

Dino Valz
May 12, 1988

Mary Kasamatsu
Interviewer

DV Today is the 12th of May. We are at 17 Stratford Road in Andover, Mass. My name is Dino Valz. I was born at the end of 1903 in Northwest Italy. I was born both an Italian and an American Citizen because my father had previously been naturalized. I came to the U.S. and to Barre, Vermont in 1905 and I graduated from Spaulding High School in 1921. From there I went to Harvard where I finished in '25 and after that I came to Andover where I have lived ever since. In Andover, I had a job with the Andover Press, printers of college yearbooks. I worked for them for 18 years. Then I took a job with a Boston advertising agency where I worked for 28 years. And concurrently, I taught part-time at Simmons College in Boston for 31 years. My subject was editing and publishing. I'm now long since retired. The only job I have is as a volunteer editor of the newsletter for the Andover Historical Society which I started 13 years ago. End of bio.

MK Okay.

DV You can turn off the machine for awhile.

MK Your family stayed in Barre?

DV Oh, my family had left for Italy in 1920, small family, four of us. I went over there with them the day I would have become a senior in high school in September of 1920. And my problem was the language barrier. I took a bit of tutoring while I was over there and the instructor brought out the third grade book which I later thought was very sound. But I was supposed to be in the 12th grade and I concluded that I just lost 9 years of my life. So I told my parents I wanted to return and I did get back here in January, '21, just before mid-years at Spaulding which meant that I lost about half of that year. And that in turn meant that I had a little difficulty with college entrance exams and I got into college on trial. I'm blaming losing half a year. Of course that isn't the real reason. The real reason is that I was never so really smart to begin with. Any other questions?

MK No, I just I had wondered now, so your family then stayed over in Italy?

DV My family stayed over in Italy. I'll say a word about my sister who was born in Barre, Vermont. Still there, we went back to Italy last summer. It was my fourteenth or fifteenth trip, I don't know which and it doesn't matter. And my sister, whose, was or is 80 years of age, maybe she's 81 now is in fair health. Her brother, your humble

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servant is now 84 and in good health, undeserved good health. And it's undeserved because there's no justice in the world. The good have ill health and evil people like me enjoy good health, end of sermon.

MK Well let's talk about Camp Vail and how you got there. Now you were 14 years old at the time you heard about Camp Vail?

DV Yup.

MK Tell me about that. How did you hear about it? How

DV Uh huh. That's why I had the yearbook out. Look, before I tell you how I heard about Camp Vail, let me try to explain why Camp Vail existed at all. It's difficult for younger people to realize the tremendous pressure on the general population for raising food during great world wars of which we've now had two. You don't realize it, because you never experience it and to read about it in the book isn't terribly convincing. Soldiers did the fighting. The rest of the population did their share of other things, many other things. But one of the most important was food. Napoleon had said it perfectly when he said, "An army marches on its stomach." No food, no marching, no victory, nothing but defeat. And our job was to lick the people whom we then called the Huns and the Kaiser, as simple as all that. The war had been going on for years. It was a trench war. It was inconclusive. The Americans joined light, but we needed something to change the stalemate which the war had become in the trenches of Northern France. People actually took their manicured lawns and plowed them up to plant potatoes. It was the patriotic thing to do. And people were patriotic. Winning the war was vital to our security and our welfare. Now someone, somewhere must have thought we need more manpower on our farms because farmer's kids had joined the army and where were you going to get manpower when it's scarce. Someone must have said, let's recruit some high school kids and that was how the idea of Camp Vail was born. You don't recruit farmer's kids, you recruit city kids, like kids in Barre and elsewhere in the state.

MK I don't see what you are saying. You don't recruit farmer's kids, why not?

DV They're already there. You want new workers. The farmer's kids are already at work on the farm. You want to add to the labor force by recruiting outsiders.

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MK Were some of the farmers' kids leaving the farm to join the war?

DV Some were, yes, at the age of 18 or so when you could join, and then there was the draft that picked you up whether you volunteer or not. So, one day at an assembly at Spaulding High School, probably around May 1, 1918, our principal Lyman Hunt made an announcement. He announced the existence of a camp for training boys to do farm work and he said that any high school boy whose grades were good would be released from high school early, meaning I think toward the end of May, to go to Camp Vail up near St. Johnsbury, Vermont, this is the Vail Estate. Theodore Vail was, I believe, the first president of American Tel and Tel and he had this huge farm up there. They would be released early to go up there for two weeks to learn something about farming. And then they would be assigned to individual farms all over the state to help raise food to help win the war. It was as simple as that. Probably I was an eager beaver, but it appealed to me and I told my parents I wanted to go, and they had no objections so I signed up to go to Camp Vail.

MK Did you have a group of friends who also signed up?

DV Not in my class. I think there were others from Spaulding High School in the upper classes, kids whom I don't know. But I have no clear recollection of how many there were or who they were, because once we got to Camp Vail, we were separated into work squads and probably never met again.

MK What was your first impression of Camp Vail when you got there?

DV I thought you'd never ask. (LAUGHING) Hey, I've got a gap here. My first impression of Camp Vail in Lyndonville, Vermont was a shock. I thought we were going to a farm with a house and a barn and all that. And we landed at a large field with one or two rows of tents. In other words, Camp Vail was tent city which astonished us because we asked, "Is that where we are going to sleep?" and we come from a nice house with a good bed! You can guess at the answer. There was a desk set-up where we registered and were assigned a tent. I think each tent slept four kids and there were four had army cots in each tent. Then we hear a great shout and the shout was "FALL IN." And we look around and here's a man in military uniform who turns out to be a sergeant from Norwich University and he repeats the shout "FALL IN" and of course we didn't know what he was talking about. We looked around to see where we should fall, but we didn't know where **IN** was. Then he

told us to form a straight line. I don't know how many kids were at Camp Valz, but probably well over 100 and can you imagine 100 kids from the age of 14 to 18, I was 14 at the time, forming a straight line. Of course we formed a crooked line. And after he lined us up, he gave us a little lecture on what we were to do. We were to have military drill every morning at 6 a.m. sharp and again in the evening before supper if we could still stand at that hour. Pretty soon he tells us that we should march forward and that we understood. But when he said that we started with the left foot, some of us didn't know our left from our right. And then we were told and the order at that time was "squads left, squads right." They've since changed the terminology, but that's what it was. And again we weren't quite sure which was our left and which was our right. At the time we were assembled, the Norwich sergeant told us that we would be awakened in the morning at 6:00 by a military bugle. And he asked if anyone would volunteer to raise the flag at that time. Guess who volunteered. I was a little naive in those days, but I ascribe it to my youth. You know, you're not very smart at 14. This meant that I had to get up at 5:30 and clean up and dress and get out there before 6:00 to raise the flag at that hour while the bugler was raising the troops. Have you got anymore questions?

MK Okay, well, then you settled in. You were only there two weeks, what did they teach you, what did you learn?

DV I'd say we learned two kinds of things. One had to do with animals and the other had to do with working tools. And I'll tell you about the animals first.

MK Before you start, had you had any experience with farming at all?

DV None whatsoever.

MK What about the other kids? They were all totally green?

DV I'd say so.

MK Uh huh.

DV You see, if a boy was a farmer's kid, he wasn't eligible. He knew more than he could learn in two weeks. And why take him off Farm A and put him on Farm B, it didn't make sense. We wanted new labor. I probably did know that cows had to be milked twice a day. I'm sure some kids didn't know it. And that they had to be milked about twelve hours apart. What I didn't know is that, that

established your work day. It had to be a minimum of twelve hours and could very easily be more than that. I probably knew that a cow's udder had four faucets. I didn't know how hard it was for an inexperienced hand to get the milk to come out of those faucets. And very soon our hands being unused to the squeezing motion got very, very tired, even sore. The second week wasn't so bad and I think by that time I was able to strip an udder which was quite an achievement. I learned that cows were unbelievable stupid. When they were wild animals, centuries and centuries ago, they must have had sense to look out for themselves or they never would have survived. But domestication does things to animals. It robs them of all their sense and integrity. At any rate, I came to like cows and still do. Horses, oh you have to learn how to pronounce these things in the backwoods of Vermont. Cows aren't cows, they are C A W S and horses aren't horses, their H O S S E S. We learned to brush horses. We learned to harness horses, hitch them to a wagon. At first one horse to a wagon and later a team of two horses to a wagon which can get kind of complicated. We learned some of the terminology of the horse, the harness and the wagon. The only one that has stuck with me because it's such a strange word is the whiffle tree. Do you know what a whiffle tree is, Mary?

MK Is it the middle wooden piece that comes out from the wagon?

DV It's what you hitch the pulling harness to and it...

MK Uh huh, okay.

DV It wiggles because of the notion of the horse or people from left to right as they swing their weight from one leg to another. We were told that "git up" means get going and "whoa" means stop. We were told about "gee" and "haw", but a horse paid no attention to a strange voice giving it those orders and that we learned that a tug on the rein was better than words. Horses also were stupid. They were slaves, but not quite as dumb as moo cows. We learned to use some tools. A hoe was a very useful tool early and through the summer for hoeing, for cultivating. We used these tools at Camp Vail. We learned that corn was cultivated between the rows especially after the rain when the ground was hard and we learned that potatoes had to be hilled. And the new potatoes grew within that hill. We learned how to run a horse-drawn hay rake. The problem was keeping the horse aligned with the line that you're making as you rake and "gee" and "haw" didn't work very well. And you learned how to press the lever at the right time

to make a more or less straight furrow of hay. Probably the hardest thing was the scythe. For one thing, at 14 I wasn't fully grown and a scythe was kind of big for me. But the main thing is that unless you swing that scythe at exactly the right angle, it isn't going to do anything for you except press the hay down. A scythe was used to trim on the edges of a hay field. Now you want to turn it off and I'll take a deep breath for a moment.

MK Okay. One thing I did wonder about, did you make any close friendships with any of the other kids while you were at Camp Val? or were you too tired and worked too hard to do much...

DV No, see they divided us all up into squads. Whether the work squads were the same as the tent groups, I don't know and it doesn't matter. But a squad might have been four or six. You'd go here. The other kids would do something over there, so that I knew the four or so kids in my work squad because we worked together during the entire two weeks. But as for the others, no I didn't get acquainted. Another reason may have been, I was probably one of the youngest there. You see, I was a freshman. I was 14. Most freshmen are 15 at the turn of the year, the end of the freshman year. I was even young for a freshman. The others were older and that may have had something to do with it.

MK Had you expected it to be a military style?

DV No! No I expected to confront a moo cow eye ball to eye ball, but squads right and squads left, I don't know why that was put in. It didn't make us better farmers.

MK I wonder whether there was some thought that it would get you introduced to it in case the war continued and these people were needed to go into the army. Was it a taste of the army or...

DV Well look, during the Second World War, I belonged to the Massachusetts State Guard. Well one function we served, you know if, we're near the ocean here, less than 20 miles, if a German submarine parked out there, we'd be out there with ammo. That was the primary reason in case of a direct attack. Well we served a secondary purpose. We took young kids in who were going to be drafted and by giving them some "squads right" and "squads left", we made their first days in the army easier. At least they knew their right from their left before they joined up. And if you think that's easy, it isn't, not for everybody. Now a boy who dances learns that. He starts out with you know

this foot. In the army, it's the other foot. But you know which is your right. Now the hand is easier, because you write one way or the other. But the foot, you seldom distinguish one from the other for any specific purpose. No, I didn't get acquainted and I have no recollection of any other individual except the big loud mouth sergeant from Norwich who scared the daylight out of us. We thought we were in a prison.

MK Did it...

DV Bossing us around like slaves. We weren't his slaves.

MK As far as you know, did any of the kids decide hey, this isn't what I came in here for, I'm going home?

DV I don't know. I doubt it. Don't forget one thing. Patriotism is a tremendous power especially when the nation's existence hangs in the balance. It's all around and everybody accepts it and everybody wants, you don't have to force people, wants to help. People would knit for the Red Cross, sweaters and socks and scarves and bandages the women, bonds, war bonds, raising money. Wilson of course was President. He was a scholar of course, an intellectual. He'd been a professor at Princeton, professor of history, but he could give a good speech, not the rabble rousing type of speech, he wasn't a Jessie Jackson, but he was articulate, and war until you experience being in one, is a tremendously emotional thing. And these other countries had been at it for three years, bleeding for three years. England, France, Italy and still the Kaiser was thumbing his nose at us. I think it was the Kaiser who's alleged to have said, "The Americans are too proud to fight." Wrong thing to say, right? It was stupid. It's alright. He received a few extra bullets for that crack. Well alright, shall we get down to business. Is it on?

MK Yes it is, I slipped it on here when I asked you what...

DV When it's, when I think it's off, I get a little more informal.

MK That's fine.

DV Alright, after two weeks, we were all assigned to farms. So far as I know, each individual went to a separate farm. I was assigned to a farm in West Danville. And when I got to the farm, I was a little surprised first how isolated this farm house was from all others. You know, I came from a city and a house was a spit and chaw away. The

other thing that surprised me is the three people who lived there. That farmer, the male, the boss, seemed to me to be in his 50's. He had a sister, unmarried, who seemed to be in her 50's and their mother who seemed to be 80 or thereabouts and I was 14. So we had not one generation gap, but almost two. And I was soon to learn that there were no other kids within a mile or two from the place. And that made a difference. No kids around. The house had no electricity, no water, except what you pump by hand at the sink.

MK Now you were used to electricity at home in Barre?

DV Oh, electricity and flush toilets and you know, 20th century.

MK So this was your first real taste of life without electricity

DV That's right.

MK Wow!

DV Now I'm back to the 19th century and what a difference that makes. The toilet of course was the type of toilet that we've had for a million years until this, well into this century. Cities had running water, flush toilets. Out in the country, it was the old well and the hand pump and a two-holer or occasionally a three holer. I once owned the book by Chick Sales on this subject. Very amusing. I made the mistake of loaning it to people. You know ^{George} ~~Bernard~~ Shaw said about that. "Never loan your books to people. My library is made up of books that people have loaned me." That's an aside. When there's no electricity, horsepower takes on a different meaning. It becomes literal. The only power is human power and horsepower produced by four legged animals. I would go to bed in the attic with a kerosene lamp in my hands. The farm had about 15 milking cows, one or two calves or heifers. The boss was very fond of these hereford cows. He loved their looks, their appearance, their reddish color. The food was plain and rather bland, but adequate. Breakfast consisted of mush, corn meal mush and milk. The pay was a \$1.00 a day. That was with agreement with the Camp Vail organizers. The hours must have been at least 12 per day for six days and then since cows don't recognize the Sabbath, at least 4 hours on Sunday, so that we probably worked about 76 hours per week. I stayed at Camp Vail for about, at the West Danville farm, about 2 1/2 months and went home. The main thing that bothered me

was lonesomeness. I might have been lonesome anyway, but never seeing anyone my own age or roughly my own age was difficult.

MK How were the interactions with the farm family? Did they talk to you much? Did they...

DV Yea, but cool. Maybe the most intimate thing is that I went to church with them, I think in Danville on Sunday after the moo cows were taken care of, of course, the farmer took cream to the creamery in St. Johnsbury on Tuesdays. Some Tuesdays, not all, he'd ask me to go along with him. So this wasn't work. Now it was, I don't know, 5 miles away or more, so that it killed the whole morning to go to the dairy and do some shopping, and come back, so that, that was a kindness you might say and sometimes he'd tell me to hoe the north corn field, which was proper. That was what I was there for. You don't win the war by going to the creamery. I have a postscript. When I graduated from Spaulding in June, 1921, I was called to the principal's office, Mr. Hunt, and told that I had been chosen in my class, Class of '21, to receive the gold medal of the Daughters of the American Revolution for the person who had done the most in my class to help win the war. Now Camp Vail wasn't the only thing that went into that decision, but it probably played a big part. I haven't seen that medal for decades, but it's in a green velvet box in a trunk in the attic of this house. Someday I've got to check it to see if it's still there. End of story. Fire away with your questions.

MK Okay, one thing I wondered about as you're talking about the medal, do you know of any photographs that were ever taken of the boys at Camp Vail during the training? Did you ever see any?

DV I don't know.

MK Uh huh.

DV I'm not aware of them. None were taken so far as I know. Now this must have been a state project and tucked away in some archive in Montpelier, there has to be some data on it. Now you know it could be buried five feet deep in a pile of documents and stuff, but it had to be a state project. It involved private people like Mr. Vail who gave us permission to use his farm and his equipment and to experiment on his moo cows. It involved Norwich which is a private, or is it semi-military institution. It involved the school systems, the high schools all over the state. Someone had to authorize it.

MK Some coordinator, there had to be a coordinator...

DV And the governor may have signed a piece of paper saying okay and as for a date, if we heard about this say the first week of May, 1918, April, March, may have been the times when an official decision, statewide was made.

MK Yea. The research that one of the people working on the project did was that it was organized in the summer of 1917, but I haven't checked the original researching done so —

DV Well the idea may have been born during the summer. The summer is an actual time to think of raising food. We weren't in the war in, oh, was it April in '17 that we declared war?

MK Let's see, this is partially taken from an article entitled "Vermont in the World War of 1917 - 1919."

DV Yea, my guess is we joined the war in April, although this was a pretty fast decision, but...

MK Sure.

DV ...it tells you something, Mary. The primacy of food.

MK Sure.

DV If you don't feed those guys, hey.

MK Yea.

DV Their not going to pull that trigger.

MK One thing I did wonder about that was mentioned again in some of the written stuff on Camp Vaal, it talked about some popular songs that were adapted with new lyrics just to I guess to motivate or...

DV That may be so. You see, kids camps and you know what I mean by camps.

MK Sure, sure.

DV I attended one at, was it North Hero, an island out in Lake Champlain. It was a boy scout camp. Kids camps, this is different kind of camp for recreation, swimming and all that, they always stressed songs, camp, around the campfire at night. Probably the girls more than the boys, but boys camps also. So that this would have been natural and while I can't say that I have a clear recollection of

it, I would say yes we undoubtedly did some singing. It's good for the spirit. It kills that time before you go to bed. Yea, it's a life emotionally when you're dog tired and your hands are sore from that squeezing motion. You have to squeeze consecutively you see from top to bottom and the cow knows the instant a new hand is there. And it could become uncooperative, although you're doing the cow a favor. That cow is going to be in terrible pain if the pressure of that milk builds up. Yes, I like cows and I regret that, and I learned this only two or three weeks ago, the last cow, I wanted to find out who owned it, I was hoping it was a calf, I was hoping it was a pet for someone and I was going to get a photographer to go there and photograph it. You know, you'll never see one again, not in this town.

[The last cow
in Andover, MA
is gone.]

MK What did you, obviously you got a lot of satisfaction out of knowing that you were part of the war effort as a kid, what else do you think you learned?

DV Yea, it eased the strain on your back. You know, there was pain there. Someone who has never done it, you hoe for 4 hours consecutively and oh, me poor aching back, but then I agree, hey, why are you doing this. To help lick the Huns. You had an objective. Yes it did, we knew why we were there. The whole country knew why and responded in both world wars magnificently. Men, women, old, young, it's the civilian population, we know what the soldiers did. But the civilians and come Veterans Day, look it's the soldiers' day, but let's not forget all the support they got from the folks back home. The support was there. It was^{not} given grudgingly, not at all.

MK Now you talked a little bit about that as you, before we turned the tape on, as you were saying why you wrote the article that you wrote for the Times Argus a few years ago. You said you wrote it around the time of Memorial Day?

DV Well, you know, the newspapers and everything were full of Memorial Day. We honored the soldiers, that's correct, we should. A lot of them died. The first world war was a trench war and you'd sacrifice a thousand lives to gain a hundred yards of real estate. What to hell good was that hundred yards? No good, but you know, you had to do something. You couldn't just sit there and do nothing. There was a war on. So the soldiers did the sacrificing, but the, without the tremendous support back home, the soldiers would have starved, no ammo, no food, no clothing, no nothing. The whole country dedicated itself. People who didn't know what a pig looked like would buy a

pig or two and raise pigs. Hey, food. The home population needed so much. Any surplus beyond that went to the soldiers. Add one pig to the domestic requirements, that goes to the troops. The Red Cross was a center where women of all ages, up in their 80's would go maybe two, three evenings a week, making bandages of direct use. But woolen goods, socks, sweaters, scarves, all sorts of things like that to keep the soldiers warm. You know, they didn't have heat at home in northern, in the trenches of Northern France. It was a hole in the ground, full of mud. And that's where you lived. No dog ever lived that badly, never. Why, I haven't read that article for ages. What I hope I brought out, the totality of the participation. We honor the soldiers, but everybody was in the act, and gladly. Patriotic fervor. Now the side issues far, far, away, you know Vietnam, Korea, they were so far away and small in scale, relatively that we never really, really felt it. But the Kaiser, Wilhelm, ah, that was different. He had a powerful army and we couldn't beat him. Year after year, stalemate. Yea.

MK Do you think there were different social conditions in the country that contributed to the patriotism? Do you think those conditions were different than they are now, would we see the same kind of total mobilization today?

DV I'm not sure I understand your question then, but I'm going to answer it even if I don't understand it.

MK Okay.

DV I said I think even a word will trigger a great reaction. "War," it's electric. It startles everybody. It changes the whole world. I think the response is automatic except for you know a few revolutionaries. We always have those. And sometimes they end up in jail and sometimes they end up on T.V. Yup. What's at stake is the life of the country. If Germany is defeated, if France is defeated, their whole lifestyle goes to pot. Look at the six countries that divide old Russia from the western. Let's start with Poland. It's been in the newspapers so much the last two weeks and go right down through. What happened? Well, Germany lost the war. It can be put in such simple words and so briefly. I have some French Canadian friends in Lowell and I like to tease them and kid them and rib them and scold them that their relatives the other side of the border refuse to learn English. And I give them more than one reason why I think they're wrong, but I'll give you only one. I said what you folks have forgotten and this is so easy to forget is that you

lost the war. Had you won at Quebec, the whole nation would be speaking French. But you don't put that in your history book because no country talks about its, the wars it lost, only about those it wins. And if it mentions the losses at all, it's all full of excuses and you know, it's the old story of Adam and Eve. Not my fault, blame him, blame her. First lesson in human nature, Mary. First recorded lesson in western civilization. You don't accept fault for your mistakes. It applies to an individual. It applies to a nation. I find that very illuminating. Poor serpent, couldn't answer back. Don't you have any sympathy for that crawling beast. No tongue, tongue, but no, you know speak-a-english. I feel sorry for it. It couldn't even lie. Adam and Eve could. The serpent was honest. Man and woman weren't. Hey there's a lot to that story. It's all there.

MK One other thing I wanted to just ask you in terms of, I'm okay, I'm imagining myself at 14, still, you know, pretty impressionable, young, pretty impressionable, not only were you determined to help win the war, or do whatever you could for the war effort, but an experience like that, that you had at that age, must have had a greater impact too in terms of something formative there that you took away with you that applied to other things. What do you think?

DV I don't know how to answer your question. Probably, but ask me to be specific. I don't know.

MK What things did you...

DV I'll tell you the respect in which I was different from, I can't say the average, the natives, the yankees and in Barre, the Scotts would have been there for several generations. You see, I lived in this little family, two children. My first language wasn't English. My first language wasn't Italian. When I got to Italy, I no speak the Italian. My first language was the Piedmontese dialect. I was born in the Alps. See the Matterhorn over there. Well I climbed the damn thing once upon a time. I grew up in a, I think the best way word is, neighborhood which was predominantly Italian. So that my knowledge of the world, my acquaintances were, I'm going to say, restricted ethnically. When you go to high school, you meet all these other guys from god knows where, Spain a lot of them. The Spaniards used to work in the quarries and lived in Websterville and Graniteville and many of them were illiterate. High school brought the whole community together. Your local grammar school and it was eight years, not six the way it is in Andover. You know,

Scotts

that takes you up to the age of 14. It's the enlarged neighborhood. But the north end of Barre was predominately, no, exclusively Italian. And when I say Italian, I'd like to take it another step, North Italian. The guys that, it says here, like mild food, not the hot spicy food that the southerners like in which I hate. I can't eat it. So it was an ethnic background, limited in that sense. I'll throw you a curve. It's estimated that before the war, there were between 4 and 5 thousand Italians in Barre, thousand Italians in Barre. Now that's an awful lot. The whole city was maybe 10,000 or 12,000 thou. You bring a 100 Irishmen over here, right here in this neighborhood, what's the first thing they are going to do? They are going to call in a priest, some nuns. Am I right or wrong?

MK I guess. I don't have much experience with Irish or Catholics, but...

DV Believe me, they'll call in a priest and nuns and start a parochial school. 4,000 to 5,000 Mary. Let's take 4,000. 1% would be 40, 1 out of a 100. Well, I would have lived right behind the Catholic Church. I walked by it every time I went anywhere, under the municipal building they call it now I think. Where the parochial school is. I'll give you as my estimate, that 1% or less of these Northern Italians nominally Catholic, went to the Catholic Church. It's the biggest mystery I have. In fact, I think I understand other things fairly well. You know, I lived through it here. I've been over there numerous times, not this one. Oh, I can offer explanations, but put all my explanations together and I am not personally satisfied that I have the full answer. That's why I call it my mystery. Now on the surface, anyone would say, their Italians, of course they're Catholics, of course they go to Church. Wrong, logic sometimes fails you. I grew up a Baptist. My wife from Milford, New Hampshire which is also granite by the way, and will you believe the two families never, and I mean never met. That's another story. I didn't have a relative at my wedding. Why? Damn good reason. I ain't got no relatives. Well I created one or two, but I didn't have any. I came back alone and I've been a loner ever since. Came back alone in 1920. Well I left late December, 1920. I got to New York and Barre early January, 1921. I spent Christmas at sea. Whee! Horizontal in my cot, suffering the agonies of sea sickness. Now I'm going to have that cigarette you promised me.

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MK Okay, fine. Let me just take a couple seconds here to get a little sound of the room and then I can pack all this up. Okay.

DV You can pack that up now, but you're eating here.

MK Okay.