be my task to work among the poor and indigenous people and to dedicate myself to their evangelisation. This consideration, this desire, was uppermost in my mind and I decided to leave for Ceylon ...

"When the final Sunday arrived and I had made my farewell speech and said goodbye for ever to those people who were so devoted and affectionate towards me, there were tears in everyone's eyes, starting with mine. I could not but feel moved when I saw everyone serious and saddened by my departure, and then outside the church they expressed their feelings with warm handshakes. A deputation of those miners accompanied me on horseback for about ten miles, almost a guard of honour, when I set out on my trip. Thus my departure took place from Ravenswood, not without internal struggles and fierce and painful conflicts and doubts about whether the step I was about to take, was right and appropriate."

Fr Balangero returned to Italy in 1893 and worked in diocese until 1901, during which time he met the great Bishop Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, who had already founded a missionary congregation some years before, in 1887, to assist Italians abroad. He entered this congregation and in 1902 Bishop Scalabrini sent him to the United States, where, after a brief period as assistant in Boston, he was made Parish Priest of the Italian church of the Sacred Heart in Cincinnati. He remained there until his death on 20 May, 1919.

A few other priests, such as Lucido Cervini, were invited to return to their homelands for family reasons. He came to Queensland to avoid military service, but returned after pressure from the family. (30) Oreste Tardozzi, who was directing a mission 800 miles north of Brisbane, instead, was ordered by his superiors at Propaganda to return home and care for his aged mother. (31) Costantino Rossolini, from the year of his arrival in 1871, was Parish Priest at Mt. Penny until 1880.

He was made Parish Priest of Bundaberg and remained there until his death in 1893. He was one of those who opposed Bishop Cani, but was an exemplary priest. (32)

The gifted artist, Fr Giuseppe Romani, found Bishop Quinn and his Vicar, G. Cani, lacking in virtue and the material conditions of the

priests of the diocese, miserable. The wooden churches, which were raised to give the animals a chance to shelter from the sun, were disgusting. (33)

It seems much of the discontent was inspired by the rowdy Fr Eugenio Ricci, who had to flee from Italy, because he had become the target of the "Sesta", one of the many secret societies of the time. Ricci became the centre of the reactionary Italian priests against the regulations of Bishop Quinn and the Irish nationalism, whether it be from the laity or the clergy. Ricci was suspended *a divinis* for having laid hands on the Vicar General, G. Cani, and, in a letter, he threatened to shoot Bishop Quinn.

When writing to Archbishop Polding on 14 October, 1874, Bishop Quinn asked him to obtain a post for Ricci in some place not far from Australia. Ricci had suggested New Zealand or Ceylon. He left Brisbane towards 1886. (34)

Another who opposed Bishop Quinn was Fr Guerrini, who accused him of having created "the first seeds of religious indifference that is seen even today among Catholics". Guerrini, moreover, saw the Catholics of Queensland not creatively integrated into society, "but despite the fact that they observed scrupulously the letter of the law, they ate meat on days when it was forbidden, they neglected to receive the sacraments and to attend Mass on special feast days, they married heretics and unbelievers before magistrates or protestant ministers and lived publicly in adultery and communal living." Guerrini left the diocese in 1886 and remained in the diocese of Armidale until his death on 7 November, 1918. (35)

The fate of Fr Giuseppe Pompei was determined only one year after his arrival, when he died of tuberculosis on 5 July, 1872. (36)

The date of arrival in Australia of Fr Augusto Loretucci is not known. But in 1897 he was known to be in the diocese of Rockhampton, governed by Bishop Cani. In 1899 he was found in Barcaldine. In 1902 he returned to Italy and was made Parish Priest of St. Charles in Rome and wrote a book, *"Mission in Australia."* (37)

Before concluding this first part, we want to take note of the attempt to open a mission in the extreme north of Queensland and to look briefly at the story of the apostle of Brisbane, Fr Giuseppe Agostino Canali.

Cardinal Moran, in his story of the church in Australia, writes that in 1876, a mission was launched in North Queensland with Cooktown as the centre. This mission was entrusted to "some excellent Italian priests", who came from a missionary college in Rome. "It was hoped that they would be capable of taking care of the spiritual needs of the whites, while engaging in the particular work of converting the Aborigines. But the whites had little time for them because of the language and they could meet the Aborigines only in the more remote parts of the district. After some years those zealous priests were sent to do missionary work more consonate with their abilities, and the pro-Vicarage was given to the Irish Augustinian Fathers in 1882." (38)

The priests who took part in the experiment were Fr Tarquinio Tonganelli, the Apostolic pro-vicar, Fr Luigi Fabbri and Fr Cherubino De Romanis.

Fr Giuseppe Agostino Canali was known as the apostle of Brisbane. He arrived at the invitation of Bishop Quinn, as a young engineer and architect and taught in the old school of St. James. In 1878 he became a deacon and was ordained a priest the following year. He became an extraordinary priest, a man of prayer and full of humility. He dedicated all his ministry to the poorest classes and the sick. He had no timetable, with the result that when he had a job to do he did not return home even for meals. He never took a holiday and never went away from Brisbane. As an engineer and architect he helped with the construction of the cathedral of St. Stephen and designed the monumental gates at the convent of *All Hallows*. He was known and loved by everyone in Brisbane.

One day when returning home by tram, while he was reading his breviary, he lost his balance and fell onto the road. He picked himself up and returned home alone, but a little while later he was taken to Mater Hospital where he died on 15 August, 1915, the feast of the Assumption. He was 69 years old. He was buried in the cemetery at Nudgee. (39)

ITALIAN PRIESTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

In New South Wales there were various Italian priests as in Queensland, but these were not subject to the same tribulations. In chronological order we find, first of all, the Sicilian Fr Emmanuele Ruggero, a Benedictine of St. Paul Outside the Walls. He arrived with Polding on 6 February, 1848. In September of the same year he was assigned as assistant to Fr Roche in Campbelltown. On 20 February, 1851, he was transferred to Camden. Here he fell from his horse and, at first, it seemed a fatal fall, but he recovered and was sent to St. Mary's. After that he returned to Europe and it is thought he died in England. (40)

Onorio Garrone, another Benedictine from Subiaco, accompanied Polding to Australia in 1843 and remained only six months. An architect, he drew up plans for the completion of the monastery at Subiaco and gave lessons in liturgy at the seminary. (41)

Fr Peter Magagnotto, C.P., came to join the mission at Stradbroke Island in 1847 but he arrived too late. In 1848 he was sent to Windsor and on 20 May, 1850, he was appointed Dean of Sydney. His health, which had been delicate for some time, was worsened by a fall from a cart. He was opposed to the politics of the Archbishop and soon after left Australia. His reasons are not known. In California he was made Vicar General. (42)

Fr Ottavio Barsanti, D.D., O.S.F., arrived in Sydney on 25 February, 1865. He was secretary to the Archbishop and was sent on a

special mission to Rome. He was seconded to Melbourne from 1869 to 1872. Barsanti, too, opposed the politics of Polding, who suspended him while he was preaching a course of exercises to an order of nuns in Sydney. He appealed to Rome and to Vaughan in 1877. He was reinstated into the Church not long before he died on 23 May, 1884. He was buried at Lewisham, near the church. (43)

Vincenzo Coletti was born at Alatri on 13 August, 1843. He studied at the College of St. Edmund, Ware, Ireland, where he was ordained in September, 1867. After a brief stay in the diocese of Westminster, he came to Australia. The *Directory* shows that in 1869 he went to Shoalhaven and in 1871 to Darlinghurst.

In 1874 Archbishop Polding obtained for him the doctorate of Theology from His Eminence, the Cardinal of Propaganda Fide, "because of services he has given to me and the archdiocese and for the interest he has always taken in the establishment of the missions in Australia. He is a young man who is quite learned in theological and canonical matters and has completed his studies with honours, at the College of St. Edmund, I have often thought of how I could show him some recognition of my satisfaction and I have judged this to be the best way. In the confidence that you will wish to obtain for me the favour requested, I have the honour of being..." (44)

But even in this case some Irish Bishops accused Polding of having become a promoter of his favourites. In fact Bishop James Quinn remarked acidly, "I believe that Fr Coletti is, to all intents and purposes, the Archbishop of Sydney at the moment. Two Italian priests with great cunning and duplicity, manage the old Archbishop, to the great disgust of everyone."

When Archbishop Polding died, his successor, Roger Bede Vaughan, assigned Fr Coletti to the parish of Petersham. When Vaughan went to Europe in 1883, a voyage from which he never returned, he was accompanied by Fr Coletti and Dr William Gillet. On 18 August, 1883, Archbishop Vaughan died of a heart attack in England at the age of 49. From this time on, little is known of Fr Coletti, but it seems he returned to the diocese to which he had been attached at an earlier stage. (45)

THE SAINT OF SYDNEY - FR ANGELO AMBROSOLI

In 1852 the Marist Fathers from Savoia handed over the mission of Noumea in the Pacific to the Missionaries of the Foreign Missions of Milan. Five priests and two catechists were sent. But the Marists, too, found the evangelisation of the Aborigines almost impossible and the climate deadly. The group consisted of Frs Paolo Reina, superior of the mission and apostolic prefect of Melanesia and Micronesia (appointed by Propaganda Fide), Carlo Salerio, Timoleone Raimondi, Angelo Ambrosoli, Giovanni Mazzucconi and the two catechist brothers, Giuseppe Corti and Luigi Tacchini. (46)

After a brief period of rest, spent with the Marists in Sydney, they set out on 21 September and reached Woodlark on 8 October, 1852. On 19 October the seven missionaries divided; the local superior, Fr Carlo Salerio, Fr Timoleone Raimondi and the catechist Luigi Tacchini stayed at Woodlark, Fr Paolo Reina, Fr Giovanni Mazzuconi, Fr Angelo Ambrosoli and the catechist Giuseppe Corti went to Rook. (47)

Almost immediately Fr Mazzuconi was struck by malaria and soon after Giuseppe Corti met with the same fate. In 1855 the situation became desperate. The two had become so weak with fever it was feared for their lives. The superior decided to send them to Sydney to recuperate, but the ship's captain took only Fr Mazzuconi. Giuseppe Corti was too ill and would have died during the trip. Fr Mazzuconi reached Sydney on 19 April and commenced a period of convalescence and an apostolate among the Italians of the place. (48)

Meanwhile things came to a head at Rook. On 17 March the brother catechist, Corti, died and relations with the natives worsened. The lives of the two remaining missionaries were in serious danger, so they took advantage of a passing ship and went to Woodlark to join the others remaining on that Island. There, everyone decided to return to Sydney together. They set out on 17 July, but the ship arrived in Sydney on 23 August, five days after Mazzuconi had embarked on the return trip to Woodlark. The ship on which Fr Mazzuconi was travelling had hardly arrived at Woodlark, when it was attacked by natives, who killed first, the missionary and then the captain and all the crew. (49) With his beatification on 19 February, 1984, the Church recognised Fr Mazzuconi as a martyr for the faith. (50)

The four other priests managed to reach Sydney. Bishop Polding tried in every way to convince them to reopen the mission for Aborigines at Stradbroke Island. They, knowing the story of the Passionists, did not want to accept. Having regained their health Frs Reina and Salerio were assigned to other missions; Fr Timoleone Raimondi was consecrated Bishop of Hong Kong and Fr Angelo Ambrosoli remained in Sydney, as a chaplain to the Benedictine nuns of Subiaco and to St. Vincent's Hospital.

His simple and almost perfect life in that monastic retreat was briefly described by an eye witness in the following way, "His name was Angelo and he was truly an angel. He gave the impression of a soul who was living in God and for God. Only a saint and a great saint could live the life he led in Subiaco. He celebrated Mass every morning. After that he wasn't seen or heard any more. In fact he was nothing and asked for nothing. He didn't see anyone and didn't speak to anyone. He led this sort of life for years. I never knew anyone so humble. He had a pure and innocent soul. Many edifying episodes are related, which illustrate his tender love for the reparation of souls to his Saviour in the Eucharist and his intercessions for the souls in Purgatory, which became the most burning desire of his heart."

After 17 years spent for the community of the Benedictine nuns, the scene of his zeal and his work was changed from Subiaco to that of

the nuns at St. Vincent's hospital in Sydney, where for another 17 years he gave continuous testimony of his zeal.

He used to rise every morning at 4.30am to pray, to meditate and for the recitation of his divine office. At 6.00am he gave communion to the nuns and to the sick at the hospital. At 7.00am he celebrated Holy Mass in the chapel at the hospital and then at 8.00am in the nuns' chapel at the convent. At 9.30am he would walk to Woollahra to hear the confessions of the nuns and of the faithful, to impart the Eucharistic blessing and to distribute communion to the sick. All this without having taken a bite to eat. Towards midday he would return to the hospital and usually he would find straight away some other work to do or visits to make.

At 4.00pm he would give the Eucharistic benediction in the central house of the Sisters of Charity and then in the hospital. Then he would go to the railway station to take the train for Ashfield, where again he would hear the nuns' confessions, recite the rosary with them, preach and give the Eucharistic benediction. He would return home by train as far as Redfern and then walk for one or two miles to his home. Many of the episodes of his life were made known only after his death, as for example, he never took a "carriage or even a cab". He always travelled second-class in a train. He spent all he had in adorning the altar, in buying sacred vases and tabernacles. He really consumed himself promoting the honour and glory of God. (51)

THE SECOND BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF ARMIDALE

Another great missionary figure and Bishop was that of Bishop Eleazaro Torreggiani. He was born at Port Recanati and became a member of the Order of St. Francis. He completed his studies at the Cappucin monastery at Camerino, and then in Ancona where he was ordained a priest on 23 May, 1853.

He longed to do missionary work and was sent to England. In June, 1856, after a brief stay at Peckham, London, he was assigned to Pantasaph to help with the founding of a new Cappucin monastery. In 1880 he was elected superior of the mission at Pontypool, where he built a monastery and a big school. He was made the superior of Peckham where his success as a missionary and administrator, attracted the attention of Archbishop Vaughan who was looking for a Bishop who was not English or Irish, to replace Bishop O'Mahoney of Armidale.

He was consecrated a Bishop on 3 May and after a brief visit to Rome, Torreggiani embarked on the ship, *Avoca* on 8 November, 1879, with five other Cappucin priest confreres, headed for Sydney. The huge diocese of Armidale, with over 10,000 Catholics, was served by only nine priests. There were only two Catholic schools. It

took Bishop Torreggiani three years to complete the first pastoral visit, covering 40,000 miles. Bishop Torreggiani, always jovial and kind, with a thick beard and an imposing physique, was known in every town. He brought harmony everywhere and reorganised the diocese.

While he was preparing to celebrate Holy Mass for Christmas, 1884, a road-worker by the name of McCafferty, tried first to punch him and then shot him with a revolver. The Bishop, having fallen, picked himself up as if nothing had happened and continued the religious service.

Among the many works carried out in the diocese were the calling of the Sisters of Mother Mary McKillop to Tenterfield, also the Orsoline Sisters and in 1887 the Mercy Sisters. In 1885 he spent £60,000 on new buildings and in 1887 instituted the new diocese of Grafton.

Bishop Torreggiani died on 28 January, 1904, as a result of thrombosis and a heart attack.

Fr Patrick Joseph O'Connor, who lived with Bishop Torreggiani for 25 years and who had seen him in circumstances that would have tried the patience of a saint, declared that he had not seen him upset or angry even once. (52)

THE COLONY OF VICTORIA

Two Italian priests are especially remembered in the colony of Victoria, Fr Nicola Ceseretti and Fr Nicola Bassetto. Fr Nicola Ceseretti, from Perugia, was ordained a priest for the foreign Italian missions and arrived in Melbourne in 1858. For two years he was a zealous assistant at Bendigo to the difficult Fr Henry Bacchauss. Then he was transferred to Kilmore. Later on, having been recalled by his superiors, he went to London and from there to Ireland where he died at the age of 40, on 7 March, 1869. (53)

Fr Nicola Bassetto, instead, arrived in Victoria in 1869, after having worked for many years in India. He worked for a while in the Parish of Melbourne and was then sent to Port Fairy, where he remained for two years. Many fine episodes remain impressed on the minds of the good people where he served.

A daughter of J.F. Devlin, still a girl at the time, wrote of him, "I remember one day (in 1870) when Fr Nicola paid us a visit when returning to Port Fairy.

"At the moment of departure, my parents accompanied him outside the house. My mother had a baby in her arms and my father was carrying a chair, which was to be used by Fr Bassetto, who was small of stature, to climb astride his horse. Having mounted his horse, with the help of the chair, my father tucked his cloak around his knees so that he might not catch cold. And so Fr Bassetto, the priest with the long, bushy beard, set out for Port Fairy, 18 miles distant." (54)

In 1872 he was sent to Castlemaine to help Fr Patrick Moore who was ill. The correspondent of the *Melbourne Advocate* spoke in glowing terms of his stay in the gold-bearing district, where Italians and Ticinesi were numerous. Among other things, he said that Fr Bassetto taught the catechism regularly every Saturday in the chapel at Eganstown, according to a well established program, and every Friday in Hepburn. Every other day he taught in schools. "The priest was carrying out extremely good works in those districts." But these comments were in complete contrast to a letter that a certain Fr Barry wrote to the Vicar General, in which he wrote bitter criticisms of Fr Bassetto.

In 1874 Fr Bassetto was assigned to Heathcote. In 1875 he moved to Corop, where Fr Backhaus had had the church built at his own expense. (55) He immediately commenced regular visits to the families of the extremely vast area. In 1876 he changed residence and went to live in Echuca, from where he continued his ministry that took him to Kyabram, Mt. Scobie, Gingarre, Rushworth, Murchison, Toolambra, Nagambie, etc.

In 1878 he was recalled to his home-land. On leaving those places that had become so dear to him, he expressed his deep regret in leaving all those for whom he had worked, and exhorted them to remain loyal to their faith always. He realised also that all his hard work had sapped his strength.

And so another zealous missionary left the land of strife in the present, but of hope for the future. (56)

NOTES

- 1 - P. O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church & Community in Australia*, Brisbane, 1977, p. 135.
- 2 - *Passionist*, Fonti; O. Thorpe, *First Catholic Mission to the Australian Aborigines*, Sydney, 1950 - Card. P.F. Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*, Sydney 1896 - Antonio Giordano, *Grandi figure di italiani in Australia*, *Corriere d'Australia*, 1958.
- 3 - *Register*, 8-4-1864.
- 4 - *Advertiser*, 8-4-1864.
- 5 - *Corriere d'Australia*, 11-9-1958.
- 6 - Frank Flynn & Keith Willey, *Northern Gateway*.
- 7 - *Ibid*.
- 8 - *Ibid*.
- 9 - Rica Erickson, *Old Toodyay & Newcastle*, The Toodyay Shire Council 1974 - Donald S. Garden, *Northam: an Avon Valley History*, Melbourne, 1979, pp. 80-81.
- 10 - Notes by Fr Linane, Editor of *Footprints*.
- 11 - Y.M. McLay, James Quinn: *First Catholic Bishop of Brisbane*, Armadale, Vic., 1979, p. 45.

- 12 - *ibid.*, p. 88.
- 13 - *ibid.*, p. 54. - (Cfr. O'Farrell *op. cit.*, pp. 133-34.)
- 14 - *ibid.*, p. 67.
- 15 - P. O'Farrell, *op. cit.*
- 16 - Y.M. McLay, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
- 17 - *ibid.*, p. 53.
- 18 - *ibid.*, p. 58.
- 19 - Serle, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.
- 20 - Y.M. McLay, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
- 21 - P. O'Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 221.
- 22 - *ibid.*, p. 224.
- 23 - Serle, *op. cit.*
- 24 - Y.M. McLay, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
- 25 - From Abel to Zundolovich, *op. cit.*
- 26 - Typescript: When God Calls, Brisbane, 1925.
- 27 - J. Harslett & M. Royle, They came to a Plateau (The Stanthorpe Saga), Stanthorpe, 1973, pp. 24, 64, 98, 99, 115.
- 28 - *ibid.*, p. 91.
- 29 - Fr. Bill O'Shea, The First Parish Priest of Logan (typescript). (Cfr. St. Patrick's Church Beenleigh, Souvenir Booklet, 1980).
- 30 - Giovanni Battista Balangero, Australia & Ceylon, Studi e ricordi di tredici anni di missione, Torino, 1924, pp. 3, 181, 182, 183.
- 31 - Y.M. McLay, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
- 32 - *ibid.*, p. 89 (Cfr. Note di Fr. Linane, Editor of Footprints).
- 33 - *ibid.*, p. 92.
- 34 - *ibid.*, pp. 92-93. (Cfr. Note di Fr. Linane, Editor of Footprints).
- 35 - P. O'Farrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-6. (Cfr. Note di Fr. Linane, Editor of Footprints).
- 36 - Y.M. McLay, *op. cit.*, p. 92, note 166.
- 37 - Information by Fr. Linane, Editor of Footprints.
- 38 - P.F. Moran, History of the Catholic Church in Australia, Sydney, 1898.
- 39 - From Abel to Zundolovich, Vol. 2, pp. 17-19.
- 40 - Information by Fr. Linane.
- 41 - St. Mary's Archives Records, Sydney.
- 42 - *Ibid.*
- 43 - *Ibid.*
- 44 - From Abel to Zundolovich, Vol. 2.
- 45 - *Ibid.*
- 46 - Piero Gheddo, Missione in Oceania: Giovanni Mazzucconi Martire a Woodlark, Ed. Paoline, 1984, p. 44.
- 47 - *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- 48 - *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- 49 - *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- 50 - *Ibid.*, p. 89.
- 51 - P.F. Moran, *op. cit.*
- 52 - Serle, *op. cit.*
- 53 - From Abel to Zundolovich.
- 54 - *Ibid.*
- 55 - Michael A. Endricott, O.S.A., Kyabram Catholic Heritage, Augustinian Historical Commission, Australia, 1978, pp. 7, 8, 9. (Cfr. The Centenary of St. Mary's Parish, Echuca: 1875-1975).
- 56 - *Ibid.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, K.N.M., *Colonies to Commonwealth 1850-1900*, Melbourne, 1971.
- Allen, W.J., *Report on Inspection of farms held by Returned Soldiers (1924)*, Leeton, N.S.W.
- Australian Men of Mark, Vol. I & II, Sydney, 1889.
- Australia's Heritage: *The Making of a Nation*, John Sands Pty. Ltd., Artarmon, 1970.
- Baggio, B., *Giudizi e pregiudizi sugli emigrati Italiani (Il Veltro: Rivista della Civiltà Italiana, 1973)*.
- Baker, S.J., *The Ampol Book of Australiana*, Currawong Pub. and Co., Sydney, 1963.
- Balangero, G.B., *Australia e Ceylon - Studi e ricordi di 13 anni di missione - G.B. Paravia & Co. Torino, 1885*.
- Battye, J.S., *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia*, 2 Vols. Adelaide, 1912.
- Banfield, L.L., *Green Pastures & Gold, History of Ararat*, Mullaga.
- Barbadoro, B., *Ventisetti Secoli di Storia d'Italia*, Firenze, 1967.
- Barnard, M., *A History of Australia*, Angus & Robertson, Melbourne, 1976.
- Barnard, M., *Macquaries World*, Melb. Univ. Press., Melbourne, 1961.
- Barton, G.B., *History of N.S.W. from Records - 1889*.
- Bateson, C., *Convict Ships 1787-1868*, Glasgow, 1959.
- Bethell, L.S., *The Valley of the Derwent*.
- Bernacchi, L.C., *To the South Polar Regions*, London, 1901.
- Bertei, J.M., *Innisfail (Thesis 1959)*.
- Bigge's Appendix Return of Birth, (Michell Library).
- Bignell, M., *First the Spring, A History of the Shire of Kojonup*, Un. of W.A. Press, Perth, 1971.
- Bladen, *Historical Records of N.S.W.*
- Blair, S.J., *Blair's Guide Victoria*, National Mutual, Melbourne, 1983.
- Bolton, G.C.A., *A Thousand Miles Away*, ANU, Brisbane, 1963.
- Bonutto, O., *The Migrants's Story*, Brisbane, 1963.
- Borrie, W.D., *Italians & Germans in Australia*, ANU, Melbourne, 1954.
- Bosi, P., *Sweat, Blood & Guts*, Sydney, 1970.
- Bosi, P., *Australia: ieri, Oggi, Domani - Compendio Enciclopedico Mensile - Vol. 1, No. Novembre, 1983*.
- Bossence, W.H., *Tatura and the Shire of Rodney*.
- Branchetti, O., *Gli aspetti geografici dell'emigrazione Italiana in Australia (Tesi: Università degli Studi di Parma, Anno Acc. d. 1974-75)*.
- Brasdale, J.I., *Wine & Wine Making*, in Agric. Vol. 10, 1976.
- Briani, V., *La Stampa Italiana all'Estero, dalla Origini ai nostri Giorni*, Istit. Poligrafico dello Stato, Roma, 1977.
- Brodsky, I., *Sydney Looks Back*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney.
- Bromley, J., *The Italians of Port Pirie*, Thesis - ANU, 1955.
- Broome, R., *The Victorians - Arriving - An Anniversary History - Victoria 1500*, Melbourne, 1984.
- Byfield, C.C., *Let's look at the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area*, Marcol Pub. Hughes, ACT, 1983.
- Cabrini, A., *Emigrazione & emigranti*, N. Zanighelli, Bologna, 1911.
- Cappelli, L., *Le Memorie di Garibaldi nella redazione definitive del 1872*, Bologna.

- Capra, G., *Gli Emigranti Italiani nell'Australia*, Italica Gens, A.III No. 6-9, 1912.
- Capra, G., *L'Australia nei suoi rapporti con l'Italia*, Co-operativa Tipografia Manuzio, Roma, 1910.
- Capra, G., *Il Queensland o la terra della Regina*, Roma, 1912.
- Capra, G., *La Nuova Galles del Sud (Australia)* Tip. Salesiana, Milano, 1912.
- Capra, G., *L'Italiano in Australia & Nuova Zelanda - Guida Pratica* - Ditta F. Viassone, Ivrea, 1914.
- Carboni, R., *The Eureka Stockade*, Melbourne Un. Press, 1975.
- Carpi, L., *Dell'Emigrazione Italiana all'Esteri...*, Firenze, 1871.
- Cerruti, G.E., *Farmers Journal & Gardens Chronicle*, Vol. 1861.
- Cheda, G., *L'Emigrazione Ticinese in Australia*, Tesi di Laurea, A. Dadò Editore, Locarno-Torino, 1976.
- Chessbough, S., *A Spread of Green: Griffith - Kalora* Pub. Sydney, 1932.
- Ciiento, R.W., & Lack C., *Triumph in the Tropics*, Brisbane, 1959.
- Cipolla, A., *Il mio viaggio in Oceania*, Tip. G. Angeli, Milano, 1928.
- Clark, M., *A short history of Australia*, New American Library, N.Y. 1963.
- Clifford, F.C., *New Italy: A brief sketch of a new and thriving colony*, Govern. Printer, Sydney, 1889.
- Coghlan, T.A., *Labour and Industry in Australia*, Vol. 2.
- Coghlan, T.A., *Report of European Emigration to Australia - in intelligence Department of N.S.W. - Bulletin No. 15 - Government Printing, Sydney, 1907.*
- Collinson, J.W., *More About Cairns*, Brisbane, 1942.
- Collinson, J.W., *Early Days of Cairns*, Brisbane, 1939.
- Colwell, J., *History of Australia, Past and Present*, in six volumes, Sydney, 1925.
- Commonwealth of Australia, *Gazette: National Security (Land Transfer) Regulations (1940-1946)*.
- Commonwealth of Australia, *Gazette: Alien Control Regulations (1940-1946)*.
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates - *Debates* - Vol. 4.
- Commissariato dell'Emigrazione: *Emigrazione e Colonie, Raccolta di Rapporti dei R.R. Agenti Diplomatici e Consolari*. Vol. 2: Asia - Africa - Oceania. Tip. G. Bertero, Roma, 1903.
- Commissariato Generale dell'Emigrazione: *L'Emigrazione Italiana dal 1910 al 1923*, Ed. del C.G. Em. Roma, 1926, *L'Emigrazione Italiana dal 1924 al 1925* - Roma, 1926.
- Coppel W.G., *Australia in Figures*, Pelican Books, 1974.
- Corte, P., *Il Continente Nuovissimo ossia l'Australia Britannica* Tip. R. Frassati - Torino, 1898.
- Corte, P., *Report: Gli Italiani in Australia e Nuova Zelanda*, Roma, 1906.
- Cresciani, G., *The Italian Community at the Outbreak of the War*, Sydney, 1980.
- Cresciani, G., *Australia, Italy and Italians, 1845-1945 in Studi Emigrazione*, A.XX Marzo, 1983.
- Cresciani, G., *Italian Anti-Fascism in Australia 1922-1945*, in *Affari Sociali Internazionali*, Franco Angeli Editore, 1978 - No. Unico pp. 142-164.

- Cusak, F., *Bendigo, A History*, 1873.
- Dal Pin, E., *La strana Colonia del Marchese de Rays ovvero dell'Emigrazione male assistita*, Typescript.
- Dawson, R.L., *Bowenfels and Kirkcomel in the sixties*, in *Royal Historical Society Journal*, 1925.
- Daylesford Almanac, 1889.
- D'Albertis, L.M., *Alla Nuova Guinea: ciò che ho veduto e ciò che ho fatto*. Tip. Fratelli Bocca & Co. Torino, 1880.
- De Amezaga, C., *Viaggio di Circumnavigazione della Regia Corvetta Caracciolo 1881-82-83-84*, (La nostra Colonia Vol. 4), Roma, 1886.
- Delaney and Daws, *They Passed This Way*, Sydney.
- Department of Immigration, *Eureka: Saga of Australian History*. Speech by Hon. A.J. Grassby at Ballarat, 3 December, 1973.
- De Prada, L., *My Walhalla - I.T. Maddern, Morwell*, 1978.
- Descalzo, G., *La terra dei fossili viventi*, Milano, 1938.
- Doherty, W.J., *Innisfail*, Townsville, 1923.
- Downie, A.R., *Italians who wrote Australian History in Critica Jan-Feb.* 1962.
- Durak, M., *To be Helrs Forever*, Gorgi Ed. London, 1979. Easterby, H.T., *History of the Queensland Sugar Industry*, Brisbane, 1931.
- Ebsworth, *Pioneer Catholic Victoria*, P. Press, Melbourne, 1973.
- Edizione Nazionale degli Scritti di Giuseppe Garibaldi, *Le Memorie di Garibaldi - L. Cappelli Editore - Bologna*, 1872.
- Endrocott, M.A. (O.S.A.), *Kyabram Catholic Heritage - Augustinian Historical Commission, Australia*, 1978.
- Erickson, R., *Old Toodyay & Newcastle*, The Toodyay Shire Council, 1974.
- Ferguson, J.A., *Bibliography of Australia*, Vol. IV 1846-1850, Sydney, 1855.
- Fiaschi, T., *A Viso Aperto*, John Sands - Sydney, 1890.
- Fillipuzzi, A., *Il dibattito sull'emigrazione*, Firenze, 1976.
- Flett, J., *The History of Gold Discovery in Victoria*, Melbourne, 1870.
- Flynn, F., *Northern Gateway*, 1963.
- Forrester, R.F., *The Italian Immigration of our Times*, Cambridge, Mass. 1919.
- Gagliardi, F., *L'Australia e i suoi rapporti con l'Italia*, Tip. Commerciale, Firenze, 1897.
- Gagliardi, F., *L'Australia d'oggi*, Stab. Tip. Succ. FF Nistri-Fornitori della Real Casa-Pisa, 1914.
- Gagliardi, F., *L'Australia: Lettere alla Gazzetta d'Italia*, Firenze, 1881.
- Galletti, B., *Il Giro del Mondo colla Ristori - Note di Viaggio - Roma*, 1876.
- Gamba, C., *The Italian Immigration to Western Australia*, Uni. of Western Australia.
- Gamba, C., *The Italian Fishermen of Fremantle*, Uni. of Western Australia, 1952.
- Garran, A., *Australia: The First One Hundred Years*, Summit books, 1886.
- Gava, D.M., *The History of Italian migrants in Osborne, Wanneroo*.
- Gentili, Stransky & Iraci, *Italian migration to Western Australia, 1824-1946*.
- George, P., *Le Migrazioni Internazionali*, Ed. Riuniti, Roma, 1976.
- Gheddo, P., *Missione in Oceania: Giovanni Mazzucconi Martire a Woodlark*. Ediz. Paoline, 1984.
- Giglioli, E.J., *Viaggio intorno al Mondo della Pirocovetta Magenta*, Milano, 1875.

- Giordano, A., *Marco Polo and After*, Adelaide, 1974.
- Grags, C., *Gold: The story of Mt. Morgan*, Angus & Robertson, 1982.
- Grassby, A., *The Italian Connection - (Paper)*.
- Gray, J.R., *History of Wedderburn Goldfields*, Ed. by F. Cusak, Carlton, 1981.
- Greble, N.E., *A Bold Yeomanry: Kulin, 1848-1970*, Perth, 1979.
- Griffiths, N.G., *Some Houses & People of N.S.W.*, Ure Smith Pub., Sydney.
- Griffiths, N.G., *The Old Buildings of Hunter's Hill*, Pub. by the Hunter's Hill Trust, 1969.
- Gulled, H., *Unguarded Australia*, Melbourne, 1919.
- Gunson, N., *The Good Country*, Grambourne Shire, 1968.
- Joy, W. & Piper, T., *The Bushrangers*, Seal Books - Rigby Ltd., 1975.
- Hammond, J., *Bridging the Gap: The Goulburn Valley Story*.
- Harslett, J., & Royal, M., *They came to a Plateau: The Stanthorpe Saga*, Stanthorpe, 1973.
- Heaton, J.H., *Australian Dictionary of Dates & Men of the Time - History of Australasia from 1542 to May 1879*, Melbourne, 1879.
- Hempel, J.A., *Italians in Queensland - Thesis*, 1959.
- Hempel, J., *Italians in Queensland: Aspects of Assimilation*, Quadrant, Spring, 1959, No. 12.
- Horne, D., *The Australian People*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1973.
- Horne, D., *The Lucky Country*, Penguin Books, 1974.
- Holthouse, H., *Cannibal Cargoes*, Melbourne, 1970.
- James, J.S., *Vagabond Country*, Melbourne, 1881.
- Jones, D., *Cardwell Shire Story*, Brisbane, 1961.
- Jones, D., *Hurricane, Lamps & Blue Umbrellas*, Bolton Printers, Cairns, 1975.
- tration. Re-printed from the *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, Vol. X, N.1, April, 1964.
- King, J., *Waltzing Materialism*, Harper & Row, Melbourne, 1978.
- King, N., *Western Australia*, Goldfields Rigby, Maryborough, 1980.
- Lamb, P.N., *New Settlers Come to Australia*, F.W. Cheshire, Melbourne, 1968.
- Lane, Fr. L., *The History of the Parish Beechworth, 1854-1978*, Armadale, Vic. 1978.
- Langley, E., *The Pea Pickers*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1976.
- Laracy, H., *Italiani nel Pacifico del Sud (Quaderni dell'Istituto Italiano di Cultura) N.4*, Melbourne, 1971.
- Laracy, H., *The Italians in New Zealand in Il Veltro: S.D.A. No. 2-3, Anno XVII, Aprile-Giugno*, Roma, 1973.
- Larkins, J., *Dictionary of Australian History*, Rigby Publishers Ltd., Melbourne, 1980.
- Learmonth, A. & N., *Encyclopaedia of Australia*, Hicks, Smith & Sons, Melbourne, 1873.
- Lewis, M., *The Essential Maldon*, Greenhouse, Richmond, Vic. 1983.
- Lowenstein & Loh, M., *The Immigrants*, Penguin Books, Australia Ltd. 1977.
- Lowenstein, W., *Weevils in the Flour*, Hyland House, Melbourne, 1978.
- Luciano, G., *Italians as they are*, Sydney, 1959.
- Lyng, J., *Non-Britishers in Australia*, Melbourne, 1927.

- MacDonald, A. *Sociological Study of Emigration*, (M.A. Thesis) Uni. of Sydney, 1954.
- Madgwick, R.B., *Immigration into Eastern Australia 1788-1851*, Longmans, Green & Co. London.
- Maineri, B., *La nostra emigrazione in Australia L'Italia e il Mondo - No. 6, Giugno 1928, Milano.*
- Mambrini, F., *Report of a two months visit to the Italian Settlement on the Herbert River, 1925.* (Mitchell Library).
- Marsh, J.M. and Wise, G.T., *Italian Immigrants Inquiry Board, Sydney, 1881.*
- McClelland, J., *Convict and Pioneer History, Silverdale, N.S.W., 1978.*
- McCulloch, A., *Encyclopaedia of Australian Art, Hutchinson of London, 1968.*
- McKenzie, B. & F., *Singers of Australia, Lansdown Press, Melbourne 1967.*
- Melchiorre, C., *Il Divinismo ossia la civile convivenza per tutti. Opuscolo progetto per la fondazione di una colonia Italiana agraria industriale in Australia. Melbourne, 1878.*
- Menzies, L.B., *Gold Seekers Odyssey.*
- Messina, N., *L'emigrazione Italiana in Australia 1876-1879, in Studi Emigrazione, 1976.*
- Michieli, A.A., *La spedizione del M. se de Rays, Ed. della Rassegna Italiana, Roma, 1935.*
- Milone, F., *L'Australia e l'Emigrazione Italiana, Soc. An. Tip.: Leonardo Da Vinci, Città de Castello, 1933.*
- Miserocchi, *Australia: Continente Minorenne, Garzanti Editore, Milano, 1940.*
- Moresly, L., *Australia Makes Music, Langmans & Co., Melbourne.*
- Monogham, J., *Australia and the Gold Rush, Uni. of California Press, 1966.*
- Moran (Cardinal) P.F., *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia, Sydney, 1896.*
- Moresly, L., *Australia Makes Music, Langmans & Co., Melbourne.*
- Murray, R., *The Confident Years: Australia in the Twenties, Melbourne, 1978.*
- Mann, U., *Italiani in Gran Bretagna, Centro Studi Emigrazione, Roma, 1975.*
- Newman, W.H., *Melbourne: The Biography of a City.*
- Niau, J.H., *The Phantom Paradise: The Story of the Expedition of the Marquis de Rays, Sydney, 1936.*
- Northcliffe, V., *The Empty Continent: Australia and Its Needs, Reprinted from the Times, 1921.*
- O'Farrell, P., *The Catholic Church & Community in Australia - A History, Thomas Nelson Australia Ltd., Melbourne, 1977.*
- Oldham, J., *Western Heritage, Peterson Brokensha, Perth, 1961.*
- Orchard, W.A., *Music in Australia, Georgian House, Melbourne.*
- O'Shea, B., *The First Parish Priest of Logan, St. Patrick's Church, Beenleigh, Souvenir Booklet, 1980.*
- Packer, D.R.G., *Italian Immigration into Australia (M.A. Thesis) Uni. of Melbourne, 1847.*
- Pascale, F., *Tra gli Italiani in Australia, Casa Editrice Accademia, Roma, 1930.*
- Peach, B., *Peach's Australia, Clayton, Vic., 1976.*

- Pesci, G., *Lineamenti moderni dell'Emigrazione Italiana*, Ed. Ensis, Roma, 1956.
- Pich, G., *Italian Land Settlement in the Murrumbidgee Areas 1915-1972*. Thesis, ANU, 1975.
- Pierre, G., *Le migrazioni internazionali*, Ed. Riuniti, Roma, 1976.
- Pike, D., *Australia: The Quiet Continent*, Cambridge Uni. Press, London, 1970.
- Pike, G., *Pioneers Country*, Cosmos Press, Hong Kong, 1977.
- Pike, G., *In the Paths of the Pioneers*, Cairns, 1951.
- Pike, G., *Queensland Frontier*, Pinevale Pub., Mareeba N. Qld., 1970.
- Pike, G., *Conquest of the Ranges*, Pinevale Pub., Mareeba, N. Qld., 1984.
- Pike, N.O.P., *Some Reflections on Italian Immigration into Australia, in the Australian Quarterly for December*, 1946.
- Pike, N.O.P., *Foreign Immigration to the Gold Fields*, Australia University of Sydney, 1946.
- Porter, H., *Bairnsdale: Portrait of an Australian Country Town*, Sydney, 1957.
- Portus, G.V., *Australia Since 1606*, Oxford Uni. Press, Melbourne, 1932.
- Price, C., *Italian Population at Griffiths* (Unpublished Confidential Report), ANU, 1955.
- Price, C., *Southern Europeans in Australia*, ANU, 1979.
- Ragguagli, *Delle cose dell'Australia*, 1850.
- Randazzo, N., *Breve Storia degli Italiani in Australia (Ricordo del Santuario di S. Antonio e dei Fondatori)*, Melbourne, 1969.
- Randazzo, N., *Italiani in Australia in Il Globo - Supplemento 26-9-1967*.
- Rivett, R., *The Modern World: Australia* Oxford Uni. Press, 1968.
- Royal Australian Historical Society Journal, Vol. 46, Pt. 5, *Marists*.
- Royal Australian Historical Society Journal, Vol. 31, Pt. 2, *Italians at Hunter's Hill*.
- Salvado Dom Rosendo, *The Salvado Memoirs. (Historical memoirs of Australia and particularly of the Benedictine Mission of New Norcia and of the habits and customs of the Australia Natives). (Memorie storiche dell'Australia particolarmente della Missione Benedettina di Nuova Norcia e degli usi e costumi degli Australiani)* Napoli, 1852. Tradotto e pubblicato in inglese da E.J. Stormon, S.J., University of W.A., Press, Perth, 1977.
- Sceusa, F., *Carte in Tavola*, Sydney, 1890.
- Secolari, (Fr. Luciano), *A short history of St. Ambrose's Parish*, Brunswick, September, 1976.
- Selby, I., *The Memorial History of Melbourne*, 1924.
- Serie, G., *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, eight volumes, Melbourne Uni. Press.
- Serie, G., *Introduction in "The Eureka Stockade"*, Melbourne Uni. Press, 1969, R. Carbone.
- Serie, G., *The Scientific Australian - A Popular Quarterly Journal devoted to the Arts and Industries*, 20-12-1896.
- Serie, G., *The Rush to be Rich - A History of the Colony of Victoria 1883-1889*, Melbourne, 1971.
- Serie, G., *The Golden Age - A History of the Colony of Victoria 1851-1861*, Melbourne.

- Shaw, A.C.L. & Nicholson, A.O., *Growth and Development in Australia*, Angus & Robertson, 1970.
- Smith, B., *Australian Painting 1788-1970*, Oxford Uni. Press, 1974.
- Smith, D.M., *Storia d'Italia*, Laterza, 1977.
- Smith, J., *Cyclopaedia of Victoria*, Vol. 1-3, Melbourne, 1903.
- Squitti, N., *Report: (Melbourne 14-11-1891)*, in *L'Immigrazione e Colonie*, Tip. di G. Berteo, Roma, 1893.
- Stranage, C.T., *The People of Perth*, Perth City Council, 1979.
- Strazzari, M., *A Preliminary Sketch of Italian Immigration to the Hunter Region*, 1980.
- Swan, R.A., *Australia in the Antarctic*, Tasmania.
- Swancott, C., *DeeWhy to Barrenjoey and Pittwater*, Sydney.
- Sydney International Exhibition 1879-1880.
- Thompson, A.G., *Turmoil, Tragedy to Triumph: The Story of New Italy*, Sydney, 1980.
- Thorpe, O., *First Catholic Mission to the Australian Aborigines*, Sydney, 1950.
- Turner, H.G., *The First Decade of the Australian Commonwealth*, 1911.
- Uren, M., *Glint of Gold*, R. & M., Melbourne, 1948.
- Volpato, F., *I pionieri di New Italy nel Nuovissimo Continente*, Pub. da La Fiamma, 1980.
- Walker, M., *Pioneer Crafts of Early Australia*, MacMillan Co. of Australia, 1978.
- White, O., *Australia for Everyone*, Uren, Melbourne, 1974.
- Williams, A.J., *Maldon and the Tarrawong Diggings*, Ballarat, 1953.
- Wilson, H.H., *Gateways to Gold*, Perth.
- Wilson, H.H., *The Golden Miles*, Melbourne, 1977.
- Wiltgen, R.M., *The Founding of the R.C. Church in Oceania 1823-1850*, ANU Press, 1979.
- Withers, W.B., *The History of Ballarat - Ballarat*, F.W. Niven, 1887.
- Wyatt, R.T., *The History of Goulburn*, Lanowne Press, Sydney, 1972.
- Younger, R.M., *Australia and the Australians*, 1970.
- Zubrycki, J., *Settlers of the Latrobe Valley*, ANU Canberra, 1964.
- Zunini, L.Z., *L'Australia attuale: usi, costumi, agricoltura, industria, commercio*, Soc. Tipografica Editrice Nazionale, Torino, 1910.
- Zunini, L., *Report: La Colonia Italiana nell'Australia Occidentale*, in *Emigrazione e Colonie*, Roma, 1905.

Official Documents

- Report of J. Melbourne Marsh and George F. Wise, *Italian Immigrants Inquiry Board*, Sydney, 1881.
- Queensland Legislative Assembly, *Votes and Proceedings*, 1860-1901.
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers 1901-1902, Vol. 2, *Foreign Contract Labour in Western Australia*, p. 871.
- Western Australia Votes & Proceedings 1904, Vol. 2, paper 07, *The Immigration of Non-British Labour in Western Australia*.
- Queensland Parliamentary Papers 1925, Vol. 3, paper A28, *The Social & Economic Effect of Increase Number of Aliens in North Queensland (The Ferry Report)*.

Prime Ministers Department, *Correspondence File, Enemy Aliens Internment - Policy 1939-1941* - C.A.O. Canberra, 21 May 1941.
 A. Sardo - serie 11c - busta 47, *Graham al ministero degli Esteri, 17 Febbraio, 1862*.
 M.A.E., - ser IV - busta 270, *Affari Esteri 1861-1887*.

Newspapers - Magazines - Catalogues - Church Registers

The Age 31-1-1983, "Where Past and Present Meet" by N. Dexter.
 The Age 15-4-1982, Margaret Jones, Intervista con Joseph Andreallo.
 The Age 17-3-1983, "Gold Dig in the Nature Strip."
 The Australian Workman 24-9-1890.
 The Australian, Vignerons and Fruit Growers Journal 2-6-1880.
 Corriere d'Australia 11-9-1958.
 Daily Mirror 17-4-1878.
 Irrigator & Area News (varie date 1940, 1942).
 Irrigator 24-6-1927.
 La Fiamma - Supplemento 26-9-1967.
 North Queensland Register 9-8 and 4-10-1952 (A.F. Waddell: Reminiscences).
 Johnstone River Advocate (from 1930, 31 and 32).
 Royal Australian Historical Society Journal Vol. 11, Pt. 5; Vol. 31, Pt. 2; Vol. 44, Pt. 3; Vol. 46, Pt. 5; Bol. 10, 1924.
 Perth Gazette 13-3-1827.
 Radici (Italo-Australian Magazine) Winter 1983, No. 3.
 The Silk Grower, August 1896.
 The Shepparton News 10-6-1983.
 Sydney Morning Herald 20-3-1881.
 Smith Weekly 10-11-1928.
 Smith Weekly 21-2-1926.
 Sands and Kenny, Sydney Directory, 1860, 1880.
 Sands and Kenny, Melbourne Dictionary, 1860.
 St. Mary's Cathedral Archives Records, Sydney.
 Schedario Della Mitchell Library (Sydney).
 State Library of Victoria, Righetti Family Papers, 1856-1955.
 Baptisms Records (St. Joseph's Church - Beechworth, Vic.) (St. Brigid's Church, North Fitzroy, Vic.) (St. Ignatius' Church, Richmond, Vic.) (Hunter's Catholic Church, N.S.W.).
 History of Hepburn (typescript).
 Waihalla: Pioneers and Early Residents; approximately early 1860-1920 - Recorded by Waihalla improv. League.
 Yandoit - Spa Centre: Development Association (Typescript).

Personal Interviews and Information

Information from F. Cavicchiolo, SE Mons. F.P. De Campo, De Piazza, M. Wickham, Di Salvo, Fr. Lihane, Mrs. Moroney, Sr. M. Pianta, A. Pruscino, Parise, R. Scanu.

INDEX

- Acton, Harold, 46
 Adams, John, 175
 Allen, W.J., 146
 Alleywood, Can., 334
 Alsino, Bovaventura, 231
 Amazzoli, Angelo, 99
 Ambrosoli, Ambrogio, 99
 Ambrosoli, F. Angelo, 376-77
 Ambrosoli, Giovanni, 99
 Amedi, Giuseppe, 174
 Amoroso, G., 108
 Andina, 131-32, 134
 Andreaffo, Joseph, 169
 Angeli, Julian, 117
 Anivitti, Giulio, 333-34
 Anselmi, 195
 Anselmo, Giuseppe, 100
 Antagnini, Giurgio, 168
 Antognoli, G., 248
 Antonelli, Prof. Giovanni, 346
 Antonia, Raffaele, 281
 Antonello, 100
 Antonini, F. Michele, 369-70
 Antonio, Augusto, 38
 Antonio, Francesco, 49
 Antonio, Joseph, 35
 Antoniolli, Antonio, 122
 Antoniolli, Giovanna, 113
 Antoniolli, Luigi, 122
 Antoniolli, Maria, 117
 Arduino, 263
 Arianasco, Agostino, 232, 234
 Arianasco, Stefano, 173-74
 Arrighetti, M., 108
 Arrigoni, G., 133
 Ascione, Giuseppe, 231
 Asselin (Assolini) Vice Console, 59, 279
 Assolini, see Asselin
 Azzoli, 331
 Azzolini, G.C., 46
 Azzopardi, 99
 Babondi, 284
 Baccanni, Prof., 342
 Bacchhaus, F. Henry, 379-80
 Bacchus, 164
 Badham, Charles, 334
 Baffari, Battista, 117
 Bagetti, 190
 Bailey, Arthur, 243, 248
 Balboni, Tullio, 340
 Baldacci, 131
 Baldi, 195
 Baldini, Giuseppe, 49
 Balanero, F. Giovanni Battista, 279, 372-73
 Ball, Richard, 169
 Balsamo, Agostino, 231
 Balsani, 190, 285
 Baltieri, Cirillo, 146
 Banderali, Luigi, 61, 350
 Banks, Sir Joseph, 18, 27
 Baracchi, Pietro Paolo, 216, 217, 219, 346-47, 349
 Barberetto, Francesco, 117
 Barberi, Domenico, 356
 Barbetti, 268
 Barrati, Lucia, 327
 Barret, Father, 186
 Barry, Father, 380
 Barsanti, F. Ottavio, 375-76
 Barton, Sir Edmund, 27-28, 69-70, 75
 Basich, 331
 Basile, Carlo, 269
 Basile, Giuseppe, 196
 Bassetti, Giovanni Battista, 100
 Bassetto, F. Nicola, 379-80
 Bassi, Con, 284
 Bassi, Father, 358
 Battaglia, Roberto, 174
 Battista, 100
 Battistessa, Franco, 140
 Battistuzzi, Domenico, 122
 Battistuzzi, Giovanni, 122, 124
 Battistuzzi, Giuseppe, 117
 Bau, 195
 Bavagnoli, 331
 Bazza, Catenna, 117
 Bazzo, Antonio, 122, 135
 Bazzo, Teresa, 133
 Beccari, Edoardo, 24
 Begon, 190
 Belli, 267
 Bellini, 326
 Bellotti, 122
 Bellotti, (Neri) Girolamo, 336-37
 Bellotto, Pio, 117

- Belmonte, Alessandro, 22
 Beni (Berna), Pier Luigi, 35
 Benoli, Domenico, 285
 Bernacchi, Luigi Carlo, 348-48
 Bernasconi, Giovanni, 100
 Berni (Beni), Pier Luigi, 35
 Bertane, Giacomo, 188
 Bertelli, H., 248, 266
 Bertini, 173
 Bertino, Lidio, 174
 Bertola, Camillo, 62, 339
 Bertoli, Bertolo, 122
 Bertoli, Giuseppe, 195
 Bertolo, Angelo, 114
 Bertolo, Emilia, 117
 Bertolo, Emilio, 117
 Bertolo, Ludovico, 118
 Bertolo, Luigi, 118
 Bertolo, Nicodemo, 113
 Bertolo, Rosa, 118
 Bertolo, Santo, 118
 Bertolo, Vincenzo, 117
 Bertozzi, Luigi, 174
 Bettoni, 285
 Beuti, Giuseppe, 316
 Biagi, G. (Console), 168-69, 178, 206
 Biccìa, 199, 201
 Bicego, Francesco, 146
 Bigliotti, M., 250
 Binghelli, Filippo, 319
 Biscaccianti, Count, 330
 Bishop, Sir Henry, 325
 Black, 296
 Blaxland, Gregory, 37
 Boccartini, Giovanni, 140
 Boco, C., 250
 Boero, 114
 Boff, 169
 Boffa, Frank, 100
 Boggiano, Luigi, 214
 Boggio, Pino, 140
 Boghi, 99
 Boldini, 206
 Bolton, G.C., 282, 307, 318
 Bombardieri, Domenico, 284
 Bombardieri, Pietro, 284
 Bombelli, A., 37
 Bonaparte, Napoleone, 33, 39
 Bonazzi, Giacomo, 284
 Bonazzi, John, 174
 Bonazzi, Luigi, 174
 Bonazzi, Luisa, 174
 Bondietti, A., 99
 Bonella, 214
 Bonelli, Giacomo, 214
 Bongiorno, Antonio, 222
 Bongiorno, G., 222
 Bonofiglio, 135
 Bonomi, Cesare Augusto, 136
 Bonomi, Luigi, 136
 Bonomini, M., 135
 Bonutto, Osvaldo, 302
 Borchigrevink, Carlo, 347
 Bordat, Matteo, 117
 Borghero, Antonio, 285
 Borghero, Luigi, 279, 282, 285
 Borghero, Manny, 285
 Borghero, Marco, 281
 Borgioli, 331
 Borri, P. Cristoforo, 21
 Borrie, W.D., 307
 Borseria, L., 250
 Boschetti, Adalgisa, 196
 Boschetti, Albert, 196
 Boschetti, Basilio, 196
 Boschetti, Dargenio, 196
 Boschetti, Jack, 196
 Boschetti, Luigi, 196
 Boschetti, Rosa, 196
 Bosenni, 173
 Bosi, Pino, 154
 Bosisto, Giuseppe, 46, 211, 212
 Bossence, W.H., 197
 Bourke, Sir Richard, 36, 41, 103
 Bourke, 352
 Bowen, George Ferguson, 279
 Boylan, Catherine, 188
 Brady, Mons. John, 47, 231, 355, 360
 Braida, Beniamino, 222
 Bramante, Romano, 122
 Branchetti, Oda, 49, 58
 Breini, Doc. Anton, 345
 Breini, Lady Philis, 345
 Brentani, Carlo, 46, 163-64, 212
 Brican, Giuseppe, 117
 Brisbane, Sir Thomas, 39
 Brodsky, Isidore, 100
 Broome, Richard, 213
 Brown, 206
 Bruce, Stanley Melbourne, 80
 Brun, 219
 Bruno, Augusto, 205-6

Bryan, William, 32
 Buhot, John, 287
 Burgess, Maria, 326
 Burilli, F.A., 140
 Burzalli, Enrico, 304
 Busato, Giuseppe, 267
 Bulet, W.T., 334
 Buttacovoli, 195
 Buttini, S., 250
 Buzza, T., 194
 Buzzi, 219
 Byers, 189

 Cabassi, Giovanni, 173
 Cabassi, Michele, 284
 Cacialli, 331
 Cadolini, 356
 Cagli, 327
 Caleo, Felice, 222
 Calneggia, 253
 Camarda, Francesco, 269
 Camminitti, Rocco, 121-22
 Campagnola, 173-74
 Campanelli, Ernesto, 88
 Campi (Ditta), 219
 Canale, Angelina, 182
 Canali, F. Giuseppe Agostino, 374-75
 Canali, Matteo, 174
 Canali, Pietro, 99, 265
 Cani, Mons. Giovanni, 296, 366-68, 373-74
 Canna, T., 214
 Canobbio, 214
 Capasotti, 38
 Capelin, Lorenzo, 122
 Capini, 190
 Capone, A., 315
 Caporelli, Nicola, 47, 230
 Cappalla, 190
 Cappelli, 195, 331
 Cappellini, Caterina, 118
 Cappello, Erminio, 149
 Capra, Prof. Giuseppe, 76, 134, 219, 244,
 252, 258, 264, 270-71
 Capra, P. Pietro, 369
 Capriotti, 190
 Caproni, Antonio, 100
 Caputi, A., 333
 Carabino, 122
 Carandini, Christopher Palmerston, 37, 280
 Carandini, Girolamo, 280, 325-26
 Carandini, Maria, 280, 326

Carbonara, Michele, 340
 Carboni, Raffaele, 46, 169-172
 Cardenzana, 135
 Care, 196
 Carnicelli, Eric, 247-48
 Carniel, Luigi, 125
 Carozzi, 331
 Carpena, 131
 Carpi, 62
 Carrà, Felice, 222
 Carrara, Carlo, 284
 Carrera, Teresa, 327
 Caroni, 190
 Caselli, Enrico, 350
 Castellano, Francesco, 345
 Cantani, 219, 292
 Catani, Carlo, 216, 346, 348-50
 Cantani, Ugo, 337
 Cattabeni, Aristide, 212
 Cavalla, 99
 Cavallaro, 266
 Cavendon, Remigio, 192
 Cavicchiolo, Fiorino, 196-97
 Cavicchiolo, Emma, 197
 Cavicchiolo, Gina, 197
 Cavicchiolo, Giuseppina, 197
 Cavicchiolo, Johnny, 197
 Cavicchiolo, Lina, 197
 Ceccato, Ernesto, 149-50
 Cecchi, 216, 327
 Cecchini, Maria, 197
 Cechet, Roberto, 348
 Cerchi, Teodoro (Vittorio), 168-69
 Cerruti, Carlo, 99
 Cerruti, Giorgio Emilio, 23
 Cervini, Lucido, 373
 Cesare, D., 108
 Ceseretti, F. Nicola, 379
 Gester, Ernesto, 222-23
 Cetinni, Carlo, 284
 Chambers, Mrs., 267
 Chalis, Sir John, 333
 Chamberlain, Joseph, 74
 Chapman, Thomas, 164
 Checchi, Ettore, 219, 292, 346, 348-50
 Cheda, Giorgio, 49
 Chessbrough, Sue, 153
 Chiarelli, Faustino, 135
 Chivoni, Paolantonio, 331
 Chibardotti, 99
 Christian, M., 279

- Ciampi, E., 314
 Cilento, Raffael West, 342
 Cilinto, Salvatore, 342
 Cincotta, 100
 Cisen, Antonio, 336-37
 Citroni, Americo, 282
 Citroni, Giacomo, 282
 Ciuti, 327
 Clarke, Alfred, 163
 Clarke, Rev. W.B., 334
 Clarkes, 326
 Clifford, F.C., 125
 Cobb, 187
 Cobbe, 192
 Cobiainchi, Lorenzo, 49
 Codognotto, Giuseppe, 221
 Coglian, T.A., 60, 290
 Coletti, (Baritone), 106
 Coletti, F. Vincenzo, 120, 376
 Colledge, Father C., 120
 Collins, 258
 Colliodetti, 196
 Colombo, Christopher, 19
 Columbo, 253
 Colwell, James, 22, 27
 Comi, Giorgio, 195
 Commensoli, Bartolo, 190-91
 Commensoli, Antonia, 190-91
 Commensoli, Eve, 190-91
 Commensoli, Francesca, 190-91
 Commensoli, Giovanni, 190-91
 Commensoli, Marco, 190-91
 Commensoli, Maria, 190-91
 Commensoli, Minnie, 191
 Commensoli, Pietro, 190
 Concato, 331
 Confalonieri, F. Angelo, 47, 230, 360, 365
 Conte, Battista, 125
 Contini, 327
 Cook, Capt. James, 17-19, 21, 27, 30, 352
 Coombs, 107
 Cooper, James, 36
 Cooper, R., 35
 Coppeda, Attilio, 195
 Coppin, G., 326
 Coppola, P., 131, 133
 Coroccare, 122
 Corsali, Andrea, 20
 Corte, Elio, 192
 Corte, Pasquale, 63, 65, 132-33, 219, 339-40
 Cortensz, 17
 Cortese (Ditta), 133
 Corti, Giuseppe, 100, 376-77
 Cortino, 214
 Costa, Bernardo, 188, 190
 Costa, Giuseppe, 188, 190, 195
 Coughland, 259
 Coy, Giulia Tamburini, 327
 Cox, Sir Joseph, 84
 Cramer, 188-89
 Crea, Antonino, 200
 Cresciani, Gianfranco, 48
 Crew, 36
 Crippa, Fabrizio, 178
 Cuneo, John, 99, 101
 Cuneo, Tommaso, 99
 Cunial, Giuseppe, 150
 Cunico, 188
 Cunningham, Allan, 336
 Cusak, Frank, 167, 169
 Cutolo, Stefano, 214, 216, 326
 Cuttica, 330
 D'Adami, Giovanni, 217
 Dagradi, 331
 D'Alberti, A., 190
 D'Albertis, Luigi Maria, 21
 Dal Bosco, Guido, 192
 Dal Monte, Toti, 331
 Dalrymple, George Elphinstone, 296
 D'Ambrosio, Edoardo, 149
 Damiani, 266
 Dampier, William, 17
 Danesi, C., 314
 Danesi, Domenico, 174
 Dani, 331
 Danielo, P., 201
 Danesi, C., 313
 Dantree, 289
 D'Apice, Carlo, 99
 D'Apice, Sig. na C., 99
 Da Pin, Eric, 121
 Da Pordanone, Fra Oderico, 20
 Dardanelli, Bartolomeo, 212-13
 D'Arietta, Giovanni Battista, 35-36, 46
 D'Arietta, Walter, 100
 Darling, Sir Ralph, 39, 41
 Darwin, Mayor, 346
 Davadi, F. Girolamo, 370-71
 Davico, Antonio, 187
 Davini, Giulio, 232, 251

- Day, Doctor, 120, 340
 Deakin, Alfred, 75-76
 De Amezaga, C., 129
 De Basto, Antonio, 214
 De Beaupuis, Emanuele, 132, 134
 De Biondi, Pietro, 173
 De Bortoli, Vittorio, 154
 De Campo, Antonio, 188, 190
 De Campo, Pietro, 174
 De Campo, Mons. Francis, 174, 190
 De Filippi, 214
 De Freshe, Marion, 19
 Degotardi, Giovanni, 100
 Degratia, Luigi, 131
 De Grazia, Carmine, 192
 De Guyzueta, Alessandro, 217
 De La Croix (Barone), 113
 Del Grullo, Romano, 330
 Della, A., 248, 266
 Della, L., 248
 Della Torre, Carlo, 173, 201-2
 Della Vecchia, 284
 Della Vedova, Andrea, 182
 Della Vedova, Carlo, 319
 Della Vedova, Caterina, 182, 185, 195
 Dellabosca, H. A., 248
 Delloro, Alessandro, 190
 Dell'Oro, Giovanni, 84
 Delmarco, 265
 Delmastro, S., 201
 Del Pin, Eustachio, 140
 Del Santo, Camillo, 326
 Del Torrè, Italia, 331
 De Luis, 174
 Del Vescovo, 216, 334-35
 De Marchi, Umberto, 169
 De Marco, 266
 Demas, Giovanni Battista, 232
 De Meneses, Jorge, 15
 De Moroni, Giorgio, 174
 De Paoli, 24, 248
 De Piazza, Battista, 188, 190
 De Piazza, Giuseppe, 232, 266
 De Piazzi, 181, 190
 De Pinedo, Francesco, 88
 De Pizzi, 265
 De Prada, Giovanni, 173-75
 De Prada, Lou, 173, 198-99
 De Prada, Maddalena, 174
 De Quiros, Pedro Fernandez, 15, 20
 de Rays, Marchese, 24, 64, 105, 108,
 111-13, 118-20, 122, 125, 135, 206,
 340, 353
 De Revers, 331
 De Romanis, F. Cherubino, 375
 De Rozzoli, O. Fariola, 100, 103, 131
 De Salis, Leopoldo, 46, 103-4
 Desmond, Henry, 370
 Devlin, J.F., 379
 Diamantina, Contessa, 279
 Dickman, 169
 Di Lena, 23
 Dimitresco, 330
 Di Muzi, 278
 Di Salvo, 316
 Di Zotti, 266
 Dodorico, Girolamo, 202
 Domenics, James, 188
 Domenics, Margaret, 188
 Domenics, Mary, 188
 Domenics, Savatorie, 188
 Dominici, see Dominici
 Dominics (Dominici), Antonio, 188
 Dominico, Marco, 37, 279
 Donaldson, Stuart, 46
 Donati, 327
 Donchi, Battista, 188, 190
 Donizzetti, 326
 D'Orsa, Antonio, 185
 Duhig, Mons. B., 310-11, 369
 Dumme, F. Robert, 367-68
 Dunne, Mons. Patrick, 367, 372
 Duperrey, Comandante, 111
 Durak, Mary, 229
 Edami, Giovanni, 214
 Egli, F., 195
 Emilia, 330
 Ercoli, Quinto, 139
 Esmond, James William, 163
 Fabbris, F. Luigi, 375
 Fabiani, Fabrizio, 46
 Fagan, James, 365
 Fagazzolo, 331
 Fairbridge, K., 81
 Falchetti, 284
 Fango, G.B., 255
 Fannetti, 254
 Fantalini, Giovanni, 174
 Fantoni, Antonio, 107, 149

- Faoro, 202
 Farquhar, Robert, 39
 Fattorini, Doc, Carlo, 42-43, 46
 Fava, Natale, 122
 Favretti, Felice, 103
 Featherston, 334
 Federli, G.B., 191-92
 Feletti, 122
 Felicietti, Antonio, 122
 Felicietti, Maria, 122
 Fermio, Filippo, 174
 Ferrari, Gaspare, 232
 Ferrari, Andrea, 169, 174, 195, 265
 Ferrari, Bartolomeo, 174
 Ferrari, Bernardo, 174
 Ferrari, Edoardo, 99
 Ferrari, Giovanni, 174
 Ferrari, Stefano, 99
 Ferranni, 130
 Ferrarini, Giovanni, 337
 Ferry, T.A., 306-7
 Fiaschi, Doc, Thomaso Enrico, 65, 130-33, 292, 341-42
 Filamatti, R., 248
 Filippini, 331
 Filippuzzi, Caterina, 136
 Filippuzzi, Domenico, 135-36
 Filomena, Nicola, 231
 Fitzroy, Gov., 42
 Flanagan, Thomas, 243
 Flett, J., 166
 Floriani, Francesco, 201
 Flower, Sara, 326
 Fogliano, Giovanni, 21
 Foglietta, 133
 Fois, Giuseppe, 149
 Foletti, P., 187
 Folli, Antonio, 139-40
 Fomiatti, 267
 Fontana, 134
 Fontana, 190
 Fontana, Giovanni, 337
 Ford, William, 243, 247-48
 Formicatti, A., 248
 Forrest, A., 336
 Forster, William, 104
 Fortini, Mon., 368
 Foscu, 99
 Fox, 149
 Fraire, C.V., 292, 296, 319
 Franceschi, 217, 289
 Franchetti, Giacomo, 172-73
 Franzè, 196
 Frappoli, Arturo, 99
 Fraser, Anna, 182
 Fresea, 331
 Gaffori, 24
 Gagliardi, Federico, 123, 207, 289, 334
 Gagliardi, Prof. Ferdinando, 47, 65, 76, 131-33, 178, 207, 216, 219
 Gagliari, Stefano, 189
 Gallagher, Mary, 188
 Galletti, Bartolomeo, 106, 205-6
 Galli, 334
 Gamba, Carlo, 232, 240, 265, 268
 Gambetta, 53
 Garbalini, Pietro, 190
 Garbellini, 266
 Garbora, 255
 Garibaldi, Giuseppe, 158, 167-68, 212-14, 217
 Garibaldi, Menotti, 24, 326
 Garibaldi, Ricciotti, 217, 326
 Garran, Andrew, 178
 Garrone, 188
 Garrone, F. Onorio, 375
 Gatto, Domenico, 201
 Gava, Domenico, 117
 Gava, Giovanni, 117
 Gava, Mans, 122
 Gava, Sant, 122
 Gelmi, 266
 Gemelli, 266
 Genegli, Roberto, 174
 Genetti, Pietro, 284-85
 Genoni, Angelo, 232, 265
 Genoni, Carlo, 232, 265
 Gennoni, Emilio, 232, 265
 Gennoni, Giovanni Battista, 232
 Gentili, Joseph, 269
 Gentinetta, Giovanni, 49
 George, Pierre, 75
 Gervasi, 195
 Gervasi, 266
 Gervasoni, Antonio, 187
 Gervasoni, Carlo, 178
 Gervasoni, Luigi, 178
 Gervasoni, Vincenzo, 178, 181
 Gherardin, G., 250
 Ghisoni, 190
 Gianini, Lodovico, 232, 251

- Giannone, 216
 Giglioli, Doc. Enrico, 173, 214-15
 Gillet, Doc. William, 376
 Ginivan, W.J., 197
 Giorza, Maestro, 108, 292, 327
 Giorza, Paolo, 327, 330
 Gipps, Sir George, 41-42
 Graud, Fiorella, 331
 Giudici, 254
 Guigetti, Giuseppe, 195
 Guili, A., 108
 Giunelli, 266
 Guistmiani, Luigi, 46, 229
 Glorioso, Cono, 269
 Glyn, John, 59
 Gódenzi, L., 250
 Gonzales, 331
 Gonzales, Ernesto, 331
 Gonzales, Giovanni, 331
 Goold, Vescovo, 186
 Governa, Battista, 149, 195
 Grabbe, 250
 Graham, J.A., 59, 341
 Granforte, 331
 Grano, Giorgio, 46, 186-87
 Grano, Teodoro Giorgio, 187
 Grano, Tommaso, 187
 Grant, J., 331-32
 Gray, J.R., 169
 Green, James, 337
 Gregorio, XVI, Pope, 228
 Gregory, F. Henry, 357
 Gregory, John, 170
 Grey, Earl, 230
 Griffith, Sir Samuel, 288, 290, 292, 295, 297
 Griffiths, G.N., 98
 Grigoletto, 202
 Grimoldi, Giovanni, 214
 Grisafulli, Antonio, 267
 Grisafulli, Maria, 267
 Grossardi, A., 136
 Guareschi, Giovanni, 122
 Guatta, 174, 198
 Guazzini, 131
 Gueffi, 267
 Guerra, 319
 Guerrini, Fr., 374
 Guglielmini, Luigi, 146
 Guigettig, 195
 Gullet, Henry Somer, 79
 Gundlach, 52
 Gunelli, 265
 Hall (& McNeill), 163, 169
 Hall, Charles, 243
 Hannan, Paddy, 243, 250
 Hansen, N., 347
 Hargreaves, E.H., 163
 Harper, D., 249
 Harrington, Maude, 332
 Harris, Winifred Edith, 348
 Hartog, Dirk, 17, 30
 Haskitt, Stephano see Stanton, John
 Hazon, Roberto, 134, 327, 330-31
 Herbert, Robert W., 59
 Hercott, Ross, 168
 Higgins, 365
 Hogan, Nicholas, 365
 Hopecraft, Constance H., 217
 Horan, Bros., 368
 Horne, Donald, 76, 81
 Hotham, Gov. Charles, 170-71
 Hughes, W.M., 79
 Hunter, 86
 Hunter, Ernest, 292
 Iacono, Giovanni, 316
 Il Romano, Salvatore, 281
 Imberti, Giuseppe, 265
 Ioli, 190
 Iovine, Ageslao Gaetano, 340
 Irwin, 229
 Iseppi, Giuseppe, 174
 Jabretti, Maria, 117
 Jack, J.S., 345
 Jacoletti, Luigi, 247
 James, John Stanley, 172, 186
 Jannello, Antonio, 269
 Jannello, Conno, 269
 Jannevitti, 106
 Jansz, Willem, 17
 Jasprizza, Nicola, 105
 Johnston, C.J., 192
 Jones, Dorothy, 154, 304
 Jones, Julian Angeli, 117
 Jordan, 240
 Joubert, Dodier Numa, 98-99
 Joubert, Jules, 47, 98-99
 Julius, A., 334

- Kaercher, Fr., 367
 Kane, Mary, 181
 Kelly, 200
 Kelly, Ned, 315
 King, 284

 Lablanche, 330
 Lacerda, 100
 La fonte, Riccardo, 214
 Lalor, Peter, 171
 Lamaro, Guiseppe, 141
 Lampi, J., 250
 Lanfranchi, 190
 Langley, Eve, 200
 La Perouse, Jean Francois, 19, 352
 Lardi, C., 250
 La Rosa, Fortunato, 140
 La Trobe, Sir Charles, 170
 Lavello, Giacomo, 35
 Lavazzolo, 186
 Lawson, William, 37
 Lawson, Henry, 171
 Lazzarini, Camillo, 141
 Lazzarini, G.B., 319
 Lazzarini, Pietro, 141
 Leeder, William, 230
 Leichhardt, 352
 Lencioni, P. Maurizio, 356-60
 Leonard, 136
 Leonarduzzi see Leonard
 Leondi, 327
 Leoni, 283-84
 Lesina, Bernardo, 281
 Le Testu, Guillaume, 15
 Licciardello, 266
 Lomanto, Enzo De Mauro, 331
 Lombardi, 331
 Lorenzini, Lodovico, 113
 Loretucci, F. Augusto, 374
 Loscocco, Vito, 135
 Lovello, Giacomo, 35
 Lowenstein, W., 241
 Lualdi, Ercole, 49
 Lubrano, Capt. Francesco, 139
 Lucchetti, Antonio, 105, 141
 Lucco, Enrico, 148
 Luciano, Vice Console G., 305, 313-15, 318
 Lucini, Giacomo, 169
 Lusini, Ezio, 271-72
 Luvison, Francesco, 202
 Lyne, Sir William, 69

 Lyng, J., 325
 Lyons, Prime Min., 90
 Lyster, Samuel, 327-28
 Lyster, W., 327-330

 MacArthur, Capt., 104, 365
 MacCormack, 309
 McArthur, J. Jun., 35
 McCafferty, 379
 McCarthy, Fr. Dean, 36
 McCaughey, Sir Samuel, 145
 McClelland, James, 103
 McCormack, Prime Min., 309
 McDonald, Carlotta, 104
 McDonald, George, 104
 McDonald, J.S., 219
 McGinty, Fr., 367
 McKenzie, 60
 McKillop, 379
 McLean, 280
 McMahon, 248
 McMahon, Margaret, 188
 McNeil (& Hall), 163
 McQuallons, 189
 Macquarie, Gov., 33-36
 Maffero, 330
 Maffesconi, 265
 Maffoni, Andrea, 118
 Maffoni, Bertolomeo, 118
 Magagnotto, F. Pietro, 358-59, 375
 Magellan, 20
 Magetti, 167
 Magetti, C., 250
 Magnabosco, Cristoforo, 192, 196
 Magra see Matra, G.M.
 Majocchi, Theodore, see Rossi, Nicola
 Malaspina, Alessandro, 21-23
 Mallet, 219
 Mambini, Father E., 319
 Mammone, Nicola, 265, 316
 Mangarini, 212
 Maniachi, 219
 Mantegnani, Alfredo, 187
 Mantelli, 190
 Manucci, Luigi, 212
 Marandini, Domenico, 122
 Marano, Doc. V., 118-20, 133, 340
 Maratti, Domenico, 174
 Marazorati, 327
 Marchesini, Doc. Giuseppe, 292, 341
 Marchetti, Giovanni, 231

- Marcolino, 100
 Marconi, 266
 Marengo, 190
 Mana, 267
 Marina, Carlo, 46, 103-5, 130, 133
 Marino, P. Salvatore, 196, 231
 Marinoni, Angelo, 265
 Marinucci, Cons. Gen. Luigi, 59, 205-6, 349
 Mariotti, 107
 Marocco, Jaco, 186
 Marolli, Doc. Giuseppe, Enzo, 135, 340
 Marranta, Giuseppe, 283
 Marsden, Samuel, 34-35
 Marsegno, F., 267
 Marselli, Giuseppe, 231-32
 Martelli, F. Aldo Raffaele, 230, 360, 365-66
 Martelli, Alessandro, 47, 206, 212-13
 Martelli, Luigi, 366
 Martinelli, 100
 Martinuzzi, Genoveffa, 113, 122
 Martinuzzi, Giuseppe, 122
 Martinuzzi, Luigi A., 122
 Marzagora, Arnalia, 35
 Marzagora, Giovanni, 35, 100
 Marzagora, Mary, 35
 Marzagora, William, 35
 Marzetti, 26, 46
 Masengo, 267
 Masina, 46, 212
 Massa, G., 248
 Massoni, Rinaldo, 221
 Mastri, Robert, 174
 Mastronardi, Leno, 105
 Mastronardi, Luciano, 105
 Mastronardi, Steven, 105
 Marta, James Mario, 21, 24-27
 Mattboni, Claudio, 240
 Mattison, 192
 Mauro, Fra, 20
 Mayman, G., 251
 Mazzer, Antonia, 117
 Mazzer, Luigia, 122, 253
 Mazzer, Pietro, 122, 248
 Mazzetti, T.F., 36
 Mazzichelli, J., 283-84
 Mazzichelli, P., 284
 Mazzucconi, F. Giovanni, 355, 376-77
 Mead, 60
 Medwin, Thomas, 337
 Melba, 331
 Meldrum, James, 172
 Meldrum, Maria, 172
 Melare, 117, 122
 Melare, Antonio, 122
 Melare, Francesco, 113
 Mellare, Giovanni, 122
 Melocco, 136, 138
 Melossi, Guidetta, 330
 Menebrea, A., 267
 Menghini, Giacomo, 174
 Menotti, Ciro, 325
 Menotti, Giacomo, 187
 Menzies, Lesley R., 256
 Merini, 327
 Merlo, Antonio, 174
 Merlo, Giovanni, 185
 Merlo, Giuseppe, 207
 Merlo, Les, 185
 Meston, A., 280
 Meyer, Oscar, 107-8, 134
 Michellini, Alberto, 192
 Miller, Johnny, 198
 Minghetti, 331
 Minuta, 269
 Miranda, Marcolino, 100
 Mitchell, Sir Thomas Livingstone, 37, 352
 Moderna, 138
 Modini, 106-7
 Modini, Gianbattista, 120, 130-31
 Modini, L., 133
 Moffat, John, 284
 Moggioli, 133
 Molina, Ernesto, 221
 Molinari, Pietro, 174
 Mollanari, Jack, 283-84
 Mollanari, Mana, 284
 Monico, Giacomo, 187
 Montagretti, 206
 Montefiore, E.L., 333
 Montefiori, 107
 Montgomery, A., 235
 Montuori, Pasquale, 100
 Moore, 259
 Moore, F. Patrick, 368
 Moran, Cardinal, 357, 374
 Morandi, Antonio, 122
 Moras, Giovanna, 118
 Morelli, Domenico, 337
 Morelli, Giuseppe, 195
 Morellini, 266
 Morello, 135

- Moresby, Isabelle, 332
 Moretta, 265
 Moretti, 125
 Morgan, 312
 Moroney, R., 191
 Morton, C. & E., 285
 Mervigliatti, 125
 Moscardi, Jack, 284
 Moscato, G., 202-3
 Mosconi, 253
 Mosman, J., 279
 Movighatti, 35
 Mozza, Pietro, 249
 Muller, Carlo, 49, 52
 Mullins, 280
 Muraro, Angelo, 49
 Murphy, D., 186, 189
 Murphy, Vescovo, 359
 Murray, 61
 Murray, Robert, 87

 Napoleone, Bonaparte, 23, 33, 39
 Narboni, Carlo, 136
 Nardi, Angelo, 122, 124
 Nardi, Annetta, 135
 Nardi, Antonio, 122
 Nardi, Caterina, 122
 Nardi, Giovanni, 113
 Nardi, Vincenzo, 122
 Natali, (Ditta), 219
 Negri, D., 135
 Negri, M., 265
 Neich, Emanuele, 36, 46
 Neri, 327
 Nerli, Girolamo, 216, 336-37
 Newman, W.H., 217
 Nicolia, Franco, 122
 Nicolia, Vincenzo, 122
 Nolan, Fr. T., 369
 Northcliffe, Sir V., 79
 Novati, Pietro, 174
 Novello, 167

 O'Brien, Catherine, 189
 O'Callaghan, M., 186
 O'Connor, F. Patrick Joseph, 379
 O'Connors, Y., 336
 O'Farrell, 367
 O'Grady, T. & C., 191
 Oliviera, 217
 Omadei, 284

 Omadei, Pietro, 183
 O'Mahoney, Vescovo, 378
 Oneda, 122
 O'Reilly, Fr. J., 368
 Orlandino, 327
 Ortori, Ercole, 108
 Osmetti, Giuseppe, 189
 O'Toole, P., 198
 Oxley, John, 37, 145

 Packer, Prof. D.R.G., 72, 82, 84
 Paderewsky, 327
 Padovan, 202
 Padovani, 331
 Paganl, 131
 Paganini, Samuele, 154
 Paganini, 283, 285
 Paganini, Bettoni, 285
 Pagano, S., 314, 319
 Pains, P., 265
 Palise, 100
 Paima, 196
 Panelli, Rev., 174
 Panizza, R.B., 248
 Panozzo, 196
 Paparone, B., 269
 Parapini, Antonio, 61, 350
 Paravicini, Luigi, 174
 Parise, 202-3
 Parisi, Giuseppe, 316
 Parker, D., 62-63
 Parkes, Sir Henry, 60, 71, 104, 118, 337
 Pascia, Luigi, 212
 Pasini, 248
 Pastega, Angelo, 149
 Pastorelli, Gaetano, 188
 Pastorelli, James, 188
 Pastorelli, Maryanne, 188
 Patané, 266
 Patané, Alfio, 316
 Pateragmani, F. Carmelo, 369
 Paterson, Robert, 36
 Patterson, W., 163
 Patullo, Pietro, 35-36, 46
 Pavesi, 131
 Peati, Giacomo, 99
 Pedinni, Filippo, 122
 Pedretti, 266
 Pedrotti, Andy, 284
 Pedrotti, Bartolomeo, 284-85
 Pelassi, C., 174

- Pellegrini (Ditta), 133, 219
 Pelletti, 254
 Pellizzer, Agostino, 117, 122
 Pellizzer, Antonia, 117
 Pellizzer, Maria, 117
 Pelosi, B., 248
 Pelusi, Carlo, 174
 Pelusi, Giuseppe, 174
 Pero, Franco, 49
 Perrea, Luigi, 212
 Perrot, 206
 Persini, 319
 Pesciaroli, P. Luigi Maria, 356-59
 Petroni, 253
 Pettini, Antonio, 231
 Petullo, Pietro, 35
 Pezzutti, Angela, 122
 Pezzutti, Antonio, 122
 Pezzutti, Nicola, 122
 Phillip, Capt. Arthur, 27, 31-32, 334
 Piaggio, F., 267
 Piandalli, 253
 Pianetti, Cardinal, 357
 Pianta, Giuseppe, 181, 183
 Pianta, Martino, 181, 183
 Pianta, Paolo, 195, 284
 Pianta, Pietro, 174, 181
 Piastrì, Giovanni, 185
 Piastrì, Dino, 194
 Piazza, Giuseppe, 192-94
 Piccaluga, 331
 Piccoli, Andrea, 122
 Piccoli, Antonio, 122
 Piccoli, Giacomo, 122, 125
 Piceni, Cesare, 49
 Pich, George, 150
 Pigafetta, 20
 Pike, D., 30, 236
 Pike, Glenville, 278
 Pilatti, 135
 Pini, Pietro, 188-89
 Piper, Capt., 35
 Pirani, 214
 Pirona, Aldo, 136
 Pirona, Angelo, 136
 Pirona, Giobatta, 135-36
 Pirona, Maria, 136
 Pisoni, P., 130-31
 Pitt, W. M., 35
 Pivetta, 122
 Piatania, Luigi, 139
 Plozza, Antonio, 174, 199, 201
 Plozza, Bernardo, 174
 Podenzana, 134, 280
 Pola, Giovanni, 185
 Pola, Pietro, 185
 Polding, Mons. Bede, 47, 98, 106, 278,
 334, 351, 355-58, 365, 374-77
 Poletti, 284
 Polisani, 214
 Polo, M., 19-20
 Polo, 202
 Poloni, Pietro, 35
 Pompei, F. Giuseppe, 327, 374
 Pondelli, Armando, 267
 Ponto, Antonio, 21
 Porcelli, 336
 Porena, L., 219
 Porta, 190
 Porter, 199
 Posich, Stefano see Stanton, John, 35
 Powers, Charles, 295-96
 Pozzi, Giacomo, 284
 Pozzi, Leonardo, 169, 206, 253
 Pramolini, Giuseppe, 139
 Prerira, Luigi, 214
 Presetti, A., 285
 Priora, 131-33
 Provost, Jules, 117
 Pruscino, Antonio, 201
 Ptolemy, 19
 Puecher, Mons., 370
 Puglisi, Giuseppe, 137-38
 Pullè, Giovanni, 132, 139
 Purbrick, Erick, 195

 Quarti, B., 187, 253
 Quinn, Mons. James, 333-34, 355, 366-77
 Quinn, M., 368

 Racchia, Carlo, 23
 Raffaele, Giovanni, 174
 Raimondi, F. Timoleone, 376-77
 Ramacciotti, Luigi, 272
 Ramus, John, 191
 Ramus, Joseph, 191
 Randazzo, Nino, 292
 Ravogli, Giulia, 331
 Reata, 266
 Rebora, Paolo Giuseppe, 49, 52-53

- Rebottaro, Alice, 217
 Recapoli, 266
 Regazzoli, Eugenio, 279, 319
 Reid, David, 172
 Reiby, Mary, 98
 Reina, F. Paolo, 376-77
 Rencheri, Fr., 367
 Rendina, 196
 Reni, 195
 Respini, G., 50
 Resta, 265
 Rettore, 331
 Riccardi, Tommaso, 330
 Ricci, F. Eugenio, 367, 370-71, 374
 Riccio, Father, 21
 Ricetti, Bartolo, 284
 Richetti, 253
 Righetti, Augusto, 99
 Righetti, Battista, 186
 Righetti, Giuliano, 99
 Rignasco, Mauro, 231
 Rigoni, Maria, 194
 Rinaldi, Domenico, 174
 Rinaldi, Jack, 284
 Rinoldi, A.P., 139-40
 Rinoldi, G., 174
 Ristori, Adelaide, 106-7, 330
 Rizzo, Raffaele, 231
 Robello, Giuseppe, 285
 Roberts, Lord, 341
 Robertson, 108
 Robinson, Sir Hercules, 333
 Robottero, 327
 Robustelli, 188, 252, 263-64
 Roche, 36
 Rodegari, L., 250
 Roder, Agata, 113
 Roder, Arcangelo, 122
 Roder, Candido, 122
 Roder, Cristina, 113
 Roder, Francesco, 122
 Roder, Giacomo, 117
 Roder, Giovanni, 117, 122
 Roder, Lorenzo, 122
 Roder, Lucia, 113
 Roder, Luisa, 122
 Roder, Maddalena, 117
 Rodriguez, Giovanni, 21
 Rolando, Carlo, 336-37
 Romani, F. Giuseppe, 370-71, 373
 Romanezi, 201
 Romeo, Giuseppe, 340
 Ronda, Giacomo, 103
 Rooney, Rosina, 280
 Rooney, Teresa, 280
 Ros, 122
 Ros, Angela, 135
 Ros, Pietro, 135
 Ros, Virginia, 135
 Rose, William, 282
 Rosolen, Giovanni, 122
 Rosolen, Pietro, 122
 Rosolen, Rosa, 122
 Ross, Alice, 330
 Rossi, 267
 Rossi, 169
 Rossi, Capt. Nicola, 36, 39-42
 Rossi (& Villa), Ditta, 133
 Rossolini, F. Constantino, 371, 373
 Rovogli, Giulia, 331
 Rozzoli, 331
 Rubbo, Dattilo, 337
 Ruggero, Father Emanuele, 375
 Rusconi, Frank, 285
 Russell, 331
 Russo, 100, 199
 Sagagio, Carlo, 148
 Saig-Wilson, Catherine, 182
 St. Leger, Frank, 331
 Salerio, F. Carlo, 376-77
 Saligari, Giuseppe, 181, 189
 Saligari, Pietro, 181
 Saligari, Stefano, 181
 Salli, M., 195
 Salvado, Mons., 230-31, 268
 Salvado, Rosendo, 230
 Salvatore, 305
 Salvo, Ferrari, 284
 Salvo, Spagnola, 284
 Sandrin, 125
 Sanguinetti, 214
 Sani, Tommaso, 334
 Sani (& Fontana), Ditta, 134, 336
 Sanotti, Pietro, 122
 Santamaria, 100
 Santaromita, 269
 Sapia, Vera, 331

- Saragat, Giuseppe, 268
 Sartori, Maurizio, 186-87
 Saunders, Charles, 331
 Scala, Adele, 135
 Scala, Angelo, 135
 Scalabrini, Vescovo G.B., 279, 373
 Scamuzzi, 331
 Scarabellotti, Michele, 122
 Scargatti, Gustavò, 217
 Scarpi, 168
 Scavizzi, 331
 Sceusa, Francesco, 103, 130-31
 Scenza, 133
 Scherini, 113
 Schiffini, 280
 Schipa, Trto, 331-32
 Sciuto, Salvatore, 192
 Scobie, 170
 Scortechini, F. Benedetto, 370-72
 Scott, R.F., 348
 Scotto, Porfirio, 140
 Scullin, Prime Min., 313
 Scully, Fr., 367
 Secolari, F. Luciano, 214
 Segà, Mario, 17
 Segafredo, 96
 Senini, 201, 285
 Serle, Geoffrey, 172
 Serra, Jose, 47, 230
 Severi, Antonio, 288
 Shea, Dan, 243
 Shelly, 337
 Sherwin, Amy, 332
 Silvester, 149
 Simonetti, 106, 130, 134, 292
 Simonetti, Achille, 333-34
 Sisca, Doc, Natale, 340
 Smyth, R.T., 296
 Smythe, F. Patrick, 170
 Snell, F. Giuseppe, 356-59
 Solander, 18
 Somerville, 206
 Soranson, Tom, 267
 Spacadini, 186
 Spadacini, Carlo, 350-51
 Spagni, 107
 Spagnola, Ferrari, 284
 Spagnola, Salvo, 284
 Spagnoletti, Ernesto, 100
 Spina, Doc., 252
 Spinazè, Antonio, 117, 122
 Spinazè, Domenico, 122
 Spinazè, Elisabetta, 122
 Spinazè, Giovanni, 122
 Spinazè, Lorenzo, 122
 Spinazè, Lucia, 117
 Squitti, Console, 62, 131, 218
 Stafani, 219
 Stambuco (& Fortuna), Ditta, 186
 Stambuco, Andrea, 350-51
 Stannage, C.T., 229
 Stanton, John, 35
 Stanton, Mary, 35
 Steiger, Domenico, 49
 Steiglitz, see Scarpi
 Stella, 188
 Stirling, 270
 Stevens, Orlando, 120
 Stevenson, R.L., 336
 Steward, Nellie, 332
 Stringer, Edward, 173
 Sturt, Charles, 37, 145
 Sturzo, Don, 84
 Susini, 327
 Sutherland, Forby, 18
 Swan, Capt. see Dampier, William
 Swinburne, G., 81-82
 Sydney, Lord, 26
 Tacchini, Luigi, 376-77
 Tagliaferri, 253
 Talamini, Innocente, 132
 Talichino, 195
 Tamburini, Giulia, 219
 Tanzi, 99
 Tardozzi, F. Oreste, 373
 Tartaglia, Giovanni, 168
 Tasman, Abel, 34, 230
 Tassoni, 196
 Tedisco, Giuseppe, 122
 Tenni, Martin, 282
 Terreggiani, Mons. Eleazaro, 378-79
 Terrey, F. John Joseph, 100
 Tessero, 219
 Thomas, Mary, 187
 Thomas, Robert, 187
 Tirelli, G., 133
 Togno, Luigi, 187, 265
 Togno, Pietro, 182
 Tognola, 278

- Tolomeo, 19
 Tomé, Carlo, 113
 Tomé, Geronimo, 122
 Tomé, Giovanni, 122
 Tomé, Girolamo, 117
 Tomé, Marco, 117, 122
 Tomei, A., 108
 Tonegazzi, 135
 Tonganelli, F., Tarquinio, 375
 Tonta, Antonio, 319
 Tonta, Carlo, 284-85
 Tontaini, Stefano, 285
 Tornaghi, Angelo, 99-100, 106, 130-33, 351-53, 378-79
 Tornari, 331
 Tornatis, 289
 Torres, Luis Vaez, 15, 20
 Torrisi, 266-67
 Tortillo, Agostino, 23
 Tosi, F. Francesco, 190-91
 Tout, Eliza, 104
 Tova, Antonio, 22
 Towns, Robert, 287
 Triaca, Camillo, 221
 Tricarico, 195
 Trinca, 188
 Truman, Ernest, 332
 Tucci, Pasquale, 192
 Tuddenham, Mary, 185
 Turner, H.G., 76
 Turra, 202
 Tusa, Giuseppe, 34
 Twain, Mark, 171

 Uneda, Albina, 118
 Urban, VII, Pope, 21
 Urquhart, F. Domenico, 231
 Urso, Camillo, 330

 Vaccari, Gualtiero, 83
 Vaccaro, Antonio, 192
 Valle, 265
 Valli, 253
 Vallins, James, 167-68
 Vallono, 252
 Vanzetti, Eugenio, 232, 247
 Vardenega, Girolamo, 149
 Varischetti, Modesto, 249-50, 253
 Vassella, Pietro, 99

 Vaughan, Mons. Roger Bede, 368, 376, 378
 Vella, 266
 Ventura, Francesco, 231
 Venturini, 195
 Verdi, 326, 330
 Verga, Tommaso, 48, 214
 Vernon, Howard, 330
 Vicci, P.L., 267
 Vidua, Conte Carlo, 23
 Vignano, Mario, 221
 Villa (& Rossi), Ditta, 133
 Visoni, 331
 Vitelli, 326
 Vittorio, 327
 Volpato, F., 122

 Waddell, A.F., 277, 283-84
 Wade, Abdul, 282-83
 Wallace, 189
 Ward, Fred, 38-39
 Watkins, 87
 Watson, C., 74
 Watson, Capt., 22
 Webb, Frances, 336
 Webb, George, 336
 Wentworth, W.C., 37, 336
 West, Raffaele, 342
 White, Capt. Oscar, 178
 White, Oscar, 178
 Wilkinson, E., 74
 Willard, 290
 William, Percy, 334
 Williams, A.J., 167
 Williamson, J.C., 330-31
 Wills, 352
 Wilson, Catherine, Saig, 182
 Wilson, H.H., 254-55, 266
 Windeyer, Charles, 41
 Winter, James, 195
 Withers, George, 247
 Wood, Arnold, 20
 Woods, P. Tennison, 272

 Young, Charles, 290-91
 Young, Sir George, 26

 Zacutti, Sigismondo, 219
 Zampatti, Pietro, 284
 Zanelli, 195

Zanetti, Pietro, 267
Zanoli, Pietro, 99
Zanoni, 122
Zanotto, Giuseppe, 188
Zappa, Giovanni, 281
Zappa, Pietro, 232, 253
Zaza, Maria, 117
Zelman, Alberto, 216, 219, 292, 327, 330,
332
Zelman, Vittorio, 328
Zia, 122
Zola, Francesco, 89

This extremely interesting book is the result of a vast and profound personal experience, enriched by painstaking study of local history, Parish registers, tombstones in Australian cemeteries and, above all, by many and lengthy conversations with Italian migrants in Australia.
(*Pagine della Dante*, April-June, 1986)

* * * *

The overwhelming sentiment on reading this book will be one of gratitude, in the first place to the Italians who have contributed to our country for so long a time and, secondly, to Fr Tito who has put us into his debt by this thorough and scholarly research.
(*The Australasia Catholic Record*, Vol. LXIII, No. 1, January, 1986)

* * * *

"We did not arrive yesterday" is a true statement because the Italians have had a connection with Australia since the days of Captain Cook... I am sure that most honourable members will obtain a copy of this book and read it, so that they may appreciate the great contribution the people of Italy have made to Australia.
(*Mr. N. Hicks, MP, Social Security amendment Bill*, 1986)

* * * *

The book, "We did not arrive yesterday", by Tito Cecilia, is an exceptional historical document of our emigration to Australia. It will assist future historians in completing the total picture of our emigration to this country.
(*Pino Bosi, Australia: Ieri, Oggi, Domani. Vol II, Fascicoli II*, 1986)

* * * *

The author has the sense of being a living part of an ethnic group whose historical presence in Australia dates from the beginning and which now, in the somewhat euphoric climate of multiculturalism, is setting out in search of its historical roots, precisely because "We did not arrive yesterday"... The author has provided a valuable service to the community.
(*Graziano Tassello, Studi Emigrazione. Anno XXIII, Gennaio-Marzo*, 1986. No. 81)

