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THE ITALIANS IN NEW MEXICO*

By FREDERICK G. BOHME

THE people who came to New Mexico following the American Occupation in 1846 to join the Indians and Spanish already there were not all Anglo-Saxons from the eastern and southern United States, for even a casual inspection of the early manuscript censuses reveals a wealth of names from continental Europe. Although the bulk of New Mexico's immigrants during the last century merely crossed the international boundary from their homes in Old Mexico, their number was well leavened by European groups which also left cultural imprints on the Territory. This study is an attempt to follow the history of just one of these, the Italians.

Although Italians represent one of the largest sources of American immigration, they have never comprised more than six-tenths of one per cent of New Mexico's population. In 1910 there were 1,959 foreign-born Italians among 327,301 residents; in 1950, 934 out of 681,187. They are important, nevertheless, because second to natives of Mexico they comprise the largest foreign-born group (8.6 per cent in 1910) in the state. They are significant because Italian churchmen and Italian settlers, more than any others, provided a "bridge" between the Anglo-Saxon and Hispano cultures found here. Arriving in the Territory during the years when the transition from one culture to the other was most rapid, they not only made the necessary adjustment themselves, but could understand and aid in the accommodation of both cultures to each other.

In 1850 there was only one Italian in New Mexico Territory, and he lived in Arizona which was part of New Mexico until 1863. In 1860 there were only eleven, and several of these lived in Arizona too. It was not until the 1880's that any significant number of these people settled in the Territory. They reached a high point during the first decade of the

* This article is based on the author's "A History of the Italians in New Mexico" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1958). Visiting Instructor, Department of History, University of New Mexico.

twentieth century, but following the national trend, their immigration dropped off sharply after World War I.

Contrary to the pattern for this period in the eastern United States where most Italian immigrants reside, the majority of Italians in New Mexico came from northern and central Italy rather than the southern part of that peninsula. The earliest emigrants to New Mexico came from the *compartimento* of Piedmont, in northern Italy, followed by others from Lombardy and Tuscany, and finally—around the time of World War I—by inhabitants of Abruzzi and Molise, in central Italy. They were usually miners, stone cutters, or farmers, beset by unemployment and the carving up of their fathers' small landholdings into even smaller plots. The skilled miners and stone cutters moved to identical positions in New Mexico, and they were followed by an increasing number of farm laborers who had no money to buy land, but could easily adapt to mining or other types of manual labor among their compatriots. One may well ask why these people came to New Mexico, rather than settle among other Italians in the eastern states or California. The answer was, and still is, economic opportunity.

The first arrivals saw a vast territory, just beginning to be populated, and relatively free from the economic competition they would find elsewhere. If one were willing to work hard and live frugally, ignoring the hardships of frontier life, then just a little capital invested in a saloon or a grocery store—occupations often scorned by other settlers—would bring great returns. With this thought constantly in mind, many Italians mined coal or obtained employment as skilled or unskilled laborers. As soon as they had accumulated sufficient funds they would open small businesses, become citizens of the United States, homestead ranches, and send for their relatives to come and repeat the process.

A combination of circumstances brought Italian members of religious orders to New Mexico at least a decade before their countrymen began settling in the Territory in any numbers. The Roman Catholic Church's local needs were very great, for the end of the Civil War brought renewed migration to the West. In 1865 Bishop (later Archbishop) Jean

Baptiste Lamy had but thirty-seven secular priests, mostly Frenchmen, to serve a hundred thousand members of his faith. On a trip to Rome the next year, Lamy sought to have some Jesuits sent to his diocese. The Superior General of the Order, at the same time, was looking for a foreign mission field for some of his own priests, a group of Neapolitan Jesuits who had been expelled by Garibaldi for political activity against his regime. New Mexico and Colorado were immediately assigned to them. Several priests then working in Spain, and able to speak Spanish, were put at the Bishop's disposal, and arrangements were made for them to join him for the return trip to America. These men were Fathers Donato Gasparri and Rafaele Bianchi, and Brother Rafaele La Vezza. Another brother, Priscus Caso, was sent from Naples and met the party in Paris. A fifth member, Father Livio Vigilante, was already in America, and he was detached from the staff of Holy Cross College, at Worcester, Massachusetts, to become the mission's English-speaking superior.

They reached Santa Fe on August 15, 1867, and were assigned to the parish at Bernalillo. From there the group ministered to families northward along the Rio Grande and westward into the Jemez Mountains, and also conducted preaching missions in various parts of the Territory. Father Bianchi died of pneumonia while on a mission to Mora, where it was reportedly so cold that the consecrated wine froze in the chalice at mass. Gasparri, on his part, was instrumental in healing the famous "Taos Schism," in which Father José Antonio Martinez figured so prominently. In 1870, Gasparri also attempted to open a mission among the Navahos, but transportation, among other things, proved too great a problem to surmount. Another of his efforts, at Sandia Pueblo, was brought to a precipitate end when he discovered a live rattlesnake had been placed under his altar.

In 1868 the Jesuit fathers moved to Albuquerque and literally "bought out" the incumbent priest at San Felipe de Neri Church for \$3,600. Here, augmented by the arrival of more Neapolitans, they developed some four acres of gardens which contained many vines and fruit trees from Italy. The old *campo santo* around the church was replaced by buildings,

and a new cemetery, Santa Barbara (now Mount Calvary) was begun on higher ground several miles east. Albuquerque became the headquarters for further missionary expansion as more priests and brothers became available. In 1871 the fathers took over the church at Conejos, in the San Luis Valley of Colorado; the next year Pueblo; and in 1874, Trinidad. With the full approval of Bishop Joseph P. Macheboeuf, their work continued to expand in later years. The church at Socorro, New Mexico, became a temporary Jesuit charge in 1872, and in 1874 the fathers built a church at La Junta (called Tiptonville after 1876). This parish included ten villages, the most distant of which was Fort Bascom, northeast of the present-day city of Tucumcari. In the early 1880's the Neapolitans extended their work to Isleta and El Paso, Texas, where the coming of the Southern Pacific Railroad brought social changes similar to those in New Mexico.

Coincident with the geographical expansion was a move to establish parochial schools. Their first attempt in 1870 was abandoned, but in 1872 the fathers opened the Holy Family Select School for Boys in Albuquerque, supported by public funds and dignified by the title of *collegium inchoatum*, or "elementary college." Another school was operated in connection with the parish at La Junta.

In 1874 a Jesuit house was established in Las Vegas, as a result of enthusiasm engendered by a preaching mission. In this year the mission had thirteen priests and nine lay brothers. Almost at once Las Vegas became the political and intellectual headquarters of the mission as it related to its entire territory, while Albuquerque became more and more concerned with the immediate local problems of the coming of the railroad and the accompanying influx of "Anglos." The *Imprenta del Rio Grande*, a press established by the Jesuits at Albuquerque in 1873 to provide schoolbooks and devotional works for the mission, was moved to Las Vegas to escape flood waters, and in 1875 it began publishing the *Revista Católica* to fill the need for a weekly Spanish-language journal. It was an immediate success, for within six months it had seven hundred subscribers.

The establishment of the *Revista* at Las Vegas in 1875

coincided with the opening of a period of Territory-wide controversy over the separation of church and state in the public school system. Father Gasparri and the *Revista* promptly took the lead in defending the Roman Catholic Church's position over the next five years. In doing so they became rather deeply involved in politics, although at first they avoided stands along party lines. With the influx of English speaking migrants in the 1870's, pressure for more public schools in New Mexico was increased (from none in 1870, there were 138 by 1875). As these were opened, they tended to come under the direct or indirect control of the Roman Catholic Church, usually by default. School boards were organized in each county, but in some cases priests sat as board officials. The textbooks in the majority of the schools were those printed on the Jesuits' press, and a number of parochial schools were aided with public funds. Father Gasparri was even made Superintendent of Schools in Bernalillo County.

In the face of growing opposition Gasparri combatted restrictive laws in the Territorial Legislature, and a Territory-wide press battle ensued. After a period of relative peace from 1876 to 1878, the issue exploded anew when the Jesuits succeeded in having repassed over Governor Samuel B. Axtell's veto a bill incorporating the Society as a tax-free educational institution with wide, uncontrolled powers. This incorporation act was then annulled by the United States Congress, the first time that body had ever overturned a territorial measure through direct legislation. Governor Axtell, who was subsequently removed from office ostensibly because he had taken sides in the so-called "Lincoln County War," attributed his fall to Gasparri and his supporters.

In 1877 the fathers began teaching grammar and high school classes in Don Manuel Romero's "Casa Redonda" on Pacific Street in Las Vegas, and early the next year began using the name "Las Vegas College" for this educational venture. They had 25 boarders, 4 half-boarders, and 85 day scholars at the school's opening, and with an increase in enrollment found it necessary to build a new adobe structure on the nearby Calle de la Acequia. Most of the boarding students came from Mexico, and one of them, Francisco Madero, later

became president of his country. For a time the fathers also operated a public boys' school in connection with their private college. Inasmuch as the Brothers of the Christian Schools already had a college at Santa Fe, and the Neapolitan Jesuits had opened the College of the Sacred Heart (later Regis) in Colorado, Las Vegas College was closed in 1888 without granting any degrees during its ten-year existence.

Due to the advent of the railroad, Las Vegas grew considerably in population, and in 1884 the Jesuits were authorized to start a parish there for the accommodation of the newcomers. The existence of this Jesuit church, together with the college chapel, became an increasingly sore point for the local secular clergy. They complained that the Jesuits were usurping their parochial prerogatives, and alleged that the people would often attend and support the Jesuit services to the exclusion of their rightful pastors. The controversy, in which the archbishop sided with the secular clergy, twice required the intervention of Rome. Ultimately, in 1917, the *Revista Católica* (which had ceased its political activities and become a strictly devotional periodical) was moved to El Paso, and the Las Vegas house was closed. This left Albuquerque as the only remnant of Jesuit activity in New Mexico.

The Neapolitan Jesuits' operations in Albuquerque reflected a steady growth from 1875 on. Although several attempts at opening a novitiate for prospective priests failed, the public school and the wine press prospered. The priests at San Felipe Church took an active part in civic affairs, but welcomed the increased population brought by the railroad with mixed emotions. In 1883 Immaculate Conception Church was built in "New Town" with the aid of many recently-arrived Italians. Fathers Carlo Ferrari, Francesco Fede, and Alfonso Mandalari, all members of the Society of Jesus, figured prominently in its history. Father Mandalari, who served the church until 1924, had been a member of the Las Vegas College staff, and was one of the last of the Neapolitan band in New Mexico. He thus represents the end of an era.

The other Jesuit venture in "New" Albuquerque began in 1900, when Father Alessandro Leone built Sacred Heart Church to serve the Spanish-speaking residents of that area,

and his work was later taken over by the Rev. Pasquale Tomassini, who retired in 1918. In 1919 the New Mexico-Colorado Mission of the Neapolitan Province was disbanded and its holdings divided between two American provinces. Some of the priests returned to Europe, as they had been urged to do, but many had become American citizens or had been in this country so long that they had no wish to return to Italy or any other part of war-torn Europe. San Felipe continued under the leadership of several Italians who originally had belonged to the Neapolitan Province. These were Fathers Salvatore Giglio (1926-1928), and Robert M. Libertini (1933-1937 and 1947-1952). Father Libertini, whose administrations bring the history of the Italian Jesuits in New Mexico almost up to the present day, is still active at Sacred Heart Church, El Paso.

Probably the most colorful of all the non-Jesuits, and one whose history has never been adequately told, was the hermit-monk, Giovanni Maria d'Agostino. Born in Novara in 1801, he wandered around Europe and South America, sleeping in caves and travelling afoot and by canoe. He lived in a volcano in Mexico, tramped through the Canadian woods, and came to New Mexico in 1863. For three years he lived near the summit of El Tecolote, a mountain about twelve miles from Las Vegas, ministering to the local ranchers and Indians. In 1867 he moved to the Sacramento Mountains of southern New Mexico where, two years later, he was killed, presumably by Apaches. A number of legends grew up around the "Cimarron Hermit," based at least in part on fact. Some of them are associated with El Tecolote, others with Hermit's Peak north of Las Vegas, where it is claimed he also lived. He reportedly erected a number of crosses on the mountainside, and would affix a light to each one each night to assure the people below that he was safe. He found a spring in the heretofore barren Tecolote, and shared his cornmeal and water with his pet cat, "Capitan."

One of the Sisters of Charity in New Mexico, Sister Blandina Segale, was brought to this country as a small child from her native Italy. A teacher, school builder, and friend of

many prominent New Mexicans in the 1880's, her experiences are recounted in her book, *At the End of the Santa Fe Trail*.

In assessing the place of Italian churchmen in the history of New Mexico, the emphasis must continue to lie on the activities of the Neapolitan Jesuits. They came to the Territory during its formative period, and encountered both the traditional Hispano culture with its set of values, and that of the incoming Americans who had a different way of life. The Jesuits' contribution lies in their ambivalence: as well-educated Italians (all of the priests had college educations and many had been professors) they could understand and adapt to both cultures, thus providing a "bridge" between the two. This is not to say that other clergy were unable to do so, but the Jesuits' ability is demonstrated in the readiness with which Archbishop Lamy and Bishop Macheboeuf of Denver entrusted them with both Spanish and American parishes.

The Neapolitans were pioneers. If church statistics of confessions, communions, baptisms, and marriages may be trusted, they were most successful in bringing the Spanish-speaking New Mexicans back into formal relations with the Church. Once their work was accomplished, however, it tended to pass into the hands of the secular clergy as the number of these—and the population—increased. The Society was habitually short of clergy, although this may have been due in part to doubts in Naples that the Territory could financially support any more. Most of the fathers' missions were conducted in Spanish, but they soon learned English and used it when required.

Their influence in the social and political life of the Territory, however, was far greater than their numbers. Their private and public grammar schools, the *Revista Católica*, Las Vegas College, and their political activities of the 1870's and 1880's are all history. Without passing judgment on the moral issues involved, it seems evident that they filled a need during that stage of the Territory's development. As an organized group, they provided education when the Territorial public school system had not yet been perfected, and by providing teachers helped that system get started. They pub-

lished a periodical which was widely read and which crystallized public opinion at a time when newspapers were few. Their press published school books when these were almost non-existent in New Mexico. Within the framework of the Church itself, the Jesuits were on the scene and ready to accommodate the American influx, and they, more than any others among the New Mexican clergy, were able to "hold the line" over several decades, until American priests arrived to take their place.

In the present, those Italians who are members of the regular and secular Roman Catholic clergy in New Mexico continue to demonstrate their ability to act as a "bridge" between the two cultures. The Fathers of St. Joseph of Murialdo teach boys of all backgrounds at Lourdes Vocational School in Albuquerque. Priests serving in other parts of the state have "mixed" congregations, and even the Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, the Very Rev. Ottavio A. Coggiola, a native of Cuneo, is in the critical position of harmonizing the activities of both Spanish-speaking and English-speaking clergy. That Italians are found in these positions bespeaks their importance in New Mexico's history.

Although John Stambo, a young tinner from Piedmont, lived in Albuquerque in 1860, there were no Italians other than the Jesuits in that town until about 1880. Ferdinando Selva, a stone cutter, who was there in that year, later acquired property in Tijeras Canyon and opened a roadhouse known as "Selva's Ranch" in the early 1890's. This enterprise is still in existence, and is now called the "Paradise Club." Selva's widow, Secondina, carried on his interests for many years following his death in 1893. In 1880 also, Charles Bruno and John Pedroncelli, whose families are still represented in Albuquerque, were gardening on the Gutierrez Tract in Los Poblanos following an attempt to make their fortunes in the mines of Nevada.

The 1880's brought a number of Italians to Albuquerque, and some of the more prominent names of that period are still found in the city: Sanguinetti, Badaracco, Viviani, Bianchi, Di Mauro, Giomi, Scotti, Torlina, Toti, Melini, and Bachechi.

Many Italians of these and later years went into the saloon business in Albuquerque's "tenderloin." As they prospered and either built or bought their own buildings, they would obtain additional income from rentals. Gambling rooms and dance halls usually took up ground floor area, while upper stories were leased to either hotels or houses of prostitution (and sometimes it was difficult to tell which was which). This type of activity had little, if any, opprobrium attached to it at the time, and few Italians had more than a landlord's interest in these operations anyway. In later years the famed Joe Barnett owned the "White Elephant," which featured gambling, drinking, etc., but he easily made the transition to real estate and theaters when his former activities were outlawed. At his death in 1954, this second-generation Italian left an estate valued at over two and a half million dollars.

The movement of these people into Albuquerque in the 1880's and 1890's exemplifies the effectiveness of the letter home and word-of-mouth advertising, as carried on by those few already here. Oreste Bachechi was probably the most active and best known of these, and is certainly acknowledged as the one person responsible for more Italians coming to Albuquerque than anyone else. Bachechi, born in Bagni di Lucca, near Florence, in 1860, came to New Mexico by way of France, Cuba, and Mexico, and opened a small saloon in a tent rented for that purpose. In 1889 he married Maria Franceschi, a business-woman in her own right, and between them they expanded their holdings as rapidly as finances would permit. Mrs. Bachechi operated a dry goods store and the Elms Hotel by herself, and at the same time bore Oreste six children. Meanwhile, Bachechi transformed a partnership with Girolamo Giomi into a corporation, the Consolidated Liquor Company, which existed for thirty-three years and in time extended over the entire Southwest. In 1905 Bachechi built the Savoy Hotel, then the finest in Albuquerque, and in 1909 he added the Bachechi Block at First and Tijeras. His interests later led him into the theater business, later merged with that of Barnett. Bachechi was also one of the founders of the Colombo Society, established in 1892 with sixty-two charter members, and was its president for nineteen years;

Mrs. Bachechi, too, maintained an interest in public and charitable affairs.

Two other Albuquerque families date from 1899, when Ettore Franchini and Alessandro and Amadeo Matteucci arrived. Franchini was associated with Bachechi in the grocery business, and later in a similar enterprise with his brother, Ovidio, which still bears the family name. Ettore Franchini served as Italian consular agent in Albuquerque, and was made a Knight of the Crown of the King of Italy for his help when the Italian flying boat "Santa Maria" crashed in Roosevelt Lake, Arizona. He also acted as penitentiary commissioner and as a member of the state parole board.

Alessandro Matteucci entered the grocery business in the city, and later expanded into real estate. He and Amadeo were later joined by a third brother, Pompilio, whose shoe repair shop on North First Street later developed into the Paris Shoe Stores operated by his family. A fourth brother, John, also lives in Albuquerque.

Other Italian residents arrived during the first and second decade of the twentieth century; among them were such names as Domenici, Balduini, Dinelli, Bonaguidi, Pucci, Ganzerla, Puccini, and Schifani. While most of these people were from Lucca, Schifani was a Sicilian. Active in politics and public service, several of his sons are engaged in the printing business in Santa Fe. Another son, Emmanuel, is President of the Springer Transfer Company and was Adjutant General of the New Mexico National Guard.

Latecomers from Italy have been few, for the quota system set up by the United States immigration laws of the 1920's curtailed this flow rather sharply. Consequently, the main additions to Albuquerque's colony have been first or second generation Italians from other parts of the United States. They have maintained social and cultural ties in the Colombo Society, the Italian Women's Club, and more recently the Italamer Civic Club, as well as through Immaculate Conception Church.

Since 1880 Albuquerque has been the center of an urban Italian colony which not only grew with the years numerically (over three hundred members of the first generation in

1950), but even more so in influence. Those who had groceries, wine shops, and saloons, catered to citizens regardless of cultural background. Almost without exception, the new arrivals—if they did not already speak it—used Spanish as fluently as their native tongue within six months to a year. They learned English, and were often called upon to translate for customers and friends of both cultures. While a majority of the first generation married within their national group, a significant number married outside of it. The following generations moved easily either way, although increasingly in the English-speaking direction as Albuquerque filled with people from other parts of the United States. In the city, with both an Hispano and an American culture, the Italians have suffered very little from social visibility, being accepted more readily by either culture than the one culture accepted the other.

The majority of these people came from agricultural backgrounds in Italy, but few chose farming as a vocation in the Albuquerque area, even after acquiring capital by working in the Santa Fe shops or for others. Several families, such as the Salces, Trossellos, Morettos, and Airas, however, did cultivate acreage in the nearby community of Corrales, as did the Ghirardis and Ghirardettis near Isleta. The Italians' affinity for the liquor business, in all of its aspects, seems to be a local phenomenon; through tight organization and rigid control they have made it both respectable and profitable.

Santa Fe also acquired its Italian families after the coming of the railroad. Aside from several individual workers, the 1880 manuscript census reported the arrival of the Paladino and Digneo families, stone cutters from Abruzzi. They were brought from Woodstock, Maryland, where they had been working on the Jesuit college, to help in the construction of St. Francis Cathedral, and remained in Santa Fe for the rest of their lives. Gaetano Paladino, with a partner, Michael Berardinelli, entered the contracting business, and was responsible for the construction of many public buildings in the Territory, such as jails, courthouses, and business blocks. The Digneos, likewise, were engaged in this field; Carlo Digneo built Hodgin Hall, the first unit of the University of New

Mexico at Albuquerque. The Berardinelli family has been prominent in Santa Fe's public life; among the seven living members of the second generation there are represented a former county treasurer and city council president, a police magistrate, and a postmaster. The Sebastian and Di Lorenzo families virtually complete the roster of Santa Fe Italians, but others were found in the nearby mining communities of Madrid, Golden, San Pedro, and Cerrillos, when those flourished in the 1890's and early 1900's. There were enough Italian coal miners at Cerrillos to warrant establishment of Camillo Cavour Lodge, a member of the Columbian Federation, in the 1890's.

The town of Las Vegas featured a number of Italian fruit vendors in the 1880's, and two musicians, Paolo Marcellino and Domenico Di Boffa. Marcellino was bandmaster of the Las Vegas Brass Band (which reportedly paraded in "elegant" uniforms), directed the band at Las Vegas College, and was a partner with Di Boffa in a music store. In later years Marcellino moved to Socorro where he raised imported Italian fruit trees and engaged in the insurance business. He became involved in some pension fraud cases, however, and after serving a term in the penitentiary spent his last years teaching music. One of the fruit sellers, Rocco Emillio, later moved to Lincoln County, where he accumulated a saloon, a hotel, a butcher shop, and an orchard. Some of his descendants now live in Socorro.

The Italians were late arrivals in northern New Mexico, despite the fact that some of the Territory's earliest mining activity took place there. However, when the Raton Coal & Coke Company was incorporated in 1881 and developed the coal mines at Blossburg, Italians streamed in by the dozens. The 1885 manuscript census indicates that they comprised almost half of the miners, but few of them figure in the later history of this area. Among the exceptions, however, was Andrew Bartolino, who later established a cattle ranch near Raton, and whose descendants still have large holdings there. Another pioneer cattleman is Sam David, who was born in Piedmont in 1882. He was brought to the United States as a child, and began "punching cattle" at the age of twelve. Now

retired, his grazing land extended over some ten thousand acres north of the town of Folsom, in Union County.

The real development of Italian settlement here began about 1900, when Colfax County coal fields were opened extensively. Some *abruzzesi* came directly to the little mining towns of Brilliant and Gardiner, near Raton, and began the pattern followed elsewhere in New Mexico: working in the mines for several years, returning to Italy, and then locating once more in New Mexico. Still others worked in Van Houten, where one section of this mining village was named "Cunico Town," after that Venezian family. The Cunicos eventually homesteaded land southeast of Raton, and contributed "Mike" Cunico to the annals of championship bronc riders of the Southwest. The Federici family of Cimarron had a similar background, and is now represented by a district judge and a prominent attorney. The coal mining towns of Dawson and Koehler, both twentieth century developments, also had their quota of Italians; around World War I Dawson reportedly had one of the largest groups from the Province of Lucca to be found west of Chicago. Not only were the Italians the most numerous of all foreign groups there, but they held the "elite" jobs in the mines, including those of foreman and engineer. Most of these people moved to Raton, Trinidad, and northward as mining operations declined.

While many ex-miners opened businesses in Raton and nearby towns, probably the outstanding "success" story in northern New Mexico is that of Joe Di Lisio. He was born in Pacentro, Province of Aquila (central Italy), in 1885, and received an elementary education there. In 1904 he came to the United States, spending two months in Hartford, Connecticut, before coming west. His uncle, Mike Sebastiani, had a store at El Morro, near Trinidad, Colorado, and Di Lisio worked a year and a half there. After accumulating a small amount of capital working for his uncle, he took over a saloon in Gardiner. His success led to an offer from the St. Louis, Rocky Mountain and Pacific Coal Company to run their store, the Blossburg Mercantile Company, in addition to his saloon. This he did from 1907 to 1910, when the coke plant at Gardiner was shut down.

Di Lisio then operated a saloon at Brilliant for about three years, taking time out only for a quick trip to Italy to get his bride. He became a citizen of the United States and a member of the Elks' Lodge during this time also. In 1913 he moved to Suffield, near Ludlow, Colorado, where he bought a saloon. The violent strike at Ludlow caused all of the miners to leave, and Di Lisio was broken financially. In 1914, however, he managed to borrow sufficient capital to open a saloon in Raton, and this was followed in short order by a small department store, the Raton Mercantile Company. His affairs prospered, and in 1917 he founded the International State Bank of Raton, with himself as president. In 1929 he built the Swastika Hotel, and used this name until World War II, when for obvious reasons it was changed to "Yucca." He continues as president of the corporation which owns the hotel, and he has been chairman of the board of the bank since 1956. Although he is now 73 years of age (1958), he still operates the department store, called "Di Lisio's" since 1922, and only sold his interest in the Raton Wholesale Liquor Company (established on the repeal of Prohibition in 1933) in 1955.

Always active in civic affairs, Di Lisio has been a director of the Raton Chamber of Commerce, is a past president of the local Kiwanis Club, a member of the Knights of Columbus, and an honorary member of the Foresters (*forestieri*). In World War I he spearheaded a subscription drive for the Italian Red Cross, for which he subsequently received a gold medal, and in the mid-1920's he was made a Knight of the Order of the Crown of Italy. He and his wife, the former Cristina Ponne, have eight children, all of whom are now grown.

The town of Gallup, in western New Mexico, was also a focal point for Italian settlement, dating from its establishment as a coal mining center in the early 1880's. At that time about a hundred Piedmontese and Tyrolese farmers were brought from Colorado, where they had received their first experience in the mines. Among these the Brentari, Rollie, Vidal, Baudino, Noce, Casna, Cavaggio, Martinelli, and Zucal families are but a few of those now represented in the area. This first group moved into the business world after its

stint in the mines, and was replaced by the continuing arrival of relatives and friends from Italy. Around 1915 a second round began when farmers from Abruzzi and Calabria, in central and southern Italy respectively, arrived by way of the Colorado mines. These are represented by the Ferrari, Di Pomaggio, Di Gregorio, and Ricca families, to name several.

As in the coal mining towns of northern New Mexico, these people also had their mutual aid societies for both men and women, but succeeding generations have tended more toward the American service clubs and fraternal organizations. They fitted into the local economy with remarkable ease. While in Colorado Italian coal miners participated in the famous Lake City strike of the 1890's, and in other disorders culminating in the famous "Ludlow Massacre" in 1914, Italian miners in New Mexico led a most peaceful life. Strikes seldom, if ever, got beyond the incipient stage; there were no extremes, and they had little interest in unions. Under these conditions the coal mining areas of New Mexico, both north and west, have benefitted from the enterprise of this immigrant group.

Italians were and are almost non-existent on the so-called "East Side." They are found in southern and central New Mexico, however, but never in as great numbers as in the coal mines and towns of the north and west. The earliest permanent settlers in the southern portion of the Territory probably made their appearance immediately after the Civil War, in the late 1860's. Some Italian laborers were reportedly employed in building Fort Fillmore during the 1850's, but left before the war began. Notable among the names of early arrivals in Doña Ana County were Chaffee Martinelli (or Martinett) and Domenico Luchini, both of whom erected flour mills to serve the army posts in the area. Martinelli was killed by the "Kinney Gang" in 1879 or 1880, but the Luchini family has survived to the present day, including among their number several generations of politically active ranchers.

There are brief traces of other Italians around Silver City, Pinos Altos, Kingston, Carthage, and other mining towns in the area, but these seem to have come and gone with the vicissitudes of the "boom or bust" economy. The town of So-

corro attracted a number of Italians around the turn of the century. Giovanni Biavaschi, a native of the Valtellina, operated a distillery there and also built a two-story business block still in use. He was instrumental in bringing others to the town, among whom the names of Scartaccini, Tabacci, Ballatti, and Del Curto still survive in the region.

Ranching and sheep raising was popular in central New Mexico. The Bianchi and Gianera families are identified with the grazing lands near Socorro, and Joe Gianera prospered as well from the discovery and development of a manganese mine on his property.

The Italians in New Mexico have been exemplary citizens, and there is no evidence of any formal political ties with Italy and the Fascist regime locally. In 1923 or 1924, an *Alianza Fascista degli Stati Uniti* was organized through the various consulates in this country, but it was disbanded due to lack of interest within a year or two. Neither the Sons of Italy, the largest of all Italian-American organizations, nor any of the Italian Fascist groups of the 1930's found representation in New Mexico. *The Italian-American News*, a pro-Fascist newspaper, was published in Albuquerque during 1936 and 1937, but its editor, who had a prior criminal record, was deported during World War II.

Both Ettore Franchini of Albuquerque and Joe Di Lisio of Raton, who had been prominent in promoting such financial causes as the Italian Red Cross and the erection of memorials in Italy, were accused of being members of the Fascist "fifth column" in the West, but there is no evidence to support these charges. The local Italian colony's attitude toward Fascism was certainly passive. Following Pearl Harbor, as in World War I, there was a uniform movement of allegiance toward the United States. None were interned.

Virtually all of the older Italians became naturalized citizens as soon as they were qualified by minimum residence. In the state as a whole these people have consistently had a higher rate of naturalization than the average for all nationalities. Possibly because of the freer social mobility in New Mexico and the higher proportion of single men coming to the state from Italy, Italians here have tended to marry outside

their group more than their compatriots in other parts of the United States. Interviews made during the course of this study have indicated that those who came to New Mexico, mainly from northern and central Italy, invariably had at least the equivalent of an American fourth grade grammar school education, although few attempted to carry their schooling any further after their arrival. The second and third generations, however, have taken advantage of every educational opportunity, and many have entered the professions.

Throughout the history of their emigration to New Mexico, Italians have tended to be town dwellers rather than farmers. Whereas only fifty per cent of New Mexico's total population is found in urban areas (1950), almost seventy-five per cent of the foreign-born Italians and their families have fallen in this category. The movement of Italians in and out of New Mexico was highest in 1913-14, just before the outbreak of World War I, when 303 immigrants entering the United States announced that New Mexico was their destination. That same year 128 Italian aliens living in the state left for their homeland. In subsequent years the turnover diminished to a mere scattering, and in the two decades from 1912 to 1932 only two naturalized citizens returned to their native land to stay.

For the past seventy-five or eighty years, therefore, the Italian laymen have constituted an extremely stable group in New Mexico, making a ready adjustment to both the American and Hispano cultures. They became citizens rapidly, learned both Spanish and English, and took places in the business community where they served all people. They have been uniformly loyal to the United States, and have demonstrated their allegiance by service in two world wars. They have made no significant contributions to letters or the arts, but, what is more important for New Mexico, they have promoted understanding among peoples of divergent cultural backgrounds.

Those Italians who came to the Territory as representatives of the Roman Catholic Church from 1867 on, were important in New Mexico's life far beyond their mere numbers.

Foreign to this country and its ways, they frequently aroused widespread animosity because of their autocratic methods. Through missions, schools, a college, and a press, however, the Neapolitan Jesuits expanded and accelerated the work of their Church in New Mexico, and influenced their parishioners not only spiritually, but socially, economically, politically, and intellectually as well. Their dedication, energy, and intellect provided an example for all, and those Italians who serve in the state now continue to uphold the high standards set by their predecessors.