

NAME OF PROJECT: *Italian Canadians as Enemy Aliens: Memories of WWII*

DATE OF INTERVIEW: December 9, 2010

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Toronto, ON

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: Galileo Ricci

NAME OF INTERVIEWER: Melina De Guglielmo

NAME OF VIDEOGRAPHER: Travis Tomchuk

TRANSCRIBED BY: Nadia Mior

DATE TRANSCRIBED: February 14, 2012

ACCESSION NO.: ICEA2010.0006.0001

PROJECT NOTE:

Please note that all interviews have been transcribed verbatim. The language in this transcript is as it was provided by the transcriptionist noted above. The project staff has not edited this transcript for errors.

TRANSCRIPTIONIST NOTE:

The underlined parts indicate overlap. These were tricky! Some words have a question mark indicating that I was not 100% sure of the word. There are some dashes [--] which indicate a word that I just could not hear clearly.

KEYWORDS/TAGS

Galileo, GalileoRicci, Ricci, Melfi, Potenza, Basilicata, Florence, earthquake, orphanage, LicoPestarozzi, Pestarozzi, Paris, London, Halifax, Montreal, PhillipsSquare, Rosemount, Westmount, Arnaldo, ArnaldoRicci, Orazio, OrazioRicci, Mesegna, MesegnaRicci, Romeo, RomeoRicci, Italy, Italian, ItalianCanadian, ItalianCanadians, Protestant, Catholics, Canada, Canadian, Immigrant, Immigrants, Immigration, Immigrated, discrimination, CanadianGovernment, Mussolini, Informers, Informer, Informant, Informants, RCMP, RoyalMountedPolice, MountedPolice, Fingerprints, EnemyAlien, EnemyAliens, FifthColumn, balilla, expo67, Toronto

ABSTRACT

Galileo Ricci was born on February 4, 1922 in Melfi in the province of Potenza, Basilicata, Italy. He was the youngest of five children; he had three brothers (Orazio, Arnaldo, and Romeo) and one sister (Mesegna). Because Galileo's father travelled frequently to North and South America for work (18 trips total), Galileo did not know him very well. After the big

earthquake in 1929, the family moved to Florence where Galileo and his brother attended the 'Lico Pestarozzi' orphanage for school. Galileo's father followed them in 1929. In 1934, the family (except Orazio and Mesegna) moved to Canada. After landing in Halifax, the Ricci family travelled to Montreal where they settled. In 1939, just before the start of the Second World War, Galileo's father passed away. In 1940, Galileo was 18 years old. He was not interned but was instead labelled an enemy alien, fingerprinted, and ordered to report monthly to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Galileo always found work, despite being a victim of racial discrimination and being accused of having fascist involvement. He married Ninetta Frenza (daughter of internee, Leonardo Frenza) and in 1967 they moved to Toronto where he worked until the age of 70.

INTERVIEW

GR: Galileo Ricci, interviewee

MD: Melina De Guglielmo, interviewer

TT: Travis Tomchuk, videographer

GW: Galileo's wife (not on camera, minor role)

[Title Screen]

[Fades in at 0:00:10.5]

MD: here with ...we'll talk about your early ahm

GR: ok

MD: life and life in Italy...and then we'll talk about Canada and ahm the enemy alien aah designation

GR: good

MD: ok...sounds good...alright...all set

GR: ok I'll start at the beginning..I was born on February the fourth 1922 ..in the town of Melfi and the...la provincial di Potenza Basilicata

MD: ok and your full name how...

GR: Galileo ..Galileo

MD: Galileo Ricci ok perfect

GR: aaah eravamo nel paese io ero nato ero il'ultimo della famiglia c'è avevo tre fratelli e una sorella e lì ero il più piccolo..allora che successo che io padre aaah ha fat il viaggio tra l'Italia e nord America e Sud America diciotto volte..and eeh I speak Italian now

MD: that's ...whatever language you're more comfortable

GR: eighteen times he used to go for example he went to Buenos Aires ...aah in the year 1910 I think it was and ahh he was making boots for the cowboys..he's also a shoe maker like my wife...and he made a lot of money in other words.. wherever he went he made a lot of money ..he went to Italy because he wanted to live in Italy but in Italy the commerce and life was not the same...and instead of making money he was losing money...so he said no this is not for me so he go north again he would travel so he did that eighteen times... so I was a little boy and I never knew my father and then aaah my mother didn't know what to do with me because my father...Italian fathers in those days ..they got mad at their wife ..wouldn't for example my father would not send any money to sport

MD: yeah

GR: and aahh so my mother was a very good seamstress so she was making dresses and was for ...for the money...and aah I was about three four years old..five ..almost five years old and aah I was walking around you know the town was mine I could go wherever I want..it's not like today that you know the children ..take care..you know ..I was thee years old I was on my own..and aah at five years old my mother said I don't know what to do with this little boy..because my brothers were at Florence in the college at Florence..see I had

MD: they were older your brothers

GR: yes, older two brothers were in Florence and aah I had a brother in Melfi where I was born and he was different than I was...he was more outgoing than I was and my mother in order to keep me safe ..there was a barber shop down the street ..she went there and said 'would you mind keeping my little boy here while I do the work...he can probably sweep

the hair off the floor' so I went there.. five years old..I went there and I stayed there and ahh you know you see the people the way they were shaved and cut their hair and I sweep the floor insomma..in the meantime my mother ...being a good seamstress she as I said she had good customers ..and one day she met a teacher you know ..so she start telling ..she start telling she said look would you mind taking my boy into your classes ..she said no he's only five years old you know we start at six...anyway..after two or three time that my mother almost begged she said well I will take him but when the inspector comes he goes back home ...so anyway I went the first year and a couple of times I had to go back home because the inspector was there ..where I finished the year and I passed

MD: wow

GR: so the school board got a problem ...[smiles/chuckles] aah I had to go to second grade...

[4:37.2]

GR: so anyway I went to second grade and I was happy because I had the all the freedom that I had I used to go everywhere and do everything I wanted to do...and aah I was pretty good in school too and aah then in 1929 we had a big earthquake..we had a house that aah the bedrooms were upstairs and aah I was well 1929 so I was seven years old and aah I used to sleep with my mother and my brothers the other ..another brother in another room and aah this particular morning I wake up and aah I find the plaster in the bed you know I said my mother wasn't there you know I said what wh-what is going on you know...so I got out of bed I tried to go downstairs you know where the steps were...the steps weren't there anymore ..well mind you I noted that they weren't there anymore because they collapsed that was not it...because the earthquake went this way [both hands move up and down] this way [both hands move sideways] and when it went this way the roofs came when the roofs were made the Canadian/American way because in the United States and Canada they put the sides they put something across the top instead the homes that are built in Europe they're all cement all over the place one of those rooms fell in the house.. anyway so I was looking for these stairs and the earthquake like I said went this way and that way [shows

with hands again] and it went around.. so when the when the earth went around it moved the bed 180 degrees...so i got out of bed I tried to find the stairs they weren't there anymore so a little kid you know going around ooh find the stairs and go downstairs ..went downstairs and my mother will say get out of the house we all went out.. this was at one o'clock in the morning..we all went out in the street..now in front of the house we had a big square...wasn't paved nothing it was just a where a big tree in the middle..was a nice place..so were all we all went there and aah we were waiting to see what was happening.. anyway..we saw people running all over the place you know it was an earthquake in a small town well it was a pretty big town but anyway...what happened the government aah put up tents .. in front of our church there was a big square so they put up tents and aah we lived on the tents for aah three months in the mean time my mother was corresponding with my father and they cause..I got to go back a little bit..aah my family ..my father's parents they must have must have come because I'm not sure for .aah...at that time the pope had certain three provinces of Italy under control ..la Romania and aah anyway..they had come from there..so my father knew somebody in Florence ..and aah this person that he knew was a was a minister but he he was working for an orphanage.. that the people that were that were going to this particular place l'instituto aah they they were orphans and also people that were not orphans the orphans were not paying anything to be there but us that we had parents we were paying and aah so we went there and aahm --

[8:22.9]

MD: so so your you went from Basilicata

GR: we went to Florence

MD: to Florence

GR: to Florence

MD: and that was you and your brother that went together

GR: we my brother and I went there together

MD: yeah

GR: that's right and we ...left Italy in January the 22

MD: so that was after you had lived in Florence for a few years or you left

GR: oh yeah...no no ..yeah oh yes I lived in Florence I stopped there we lived in Florence I was aaah aah nineteen twenty nine nineteen thirty about eight years old..and I ..,in Italy they had five grades schoo-elementary school so I did two in Melfi and I had to make three more so I went to school in Florence... for my three grades I went to Florence..and I passed and I had my certificate...in the meantime, my father came to Florence

MD: to see you

GR: and I had a little job ...that went not for firm..imagine this..there were recycling paper this way back them..you know the American say they invented things they don't –and I had a little cart..a baroccio it's called where all this paper and I was pushing it going away about ten miles to this other place to dump it ..you know and I don't know if you know Florence you know Florence?

MD: a little bit

GR: there's the Lungarno there's the piazza

MD: yes

GR: and there was in those days there were no no taxis they had the carriage with the horse..so this particular il cortiere it was called he was making.. a U- turn in the middle of the you know..the cart and the horse were longer than the road..so he had a hard time..and I was coming along with this baroccio [chuckles] they know what you do you know ..so I said I'm ready to take a chance I went under the horse..you now the legs are here [shows with hands] I went under the horse with the baroccio and everything

[laughter]

GR: anyway so I did a lo-I did quite a few things

MD: yeah

GR: --and then my father came and then my father was very very strict..he would not put up with anything..so one of my elder brothers...aaah he was a barber my brother and he used to bring the pay to my father my father would not give him any money to spend so when you're a young man you try to find a way out to get a few dollars..so what happened he went into business with another fellow they I don't know they managed to get some material they were going to sell it and make money and so on and so anyway it didn't happen so they lost everything so..this is the story of one of my brothers..now I'll tell you a story of another one of my brothers.

MD: which what was that brother's name

GR: my brother that name was Orazio

MD: Orazio was the one who opened up the business and lost everything

GR: yes..named Orazio after Orazio after Orazio Crocert nella storia d'Italia

MD: oh ok

GR: Galileo Galilea

MD: yes yeah [laughter]

GR: my other brother's name was Arnaldo ..which was taken after Mussolini's brother which was Arnaldo..

MD: ok

GR: and my sister's name was Mesegna aaah a name but I --I read a lot of history and I was reading the history of Greece not very long ago a friend of mine gave me a book in Italian and I read it ..and in Egypt there were always people fighting each other -- and there was a

mountain that was protected by certain group of people and then you know the mountain was Mesenga

MD: oh

GR: so that was her name and she was in Italy actually and aah she had a child and she was married and stayed there..and my other brother had an accident aah he hit the cart again and hit the temple anyway he was going to university in in Melfi..they had a nice university and he's doing quite well and aah as I said, my father was quite strict and aah another thing that happened in Italy is that aahm my father ..because my brother was so good he never give him money ..he give him pocket pencil and pen and pencil aah give it to him as a present because he did well in school

MD: oooh

GR: so my brother said to him what the heck am I going to do with this..so he sold it..to get some money you know

MD: yeah

GR: so in no time the word goes around my father got to know it...so one day [chuckles] one day we were sitting at the table having dinner and my father talks..Romeo was his name
Romeo

MD: Romeo

GR: see all the names

MD: Romeo Ricci

GR: Romeo Ricci..aah do you speak Italian

TT: not well

GR: Ill say it to her then I'll translate..

MD: yeah

GR: tra mi vedere la penna che te ho dato...show me the..the

MD: the pen

GR: the pen that I give you my brother said well I left it at school so on and so forth..then my father all of a sudden tips the table over [lifts both hands up in the air] he said I know what you did you sold I give you a present so on and so forth and he took a chair to throw it on my brother [chuckles] and only this chair didn't land on my brother it landed on my head

[14:32.0]

MD: oh no

GR: so I was crying you know and my father said keep quiet keep quiet...eeh I was yelling even more then he put his hand on my head and I was bleeding and he calmed down like like that you know very fast and he..

MD: he realized it was serious

GR: and everything was settled he brought me to the doctor so on and so forth anyway..so anyway then he went back to North America he he had a daughterfor four boys and they were all supposed to be baptized protestant ..the reason why and I say it.. I don't know whether you are very Catholic or not but that Pope at certain time in the 1800's controls certain parts of Italy and they ahh if you did not believe in their dogma then they used to take their homes everything that you had away from you they would report to the state and the state would bring them to court and see and sometimes they were even killed ... so what happens at the ..the church had taken from my grandparents their home and their land where they were living because they didn't believe in their dogma...ok.. so naturally my father was not Catholic he was Protestant and he came to Canada he came to Montreal and he met a Presbyterian minister..and he got talking to him and all that ...and in 1929 that we had the earthquake he decided for us to go to Florence..now the story in Florence is that there is this instituto was an orphanage my brothers two brothers had come there when

they were young boys they came out when they were young men and they went back there ..and my brother the oldest one he was in charge of the whole thing and the minister used to go to Norway Denmark to the northern countries of Italy where there were Protestants so that they could get money for the orphanage because the orphanage was Protestant

MD: what sorry, what was the name of the orphanage

GR: pest a—ah ah Lico Pestarozzi

MD: ohok

GR: that was the name of the pastor that used to get the money to..it was his name Ernesto Pestarozzi

MD: ok

GR: via de Benci? —numero nove Firenze I remember that ..and aah he was very good and aah he went there he got the money to support this place and it was ok..now we had to pay my father had to pay for my brother and I but when it came that aah we finished our schooling he said well take them out of college and keep them in the house because he had bought a house in Florence so keep them in the house

MD: so who was taking care of you you were just on your own

GR: my mother

MD: your mother ok so your mom was also in Florence?

GR: yes we all went to Florence in 1929 we went to Florence and aah my father was there heeee we rented first and then he bought a house and we stayed in the house and everything was fine except now I tell you the story of my brother that he was a barber

MD: uhhum

GR: and aaah we had planned my father had planned to come to North America and he was applying also my brother this older brother and he couldn't come because Mussolini said

that you had to go into the army first ...before you go anywhere so my father couldn't take him so he was left in Italy and when he was left in Italy I mean what could he do? So he was the age to go in the army they took him in the army ..and this was 1935

MD: ok

GR: now in 1935 Mussolini went to conquer Ethiopia so my brother was sent there so he went in the army in 1935 and he came back lucky enough he came back ...and aaah I'm jumping a little bit

MD: oh no

GR: then the second war came around and he was called again you know and he was prisoner of war during ..because the war that they were fighting they was in aaah in Africa, Tripoli and near Egypt and he got pri-he got taken prisoner--good luck good thing for him that he was a prisoner

MD: wow oh sorry one second the battery is just ...yeah so we are just going to plug in I don't mean to stop you

[19:35 fades out]

[fades in 19:36:3]

GR: so there was the earthquake in 1929 and my father came to Italy and told us to go to Florence

MD: yeah

GR: so we went to Florence we lived there for a while I told that story about my brothers then in 1932

GW: 34

GR: 33..sorry [he looks around at GW] 1933 we were in the.. in the let me think...it was..
December it was Dec-no January 1934 ..the twentieth? of January 1934..we planned it to go
to North America...we went first to Torino from Torino we went to Paris

MD: wow

GR: we stayed 2 or 3 days there...now I'll tell you why

MD: how did you get how did you get to Paris..I guess.. did you

GR: by train

MD: train train yeah

GR: aah wait a minute wait a minute aah yes with the train yes and we went there for the
simple reason that aahm my father's passport was supposed not was not ahh .. something
wrong with the passport.. so we went to Paris so he could go to the Canadian Embassy to
show his passport that said the passport was valid..we stayed there four days in Paris
beautiful place I love Paris.. but my father was going crazy because the ambassador said no
you cannot go to Canada we had all the family there we had sold the apartment and we had
all the big you know big play things full of clothes and things like ..what are we going to do
my father..we'll go to London to the ambassador in London...so we went to London ...we
went to La-? we took the boat and we to England and we went to London England aah
London was beautiful double decker busses so on and so forth you know and my father
went to the ambassador and we stayed there four days and the ambassador said you
cannot go to Canada

MD: and and what reason was he giving your dad

GR: the passport was something wrong with the passport the way it was issued it wasn't
right

MD: oh

GR: ok this happened before to him so what happened when it happened before he said that's something screwy here you know we got to find out...so he sent a telegram to Ottawa telling his name and so on and so forth..so he got a telegram from Ottawa his name was Guido Mr. Guido Ricci you are free to go to Canada any time you want he had he had this telegram but where was this telegram..all over with the clothes so on and so forth you know..we took everything apart ..we found this telegram..he goes to the ambassador and he said you can leave tomorrow if you want..and then we took the Duchess of Bedford from England and we went to Halifax ..now this was in winter..on February the fourth was my birthday I was on the ship

MD: oh really

GR: I was all by myself

MD: and where was everybody else like where you with your family were they

GR: we we had-- that's just this is the way it happened

MD: oh nobody

GR: so I went on up on deck by myself all full of snow you know this is the first time I've seen snow..anyway on the boat then we had a good time they had games and so on and so forth ..and the trip was about 18 days something like that we landed in Halifax

MD: and what was your first impression of Canada?

GR: [shakes head] it was not like Italy

GW: In February...[laughs]

MD: it's true I know

GR: and we took [laughs] and we took the train in Halifax and we put the bags above there you know I was.. as I said I was a kid I accepted everything as it came you know no problem and we travelled on that train for 24 hours and we came to Montreal ..now my father had a

friend in Montreal and he had called..he sent a letter a telegram you know telling him that we were coming to Canada if he could if we could stay with him..he knew that he had a big house this was on Rob? Street in Montreal...and aaah they said yes so we got to Montreal he came and get us and we go to the house and we stay in the house the day after I went out of the house and I was so happy I jumped on the snow.. it was beautiful [laughs]

MD: [laughter] and why was that just because to get out and finally. .that's why you were so happy

GR: I was happy to see the snow

MD: oh to see oh just to see the snow oh ok

GR: that's the first time I see the snow that's why I was so happy..you know so we stayed there a little while and then my father..a little bit at a time he found a good job he found a job it was actually it was St. Catharine street and McGill it was a beautiful spot but then he decided to open a business so he opened a business in Phillips Square just down beaver --? you know Montreal .. and then we stayed there for quite a while then in 1939 he had a sickness he got a sickness..I'll tell you how it happened..I was with my father all the time because after school my father used to give me a street car tickets eh you have to come to the store to help me he had a --now we were at Rosemount and he was at Westmount...aaah do you know the difference?

[26:01:2]

MD: it's it's pretty

GR: fifteen miles [chuckles] he give me a ticket to take the streetcar.. fine..but like I said we never had any money..I used to keep the ticket and walk and run aah so I was in good shape all the time running to the there you know then at night we used to come together fine..I used to sell the ticket it was worth 7 cents to sell it for 5 cents when I had a dime I walk downtown to go to the show [smiles] you know I had all the freedom all the time I was on my own

MD: wow

GR: no one ever told me what to do

MD: and were you in school at the time or were you just were you working were you

GR: well I had finished aah

MD: you had finished

GR: again I may come to that

MD: yeah

GR: I-I eventually I finished my fifth grade

MD: your fifth grade

GR: ..I had my limit

MD: and that was great

GR: yeah

MD: yeah

GR: so I came to Canada and my father sent us somewhere a friend of his to learn English..we stayed with him for about three or four months then the school..in September it was time to go to school we went to Rosemount school and they accepted us only..aah they asked us which grade would you want to go into ..so I finished the fifth elementary I said they had seven here so I said why go to seventh I might as well go fourth it's easier for me so I took fourth and I went to fourth I couldn't aah nobody could get along with me... let's put it this way..the kids didn't like me because I was Italian ...

GW: discrimination

GR: they didn't like me because my name was Galileo they didn't know how to spell it how to pronounce it anything

MD: and and were they all Anglo kids like aahm

GR: they were all Anglo

MD: ok

GR: it was an Anglo an English district

MD: yeah

GR: you know..so you know I remember I was in school at the desk you know I was trying to figure out how to make my name acceptable to these people you know [chuckles] so I took my name and cut it in half ...Leo..so when I told them Leo everything was fine ..anyway at mid year you now I was in fourth in mid year I had the exams and they put me in fifth mid year in fifth year.,.,so the following year I went to fifth year at the mid term with the exam they put me in anyway..I finished the seventh year in two years..you know but the purpose was to learn English so I learned English and that my father had the shoe repair shop as I said he had some kind of a sickness and even the doctor didn't know what it was ..we were coming I was coming with him on the streetcar and usually you know there had to change two or three times and aah whenever were getting off the streetcar to get another one I was looking to see if it was there you know so this particular day I said papa the streetcar is the bus is there will be a bus I said I'll get off and I'll run and hold them so I did that I got off I was a kid and I start to run I turned around and my father wasn't there I said what what's the matter and he was very sick on his knees outside of the street car..he got out of the street car his knees couldn't hold him up any more --and actually I went to help I said what's the matter papa he didn't say anything you know..anyway it took three months that this sickness paralyzed him ..he couldn't even work nothing he couldn't he couldn't do anything ..it took three months after three months he passed away..he passed away on the 21st of April 1939

[30:00.2]

GW: March March

GR: [looks over at GW] huh

GW: March

GR: March March it was spring spring

MD: and so

GR: he passed away

MD: yeah

GR: and then actually I went to cemetery and so on and so forth and I was free... he he was very control-controlling but aah although I was always on my own now I really felt free..and my father was type of a person that he told my brother you should not smoke ..he was eighteen years old ..but they were smoking you know ..so when he cut off smoking well he didn't like it ..and I knew that so you know ..but when my father died..the first thing I did I bought a package of cigarettes [laughs]

MD: oh no

GR: aaah the stairs down Montreal the stairs like that [motions a spiral with his hands]

MD: yeah yeah yeah the spirals

GR: I was so proud my mother had gone to work no my mother had gone to work and I was in the house I was coming down the stairs [makes the action like he's smoking]

MD: oh my gosh

GR: ..its my mother coming the minute I saw my mother I froze because I was smoking you know and I froze and my mother just looked at me went by and didn't say a word you know that meant that she was accepting it not like my father when I – but..the reason I met this

young lady here is that she was telling her mother ..was going from house to house to clean homes so she could make a few dollars ..so her mother came to my house to help my mother you know and aah and she was cleaning the house and mother and I used to pay her ..so when the war was over then we met her but in the meantime I have to go back again

MD: [laughter] yes

GR: in 1939 my father died and in 1939 September 1939 the Big war started... and aah Germany declared Germany and others --and England declared war Canada declared war and so on and so forth and I was 18 years old and at that time I was going to school of electricity to learn ..electricity radio and all that .. so I finished school and I couldn't find a job for the simple reason my name...I was Italian and my eyes were not blue like the Anglo Saxons you know what I mean..anyway..so I couldn't find a job and ahh and this was war time already started war time and there was a lot of work for everybody and I couldn't find a job becausethere was a young man that we knew that he had a blacksmith shop .. he said--you come and work for me I'll make you swing the hammer...it's a job I went ..and this place was underneath the factory that they had war effort working for the war effort ..you know so I was downstairs doing this and meantime this guy went upstairs to the owners hey why don't you take this young kid that I have downstairs to work with you ..he said ok let him come up..now I was working there..the war effort were making ammunitions so on and so forth this I was very young at the time eighteen years old or something like that .. was fine you know and aahh then the government said at the time that we that everybody sell ...buy...war stamps..ok no problem..but the government said that aah the employers would ask the employees if they wanted to buy these stamps..so I was working --at the end of the week I got my pay and my pay was not exactly what it was supposed to be so I went to the office and I said my pay is not right and he said well he said these are for the war stamps well I said but you didn't ask me if I want it...so there was a big confusion he was talking out loud and I was yelling --'you're fired' ok I was fired ok just like that ..across the street was my brother working at a hardware store and I had left my bicycle there I was going—I said Renaldo I said keep my bike here I want to go look for another job...I'll take the street car

...so the end of the day I found another job came back and my brother said the RCMP were here ..they were looking for you and I said what for.. it was those people ..those people that fired you I don't know if you know the term 'Fifth Columnist' they accused you of being a Fifth Columnist.. that means a spy..oh I said [shrugs his shoulders up] what kind of a spy you know ...I said ok ..so the morning after I went downtown at this place and ahh you know I was small these guys were were 6 feet three of them got me in the room asked me all kinds of questions whatever questions they asked I answered the way I felt like it you know...they even asked me about Mussolini I said well I said in Italy I was not a fascist but it was my country so I love my country and I love the way I was living you know well...anyway I answered all my questions and then they said very good there is no problem you know but there is one thing you got to do they said aaahh we have to take your finger prints and you have to report every month...that made me an enemy alien right then and there ...ok so I ..I didn't care you know [chuckles] you can call me what you want my feelings are my own they don't belong to anybody..anyway so I went out looking for another third job I got the job and it was a nice job the war effort mind you and I was laughing at the other employees that were working because aah because the work we were doing in steel in the -in any machine shop eeh you have the link you have the tool to machine system parts they have to be a certain size ..in some of these guys you take only one cut to come down you can't do that you have to do a little bit at a time especially the last one very clean because a tenth of thousandth of an inch it had to be ..so this one cut that was below you made a hole in the wall and threw the piece in the wall and I said to myself how the hell these people are gonna win this war doing this you know...anyway I worked at this place and this place was owned by German fellow ..he had opened this plant for war effort he got a contract from the government and he was hiring all people like me..like Italians that couldn't find a job or Germans who couldn't find a job or Japanese and so on all these kind of people that

[37:23.0]

MD: that couldn't find a job

GR: very good..but they were not paying their wages that they were supposed to pay

MD: aah I see

GR: that was the reason

MND: ok..and meanwhile you also had to be reporting as as you were finding

GR: every month I had to to go every month I had to report to the RCMP

MD: ok

GR: they made me an enemy alien

MD: yeah

GR: and I tell you the truth I didn't give a damn anyway.. so after those days yeah I was very

MD: rebellious

GR: expressive you know if I have to say it I think I'd say it? And aah so this way it went on and this fellow was running the plant this German guy and aah we were all doing fine and there was ...the foreman was ..his name was Nielson he was from the Netherlands he was a foreman he got to like me and he taught me everything the whole trade he taught me everything and I loved it there...and aah one day there was a bulletin on the on the board you know I went to read it ..and the bulletin would say that the ten minutes that they used to get in the morning rest they were taking them off ..no more rest..so I I was in front reading this aloud to everybody the other employees ..nobody said anything the men they went back to work they said Mr Ricci you are wanted in the in the office ...I went in the office and then they told me Mr Ricci you are fired I said what for Fifth Column ..again Fifth Column you know..anyway I was not because I liked it for so on and so forth so I went ..,in Montreal they were not in favour of the war ..as a matter of fact the mayor of Montreal was in concentration camp

MD: yeah

GR: And ah so I went there and I told him the story that I was fired because Fifth Columns then the unemployment insurance they were all laughing you know at the situation they said never mind so we'll give you a job so they give me a job and I went and I stayed there three months I didn't like it you know it was different so I said I quit I went to the unemployment insurance and told them I want another job mind you this was the worst time you know they said we don't have any more jobs available except this one he said this is the one that they fired you the last time [chuckles] aaah I said the heck I said I'll go and find out..anyway I went there and the fellow that had fired me he was the general manager he wasn't there any more they rehired me...so I worked there until the end of the war and in the meantime after the war I got to know quite a few people in the business you know

[40:16.4]

ND: yeah

GR: and aah I started to work in the place an American company that opened a place in Montreal making instruments for the navy and the air force and I was working..they give you they make ..they give you to make a prototype or something.. they said we have an idea of if we make something like this is gonna we'll be able to do this certain thing so they give you the idea and said try and develop it

MD: yeah

GR: so I had this project so I was working on this so I should develop things you know fine .. so most of the things in your mind then you go and put it down in paper ..one day [chuckles] they came to me Mr. Ricci we have to take you off the project..what for..because if you're past aaah the thing about the war that aah you were the enemy alien so on and so forth I said ok take me off the project are you fire me they said no we'll just take you off the project fine so they took me off the project

MD: so this was a few years after

GR: oh this was after the war

MD: yeah

GR: I mean you know I was married [points over to GW]

MD: so it stayed on your record

GW: it went back to haunt him [GR looks over at GW]

MD: oh I see

GR: and aah it haunted me

GW: this was at Sperigyroscope

GR: Sperigyroscope ..was the name of the company

MD: yeah

GR: at Sperigyroscope I developed aah aah what's this company that you lend money now
..what's the name of that

GW: credit union

GR: credit union

MD: oh ok

GR: so I was developed credit union it was spreading the credit union and so on and so forth
and then two weeks after they told me to get off the project they came and called me back
..hr said Mr. Ricci he said would you mind putting down on paper what you found I said you
are out of your mind I said..you know..I'm gonna give you what I have on my mind after you
took me off of the project? Well he said what would you want to go back ..I said you give
you bring me the paperwork where you have that stuff about me just these words that
stuff about me I want to see it...they brought that paper from the office..they want me so
bad..brought that papers from the other they put them in front of me and I just tore them in
half and said I don't want to see this in my record anymore and I'll go back

MD: wow and they actually listened

GR: they actually went along with all that ..so I went back to the job we developed the project as a matter of fact they give me pictures after that project that we finished and aah so what I'm saying right now ..I was an enemy alien but I was working for the war effort

MD: yeah

GR: you know and then I met my wife and aah because her mother had come to work at the aah clean helping my mother clean so we got to know the young lady [he points over to GW]

MD: young lady and then

GW: then we got married

MD: then the rest is...

GW: aah we went out to we went out for two weeks aah two years and then we got married

MD: aand do you remember any other aah boys on your street or aahm that were either enemy aliens or interned what was it

GR: aah no no I'll tell you even the Italians at the time the young boys the young of my age..I was in church we were going to church we got the young people's society in church now we had of all ages ..some of them were called in the army and the air force I remember one fellow was called in the air force and you went over over in England so on and so forth nd my my feelings right then during the war were not aah anti-Ally but I wasn't in favour either you know I was neutral and aah this fellow after when he came back from the war he was explaining you know what the Germans were doing that they killed all these people you know and the mothers were crying so on and so forth aah and I said look at you're right it's very bad but you must have killed a few people too they had mothers too mother too were crying I said war is bad for two sides not only because you're there or I'm here ..you know so I expressed my opinions you know all the time I wasn't fascist I was never even in Italy I was

not a balilla because I was in this college but I would have love to be a balilla for the simple reason that a balilla is like the boy scouts was like the boy scouts [smiles] mind you I grow up then I would have been so different but I wanted to go in the balilla so much but I never went I never had a chance to go

[45:17.6]

MD: chance to go yeah..wow

GR: and I did my life I worked all my life and I might say

MD: yeah

GR: that in 1968 I got to say this one in Montreal there was the big aaaah [looks over at GW] how you call it in Montreal there the the..

GW: the expo

GR: the expo expo in Montreal

MD: ok

GR: and aah

GW: 67

GR: the president of France came to Canada

GW: was it the no was it expo in 67

GR: expo 67

GW: 67 was the expo

GR: yeah expo sixty seven..what was the name of the president of France at the time? It was de Gaulle

GW: de Gaulle

GR: de Gaulle came to Montreal there were separatists at the time which is still there and de Gaulle went to the City Hall you know on the balcony and said 'vivre le Quebec libre'..we were in business in Montreal we had a business I was working for a an American company that that aah at the time the Americans were more developed than Canada they used to send a lot of things from Canada from the States to Canada they had to pay duty..so this company said well instead of paying duty why don't we open a plant in Montreal so they opened up a plant in Montreal and I was the plant manager..and we stayed in Montreal for a few years well until [chuckles] this guy came and said vivre le Quebec libre I said we have to go to Ontario so we fixed it so that I came to Toronto I found a new plant..and .I brought a few employees from Montreal to Toronto and we established –in Toronto ..now I lived with my wife and my family aah and I worked there until I was seventy years old ..I was plant manager they gave me the gold watch [shows the camera his watch] after twenty five years..I had a good life..even during the war I didn't have a bad life I had a good life..I expressed my opinions freely..mind you there were there was proof that I was not fascist one hundred percent but I know one thing I must say this..aah during the war Mussolini – Mussolini he came into power in 22 then everybody says they made the trains run on time yes but he made everything else go on time for quite a few years he did a lot until 1935 that he wanted the king to be an emperor and he went into a aaah Ethiopia and Abyssinia then it went to his head ok but I remember those days when I was young those are were the good days of Italy which was Mussolini there –and I was there.. then throughout things changed..aah but my feeling Italy is still in my heart... it never goes away

MD: aaah well thank you so much that was fantastic

GR: maybe it was too much

MD: no it's wonderful

GW: so long

MD: oh that's ok that's so funny though you thought your story was going to be was going to be shorter than Ninetta's? Eh?

GW: it's longer [laughter]

GW: it takes him longer to talk

MD: oh no but it's wonderful because you see how what the process of remembering is and how how you connect different memories together

GW: you're going to have to edit some of this...you're going to have to edit some of it

MD: we'll see you guys will help with the

GR: you know how I met Ninetta

MD: oh how

GR:--

TT: the camera the camera is still on so

GW: oh my gosh

TT: should I shut it off

GR: no you don't have to turn it off...

MD: ok

GR: because her mother had come to help my mother so they knew each other..now I was eighteen..nineteen years old more..twenty twenty twenty two

GW: no you were twenty twenty you were twenty one

[49:13.0]

GR: twenty one ...you know I had a friend I had a friend that we were very close were like brothers and aah we always went together you know walking home that time there was nothing you know but walking home but aah one day I bought a motorcycle so I was going on the motorcycle and I used to meet her all the time you know not only that I had no place

to put the motorcycle so it happened to me..in Montreal they have these sheds in the back ..and behind their house..anyway..my mother would say hey...I know a nice girl for you to meet..I said ma leave me alone [he chuckles] [laughter]

GR: anyway then I used to meet her you know ..never stopped she was going home we were going somewhere else..then her cousin..I knew her cousin very well because she used to come to church..you know the young peoples society

GW: the young people's society

GR: you know and her name was Nellie I said I said one day I said Nellie why don't you ask your cousin which was [points to GW] to come to the house to my house..now in Montreal as I said the stairs were like that ..my fath-mother was going down the stairs and she seen Ninetta coming along with her cousin she runs up the stairs Galileo Galileo there's the girl that I want you to meet is coming down the stairs come and -I said ma leave me alone. ..then when she saw them coming up the stairs she was flabbergasted [laughter]

MD: that was a big surprise eh'

GR: and aah we got together and went to Belmont Park and from then on it developed to whatever it is today

GW: Belmont Park [chuckles]

MD: how many years have you been married?

GW: sixty four

MD: wow..that's great

GW: sixty four years

GR: as I said we had a good life

GW: time for a change

GR: I had a very good life

MD: time for a change now you have to find somebody else [lots of laughter]

GTR: and then now the children you know they're people they have to make sure the children are their parents you know those day sit was like that I was free to do whatever I wanted when I was two three years old

GW: yeah but times were different we were safe we were safer in those days

GR: we were safe you know and I didn't have to worry about anything

GW: you didn't hear of actually there was no television there was hardly even any radio

MD: yeah

GW so you didn't hear maybe it went on but what you hear today

MD: I know it's very scary

GW: it's very scary... you know you could go out at night anywhere...well even when we moved to Toronto forty years ago it was fine it's just aahhhh these last twenty years that it was been bad

MD: yeah there's been...yeah I mean I tell you even up in Vaughan this is aah

GW: also

MD: ...yeah...it's not ...

[fades out at 52:18 4]