

**PIETRO BANDINI:
MISSIONARY,
SOCIAL WORKER, AND COLONIZER,
1852-1917**

Edward C. Stibili

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Acknowledgments

Pietro Bandini is best known as the founder of the successful Italian agricultural colony of Tontitown, in the American state of Arkansas, in 1898. As the colony's leader until his death in 1917, he earned national and even international fame. Despite this fame, little has been known about Bandini's life prior to Tontitown. For that matter, many of the books and articles that mention or describe Father Bandini and Tontitown give little information on Bandini himself. Moreover, some of the information is incomplete and at times inaccurate.¹

Bandini's life and work can be viewed as a window into several important religious and social developments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in American history: the assimilation and Christianization of the Native Americans, the problems created by mass European, especially Italian, immigration, and the establishment of immigrant agricultural colonies at a time when most immigrants settled in congested urban areas.

The aim of this study is to provide as complete and accurate a reconstruction of Bandini's life and work as the available primary and secondary material makes possible, making use of previously mostly unused archival material as well as published works.

Bandini's life and work involved four distinct phases. The first phase, 1852 to 1883, covers his personal background and education in Italy and America. The second phase, 1883 to 1889, deals with his years as a Jesuit missionary among the Indians in Montana. The third phase, 1890 to 1895, traces his establishment of the St. Raphael's Italian Benevolent Society to assist the Italian immigrants who arrived at the port of New York. The fourth and final phase, 1896 to 1917, by far his most important and productive, covers his years as chaplain among the Italian colonists at Sunnyside and as the leader of Italian

¹ See Silvano M. Tomasi and Edward C. Stibili, *Italian Americans and Religion: An Annotated Bibliography*, 2nd ed. (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1992), for references to Pietro Bandini and Tontitown, Arkansas.

colonists at Tontitown, both in Arkansas.

Very little has been known or written about the first phase, his personal background and education in Italy and America from 1852 to 1883. The first work to provide some details on his family and education was the biographical sketch by Paolo Poponessi, *In America voglio andare. L'avventura di Pietro Bandini, un romagnolo tra gli Indiani nel West e tra gli emigranti italiani in Usa alla fine dell'Ottocento* (Forlì: "L'Almanacco" editore, 2004). But even that sketch must now be supplemented by information available in the Archivio di Stato di Forlì, the Archivio Gesuiti Italia Settentrionale in Gallarate, where the Turin Province archives are stored, the Archivio Parrocchiale di San Mercuriale and the Archivio Storico Diocesano di Forlì-Bertinoro, both in Forlì, the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu in Rome, and the Archivio Storico Anagrafico of the Comune di Forlì, all in Italy.

The second phase, 1883 to 1889, which deals with Bandini's years as a Jesuit missionary among the Indians in Montana, has received some attention in the standard works on the Jesuits in the Pacific Northwest. Additional information is available in the Archives of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in Bensalem, PA, the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu in Rome, the Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, especially the Pacific Northwest Tribes Missions Collection, in Spokane, WA, and the Marquette University Special Collections and University Archives' Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, in Milwaukee, WI.

The third phase, 1890 to 1895, which describes Bandini's establishment of the St. Raphael's Italian Benevolent Society to assist the Italian immigrants who arrived at the port of New York, has been thoroughly detailed in my book *What Can Be Done to Help Them?: The Italian Saint Raphael Society, 1887-1923* (Staten Island, New York: Center for Migration Studies, 2003). This work will make significant use of that study, of which it is a sequel. Key archives for this phase

include the Archives of the Archdiocese of New York, the Archives of the Center for Migration Studies in New York, the Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, the Archivio Segreto Vaticano, and the Archivio Storico della Sacra Congregazione per l' Evangelizzazione dei Popoli o "de Propaganda Fide," all three in Rome, Italy.

The fourth and final phase, 1896 to 1917, which covers Bandini's years at Sunnyside and at Tontitown, Arkansas, has been the subject of many publications, including government reports. Recent works that deserve special mention are Elizabeth O. Borgognoni, comp and ed., *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995. A People of Faith, of Hope, and of Love* (Lake Village, Arkansas: Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church, 1995) and Susan Young, "*So Big, This Little Place*": *The Founding of Tontitown, Arkansas, 1898-1917* (Tontitown: The Tontitown Historical Museum, 2009). A great amount of archival material on this phase is available in the Archives of the Diocese of Little Rock, AR, the Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, the Archivio Segreto Vaticano, the Archivio Storico Diplomatico, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, all three in Rome, Italy, and the Washington County Archives in Fayetteville, AR.

Many archives and their staff have helped me in this effort. These include those listed above as well as the Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, the Archives of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, the Archives of the Archdiocese of Chicago, the Archives of the University of Notre Dame, IN, the Archives of the Ursulines of Toledo, OH., the Biblioteca Comunale "Aurelio Saffi" of Forlì, Italy, and the Diocese of Helena Archives, Helena, MT. The following individuals gave me valuable information, suggestions and support: Rev. Franco Zaghini of the Archivio Parrocchiale di San Mercuriale and the Archivio Storico Diocesano di Forlì-Bertinoro and Paolo Poponessi, both in Forlì, Rev. Diego Brunello of the Archivio Gesuiti Italia Settentrionale in Gallarate, David Kingma, of the Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, Mauro Brunello of the Archivum Romanum

Societatis Iesu and Rev. Giovanni Terragni of the Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, both in Rome, Elizabeth “Libby” Olivi Borgognoni of Lake Village, AR, Susan Young of the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History in Springdale, AR, Dr. Rebecca Howard of Lone Star College in Houston, Frank Maestri and Mary Maestri Vaughan of the Tontitown Historical Museum Board of Directors, Dr. Eugene Finnegan, professor emeritus of Calumet College of St. Joseph, in Whiting, IN, and Mary E. Brown of the Center for Migration Studies in New York. Calumet College of St. Joseph in Hammond, IN granted me a sabbatical and professional development funds to pursue this project. The Center for Migration Studies in New York provided funding and ongoing support for this effort. To all of these individuals and unnamed others I am very grateful.

Chapter I

Background, 1852-1883

The Bandini Family

Forlì is a small city in the region of Emilia Romagna in east-central Italy, an area first inhabited by humans during the Paleolithic period. Some 10,000 to 6,000 years ago, villages based on agriculture and domesticated animals began to appear. The use of metal tools followed. The area became a point of contact between southern and central Italy. Some Etruscan artifacts from the 5th century B.C. have been found. But the Celts or Gauls have left an even bigger footprint in the area, indicating a long and strong presence there. In the third century B.C. the Romans began to establish nearby colonies such as Rimini, Cremona, and Piacenza in the Po Valley. While they did not found the village that grew into the modern city of Forlì, it was located at the crossroad between the road that goes from Ravenna to Florence and the piedmont track that would eventually become the Roman Via Emiliana, built around 187 B.C. As a result, the village grew as a center of trade and became part of the expanding Roman world. Christianity began to spread to this area, especially after the Roman Emperor Constantine proclaimed its tolerance and recognition in 313 A.D. San Mercuriale was probably Forlì's first Christian bishop. The church named after him, facing Piazza Saffi in the city's center, was the Bandini family's parish. With the collapse of the western Roman Empire in the fifth century, much of the Italian peninsula came under the control of barbarian tribes that had invaded from the north. In 774 Charlemagne, king of the Franks, descended on Italy, freeing it from barbarian control and introducing the medieval feudal system of governance. The Romagna came under the control of the church.¹ Around 1850, the time when this story begins, Forlì was a city of some 16,000 inhabitants under papal rule, which lasted until June 1859, when the Romagna was annexed to the Kingdom of Piedmont during

¹ Fabio Lombardi, *Storia di Forlì*, 2nd ed. (Cesena: Società Editrice "Il Ponte Vecchio," 2001), 11-50. See Angelo Varni, ed., *L'Età Contemporanea*, vol IV of *Storia di Forlì* (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1992); Paolo Poponessi, *Dalla Romagna alla Romagna Toscana* (Trento: Editprint, 2001), 9-68.

the drive for Italian unification known as the *Risorgimento*.²



Forlì's Piazza Vittorio Emmanuele, now Piazza Saffi, with the Church of San Mercuriale, in the late 19th century; Web; Old Forlì.

Marco Bandini, the family patriarch, was born in Tuscany in 1793, the son of Giuseppe and Maddalena Minelli. He married Marianna Artusi, born in 1799 to Franco and Rosa Castellari. The family was probably originally from Castrocaro, a small Tuscan town not far from Forlì. It was first listed at San Mercuriale Abbey, in the city of Forlì, in 1819.³ In that year, Marco and his wife lived in Borgo San Pietro, most likely at no. 1422. Thirteen year old Matilde Bruni, daughter of the late Giuseppe and Francesca Gervasoni, and sixty

² Paolo Poponessi, *In America voglio andare. L'avventura di Pietro Bandini, un romagnolo tra gli Indiani nel West e tra gli emigranti italiani in Usa alla fine dell'Ottocento* (Forlì: "L'Almanacco" editore, 2004), 7-9.

³ APSM, Stato delle anime 1819, n.p. See ACMS, 078A, box 1, newspaper clipping, "Nel Trigesimo della Morte del P. Pietro Bandini," *L'Italiano in America*, February 4, 1917, 2; Francesco Gregori, *La Vita e l'Opera di un Grande Vescovo. Mons. Giov. Battista Scalabrini (1839-1905)* (Torino: L.I.C.E. - Roberto Berruti & C., 1934), 389; Poponessi, *Dalla Romagna*, 69-84.

three year old Vincenzo Bagnoli were also listed in the parish records as living there. Marco became a “trafficante” or trader, like his father. He also became a seller of salt and tobacco (“spacciatore di sali e tabacchi”), a state monopoly that required a license to sell.⁴

Marco and Marianna had four children, all presumably born in Forlì and members of San Mercuriale parish. The little that is known about them and three of the five children from his second marriage is found in parish and public documents. The oldest, Carlo, was born on October 28, 1819, and baptized a month later. The civil register listed him as a shopkeeper (“negoziante”) and married to Maria Fanzaresi. An 1849 legal document described him as a “widower with children” and no longer dependent on his father. Forlì’s 1874 general roster of administrative voters listed as him as a landowner (“possidente”). He died on November 23, 1891.⁵ The second, Maddalena, was born on November 14 and baptized on November 15, 1820. Since there was no civil register for her, the date of her death is not available and she either died prior to 1861, the year the registry office began its documentation on persons still living, or moved to another city. The above-mentioned 1849 legal document listed her as a nun.⁶ The third, Carolina or Carlotta, was born on November 2, 1822 and baptized on the same day. In 1848 she married Francesco Porcellini, with whom she resided in Castrocaro, and was listed in the civil register as a

⁴ APSM, Stato delle anime 1819, n.p.; ASFO, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, 1849, vol. XXVIII, vol. XXXII anno 1851, Catasto Gregoriano, mappa no. 31, foglio 2, 1877, shows location of no. 1404-1405; Popponesi, *In America voglio andare*, 11.

⁵ APSM, Libro dei Battesimi, B22, 36, Stato delle anime A16, 1825; CFASA, Bandini Carlo; ASFO, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, 1849, vol. XXVIII., Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, notai di Forlì, vol. LXV anno 1865; Elio Caruso, *Forlì: Città e Cittadini tra Ottocento e Novecento* (Ravenna: Edizioni del Girasole, 1991).

⁶ APSM, Libro dei Battesimi, B22, 53, Stato delle anime A16, 1825; ASFO, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, 1849, vol. XXVIII.

landowner (“possidente”). She died on May 12, 1893.⁷ The youngest, Adelaide was baptized on December 10, 1823. There was no civil register for her and she was not mentioned in the 1849 legal document that listed Marco’s children. It can be assumed that she died at a young age.⁸ Marco’s wife, Marianna, died on June 27, 1826, at the time no more than 27 years old, leaving behind four children from two-and-a-half to almost seven years of age. The entry in the parish’s Book of the Dead reads: “Marianna, daughter of Franco Artusi and Rosa Castellari, wife of Marco Bandini, having received all the rightful sacraments, at the age of 27, around the 7th hour in the morning, gave her soul to God. Her body was buried in a cemetery sepulcher with all the prescribed observances.”⁹

A little over four months later, on November 4, 1826, Marco married Matilde Bruni, the young orphan who had been living with his family. The event was recorded in the parish’s marriage register: “Having announced the bans for thirty day, I have detected no canonical impediments. Using the prescribed words, I have joined in matrimony Marco, son of the living Giuseppe Bandini, and widower of the dead Marianna Artusi, with Matilde, daughter of Giuseppe Bruni. Both of them were joined together in a Blessed Nuptial Mass. The witnesses were Marco Mamoli and Silvester Angeletti. Joannes Rondoni, Pastor.” Born in Forlì on April 11, 1806, to Giuseppe and Francesca Gervasoni, she was some 13 years younger than Marco. Listed in the parish records with the Bandini family in 1825 at age 18 as unmarried (“nubile”), she may have been the Bandini family nanny or servant. Under occupation (“osservazioni”) the same records

⁷ CFASA, Bandini Carlotta; APSM, Libro dei Battesimi, B22, 87, Stato delle anime A16, 1825; ASFO, Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, notai di Forlì, vol. XXXII, anno 1851.

⁸ APSM, Libro dei Battesimi, B22, 105 verso, Stato delle anime A16, 1825. See ASFO, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, 1849, vol. XXVIII.

⁹ APSM, Libro dei Morti, D8, 196.

described her as a maid (“donzina, possibly “donzella”).¹⁰ Several sources identified her as Swiss.¹¹ Given the demands of his work, the needs of four very young children, and propriety, Marco’s second marriage, so soon after his first wife’s death, seems to have been both necessary and appropriate.

Marco and Matilde had five children, giving him a total of nine children, three daughters and six sons. The oldest, Federico, was born on March 4, 1835. He was listed in the civil register as a broker (“sensale”) and married to Annunziata Raggi, with whom he had a daughter, Giulia, born on May 21, 1861. She married Angelo Pupo. They had two daughters, Federica Pupo, born November 11, 1891, and Maria Pupo, born October 9, 1895, and a son, Antonio Pupo, born November 7, 1892. The civil register noted that the three Pupo children moved to Parma on October 4, 1909. Federico died in 1861, at a very young age.¹² The second, Giuseppe, was born on July 26, 1837, attended the seminary in Bertinoro, where he was described in the academic year 1853-1854 as “good, studious, intelligent,” and entered the Society of Jesus on September 17, 1856. In 1867 he went to the Jesuits’ missions in the American West, working in several locations. He died in Spokane, Washington, where he is buried, on February 10, 1899, at the age of 61. Much information on him is available in Jesuit archives and publications.¹³ The third, Vincenzo, was born in

¹⁰ CFASA, Bruni Matilde; APSM, Libro dei Matrimoni, Y4, 9 verso, Stato delle anime A16, 1825; ASFO, Archivio storico comunale di Forlì, Appendice n. 4, mazzo n. 46, 1865.

¹¹ See ACMS, 078A, box 1, newspaper clipping, “Nel Trigesimo della Morte”; Gregori, *La Vita e l’Opera*, 389.

¹² CFASA, Bandini Federico, Bandini Giulia, Pupo Federica, Pupo Antonio, Pupo Maria. See ASFO, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, 1849, vol. XXVIII.

¹³ CFASA, Bandini Giuseppe; ASFO, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, 1849, vol. XXVIII; ASDFB, Sem., Registro degli alunni interni ed esterni del Ven. Seminario di Bertinoro, Anni 1853-1858, Anno Scolastico 1853-1854, 21-22, Anno Scolastico 1854-1855, 39-40, Seminaristi, #13, p. 71, Elenco degli alunni interni del Ven. Semin. di Bertinoro II (1854?), 2-3, Conti Correnti dei terzi verso il V.do

Forlì on July 27, 1841. He also attended the seminary in Bertinoro and married Rosa Rosetti in 1866. The civil register listed him as a teacher (“maestro”). On April 19, 1867, the couple went to Cesenatico, where their son Tito Bandini was born on September 8, 1873. Vincenzo died on July 12, 1874, about two weeks short of 33.¹⁴ The fourth, Antonio Decimo, was born in Forlì on June 13, 1848, married Carolina Brun in 1869, had no children, and owned properties in Forlì and in the country. He died on November 22, 1907, at the age of 59, by throwing himself in a well.¹⁵ Two days later, *Il Pensiero Romagnolo* published the following notice: “Friday morning at 8 Mr. Bandini, wealthy landowner residing on via C. Albicini, threw himself in a well of a neighboring house. He died as soon as he was extracted by persons who had quickly rushed there.” The notice added that “The cause of the suicide must perhaps be sought in the altered state of mind that seems to have hit him for some time so that for several days he was watched by his family.”¹⁶ Along with Carlo, Vincenzo and Antonio were also listed as landowners (“possidenti”) in Forlì’s 1874 general roster of administrative voters. They were among the small percentage

Seminario (1854-55), Elenco, Giuseppe and Vincenzo Bandini, 8-9; Paolo Poponessi, *Mission: I Gesuiti tra gli indiani del West* (Rimini: il Cerchio, 2010), 80-87; ALE, HR, Birth, Marriage & Death, Washington Deaths, 1883-1960, “Father Bandini” and Web: Washington, Find a Grave Index, 1821-2012, “Father Josephus Bandini” (accessed 10/17/2013).

¹⁴ CFASA, Bandini Vincenzo; ASFO, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, 1849, vol. XXVIII, Stato Civile, Comune di Cesenatico, registro degli atti di nascita, 1873; ASDFB, Sem., Registro degli alunni interni ed esterni del Ven. Seminario di Bertinoro, Anni 1853-1858, Anno Scolastico 1854-1855, pp. 51-52, Seminaristi, #50, p. 108, Conti Correnti dei terzi verso il V.do Seminario (1854-55), Elenco, Giuseppe and Vincenzo Bandini, 8-9. See Poponessi, *In America voglio andare*, 12.

¹⁵ CFASA, Bandini Antonio Decimo; ASFO, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Barbiani Vincenzo, 1849, vol. XXVIII; BCF, Filippo Guarini, *Diario Forlivese*, Volume Undecimo Dal giorno 17 Maggio 1905 al giorno 24 Marzo 1909, 1, 330.

¹⁶ *Il Pensiero Romagnolo*, November 24, 1907.

of the city's population eligible to vote.¹⁷ Pietro, the youngest of Marco's nine children, was born at Forlì, on March 31, 1852. He was baptized on the same day at San Mercuriale Abbey: "In the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty two, 1852, on March thirtyone, 31, I baptized an infant at six in the morning, the son of the married couple Marco Bandini and Matilde Bruni, in the chapel of St. Thomas the Apostle at San Mercuriale. His given name was Pietro Gaspare Vito. The godfather was Sante Montanari." He was by far the most famous of the nine Bandini children, whose life and work has been documented in several archives and many publications.¹⁸ Any of Marco Bandini's current descendants, if there are any, would come from Carlo and/or Federico's offspring.

Over the years, Marco accumulated two houses in Forlì and a number of properties outside the city.¹⁹ On April 6, 1835, he bought a house at no. 1404-1405 (civil #1631, 1632, 1633) in Borgo San Pietro, now Corso G. Mazzini 115, next to via Borghetto Mozzo, from Pasquino and Giovanni Bagnoli. It had a store on the first floor and a residence on the second floor. This is where Pietro and his siblings lived. On April 24, 1835, he sold the house at no. 1422 (civil #1615 and 1616) to Giovanni Bagnolini. It was most likely the family residence prior to moving to a bigger place next door.²⁰ In 1852 Marco Bandini bought a house at no. 808 (civil #2182) on Via S. Maria in Ripa. It is not surprising that Fr. Fortunato Giudice, Pietro Bandini's

¹⁷ Caruso, *Forlì*; Poponessi, *In America voglio andare*, 12-13.

¹⁸ CFASA, Bandini Pietro; APSM, Registro dei battesimi, U, B27, 1852, 47; Antonio Mambelli, *I Forlivesi nel Risorgimento Nazionale da Napoleone a Mussolini* (Forlì: A Cura del Comune, 1936), 21-22 and *Uomini e Famiglie Illustri Forlivesi* (Forlì: A Cura della Camera di Commercio, Industria, Artigianato e Agricoltura, 1972), 30-32.

¹⁹ On Marco Bandini's financial transactions and properties, see ASFO, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Benedetti Lorenzo, 1826, vol. XI, n. 3978 and 1830, vol. XIX, n. 3986, Catasto Gregoriano, Partita No. 95 and mappa no. 58, foglio X.

²⁰ ASFO, Catasto Forlivese Vulture, anno 1835, busta n. 36, Catasto Gregoriano, mappa no. 31, foglio 2, 1877, shows location of no. 1404-1405 and no. 1420.

Jesuit provincial, described his family as “well-to-do and refined.”²¹ Marco died on September 6, 1855, at the age of 60, leaving no. 1404-1405 and no. 808 to his five sons under the guardianship (“tutela”) of their mother Matilde, to whom he left the store.²² In 1866, after Matilde’s death on June 1, 1865, of lung disease at the age of 59, Antonio Bandini got no. 808 and 1404-1405 went to Julia Bandini, who inherited her late father Federico’s portion of the family estate.²³ A map for 1885 showed that Carlo, Giuseppe, Antonio, Pietro, and Giulia each owned a significant amount of land outside the city, most if not all of it inherited from their parents. Federico, who had died in 1861 and Vincenzo, who had gone to Cesenatico in 1867 and had died in 1874, were not listed.²⁴

Despite the extensive correspondence involving Pietro Bandini found in various archival collections, not one letter from Bandini to members of his family could be found. The very few available letters involving members of his family reveal very little about his relationship to it. Moreover, in his many letters and other writings, only once, in a letter to Fr. Francesco Zaboglio dated November 10, 1894, did Bandini refer to members of his family. In that letter, Bandini asked Zaboglio, who at that time was assigned to the port of Genoa, to help his brother Antonio’s nephew Tonino Brun, who did not have a passport as they prepared to travel to South America.²⁵ Even though Bandini came from a large family, he didn’t have much of an opportunity to bond

²¹ ASFO, Catasto Gregoriano, Fondi Urbani, Libro de’ Trasporti, Comune di Forlì, 1865, partita 121, and mappa no. 31, foglio 1, 1877, shows location of no. 808; AGS, DH 02, Giudice to Revmo Signore (Rolleri), Chieri, Italy, February 21, 1891.

²² ASFO, Archivio storico comunale di Forlì, Appendice n. 4, mazzo n. 17, 1855, Catasti del Forlivese, Volture, 1856, b. 54, Catasto Gregoriano, Partita No. 307.

²³ CFASA, Bruni Matilde; ASFO, Archivio storico comunale di Forlì, Appendice n. 4, mazzo n. 46, 1865, Catasto Gregoriano, Fondi Urbani, Libro de’ Trasporti, Comune di Forlì, 1865, partita 121 and Catasto Gregoriano, mappa no. 31, foglio 2, 1877.

²⁴ See ASFO, Catasto Gregoriano, Catastino D’Impianto, 1885 ca., reg. 39, cc 88-93.

²⁵ AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Zaboglio, Piacenza, November 10, 1894.



Bandini family home in Corso G. Mazzini in Forlì; Paolo Poponessi.

with most of its members. His father died when he was only about 3½ years old. His mother died when he was 13 and already at Bertinoro. The 33 to 29 years age gap between Bandini and his four half siblings

speaks for itself. The age gap between Bandini and his four brothers was narrower but still significant, 17 for Federico, who died when Bandini was about 9, 15 for Giuseppe, who joined the Jesuits when Bandini was only 4 years old, 11 for Vincenzo, and 4 for Antonio.²⁶ If Bandini was close to any of his brothers, it would have been Giuseppe, with whom he lived for one year, the fall of 1883 to the summer of 1884, at the Jesuit St. Ignatius Mission in Montana, Vincenzo, whose son Tito would join him at Tontitown in 1911 and assist him at the parish until 1916, and Antonio, who was closest to him in age and for whom he made his request to Zaboglio. While a warm relationship with his closest siblings may be assumed, the lack of family correspondence makes it impossible to document his relationship to his family and his feelings towards it.²⁷

Bertinoro

The Diocese of Bertinoro was established in 1365, when the episcopal seat was transferred there from Forlimpopoli. A diocesan seminary was established in 1708 by Bishop Giovanni Battista Missiroli. It was the major scholastic institution in the city and accepted both seminarians and non-seminarians. According to Bertinoro historian Luigi Gatti, in 1849 Bishop Giovanni Battista Guerra, lacking capable local ecclesiastical teachers, asked the Jesuits to take charge

²⁶ APSM, Stato delle anime 1852-53-54, A40, lists Marco Bandini as 62, Matilde Bruni as 46, his brothers as 17, 15, 11, and 4, and Pietro as 10 months old. This must refer to 1853.

²⁷ See ACMS, 005, box 1, Gambetti to Bandini, Imola, Italy, May 7, August 17 (includes Geppino note), and October 29, 1891, Baruzzi to Bandini, August 16 and December 29, 1891, Geppino to Reverendissimo (Bandini), Imola, Italy, January 8, 1892, 078A, box 1, T. Bandini to Demo, Orchard Lake, Mich., December 29, 1916, February 19 and May 23, 1917, box 2, T. Bandini to Demo, Orchard Lake, Mich., April 23, 1917; AGS, DH 02, postal cards, T. Bandini to Revde Domine (Rolleri), Bertinoro, Italy, February 2 and March 29, 1891, Catona to Molto Reverendo (Rolleri), Forli, Italy, April 11, 1891, postal cards, A. Bandini to Rolleri, Forli, Italy, April 14, 16, 18, 21, 1891 and May 5, 1892, RP 01, T. Bandini to Carissimo collega in venatione (Grivetti), Tontitown, Ark., December 13, 1911, January 2, April 27 and October 4, 1912, May 13 and June 11, 1913.

of it.²⁸ In his detailed account on the Jesuits at the Bertinoro seminary, Romolo Comandini wrote that in June 1852 a group of students rebelled against the superiors, hoping for new and more open systems of government. The rector, Msgr. Gioacchino Turci, was opposed to that. Unable to suppress the protests, the ageing bishop decided to close the seminary, not knowing with whom to replace the rector who was unable to control the situation and was considered in a certain sense responsible for it. The sudden decision met opposition, since the seminary was the only educational establishment in the area. Even the archbishop of Ravenna, Cardinal Chiarissimo Falconieri, was unhappy, perhaps because he feared that the spirit of rebellion might spread to his and other seminaries. The cardinal wrote to the Jesuit superior general asking that the Jesuits take over the direction of the seminary. It was decided that the Turin Province Jesuits would assume its administration. They would administer it for forty five years, from 1852 to 1897.²⁹

At first, Fr. Giuseppe Bayma was appointed rector and taught philosophy, Fr. Giuseppe Giorda was appointed spiritual director and professor of dogmatic theology, and Fr. Telesforo Demasini taught humanities and rhetoric. All three would later serve in the Turin Province's North American missions. The seminary opened

²⁸ Luigi Gatti, *Bertinoro. Notizie Storiche*, 4th ed. (Bertinoro: Accademia dei Benigni, 2003), 301, 328, 330-33. For recent studies of the Diocese of Forlì-Bertinoro, see Franco Zaghini, ed., *La Chiesa forlivese nel ventesimo secolo: storia e cronaca* (Forlimpopoli: Nuova Tipografia snc, 2000), "La Cattedrale e L'Episcopio," and "La Comunità Cristiana Bertinorese nell'Età Moderna," in *Storia di Bertinoro*, coord. Augusto Vasina (Cesena: Società Editrice "Il Ponte Vecchio," 2006), 145-60, 255-277. See also Stefania Mazzotti, ed., *Storia di Bertinoro* (Cesena: Società Editrice "Il Ponte Vecchio," 1998).

²⁹ Romolo Comandini, "I Gesuiti della Provincia Torinese alla direzione del Seminario Vescovile di Bertinoro (1852-1897)," in *Ravennatensia* (Cesena: Badia di Santa Maria del Monte, 1972), 208-16. See Alessandro Monti, *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, vol. V of *La Compagnia di Gesù nel Territorio della Provincia Torinese. Memorie Storiche Compilate in Occasione del Primo Centenario della Restaurazione di Essa Compagnia* (Chieri: Stabilimento Tipografico M. Ghirardi, 1920), 321-25, the only general study of the Jesuit Turin Province during this period.

on November 14, 1852, with great celebration. Despite unfriendly rumors, the seminary did well. It managed to survive the *Risorgimento* and the Jesuits, who had to leave Bertinoro in 1859, returned in 1861. According to Comandini, the seminary became a center of support for the now gone papal regime.³⁰ As noted above, Bandini's older brothers Giuseppe and Vincenzo had been educated there as would his nephew Tito be educated there later. The seminary had also been attended by Pasquale Tosi (1835-1898), who joined the Turin Province Jesuits and founded eleven missions in Alaska. Other notable students included Cardinal Francesco Della Volpe, Federico Polloni, who later became the bishop of Bertinoro, Senator Alessandro Albicini, Antonio Piolanti, who later became rector of the Lateran Pontifical University, and others.³¹

Pietro Bandini, orphaned at age thirteen, received his early education at the diocesan seminary of Bertinoro, not far from Forlì. The seminary's June 1864 list of faculty, students, and staff included Pietro Bandini from Forlì, age 12, and Carlo, Giovanni, and Antonio Gambetti from Imola, ages 13, 11, and 9 respectively. Bandini befriended Giovanni, who apparently became a doctor and with whom he resided in Imola after leaving the Jesuits in July 1890.³²

³⁰ Ibid., *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, 325-32, On p. 451 Monti wrote that the Jesuits left the seminary in 1850 "following the invasion of the Italian armies." That was either a mistake or a typo, since 1859 is more historically accurate; Comandini, "I Gesuiti della Provincia Torinese," 216-28.

³¹ Paolo Poponessi, "Gli intrepidi Gesuiti a fianco di emigranti e indiani americani," *Il Resto del Carlino*, July 30, 2006, V and *In America voglio andare*, 13; Paolo Poponessi, and Marco Vignazia, *illustrati: storie e personaggi del passato di Forlì e dintorni* (Forlì: Tipolitografia Valbonesi, 2007), 57-59; Gatti, *Bertinoro*, 334; Comandini, "I Gesuiti della Provincia Torinese," 222-23.

³² ASDFB, Sem., Elenco dei Superiori, Maestri, Alunni, Servienti del V. Seminario di Bertinoro compilato nel mese di Giugno del 1864, #59, #69, #70, #83; Bertinoro, Registro Seminaristi 1866-1868, Elenco, Elenco degli Alunni 1866, 6, 25.



Seminary Church of San Silvestro in Bertinoro; Luigi Gatti book, p. 332, published by Accademia dei Benigni di Bertinoro, 2003.

Turin Province Jesuit

In a brief autobiographical sketch dated September 23, 1869, seventeen-year old Pietro Bandini described what motivated him to enter the Turin province of the Society of Jesus. As already noted, his older brother, Joseph Bandini, had been admitted to the same province on September 17, 1856:

I Pietro Bandini was born on 31 March 1852 in Forlì of the late Marco Bandini and the late Matilde Bruni landowners. I have three brothers landowners in the world and one in the Society of Jesus. I completed the course in fine arts (“belle lettere”); and since 1867 I have clearly heard the call of God to the Religion of the Society of Jesus for the salvation of my soul and that of my neighbor. I feel inclined to Preaching and Latin. I have been accepted in the same Society by the Rev. Fr. Pietro Paolo Gonnella Provincial on the first of May 1869, Saturday; and on September 23 I have arrived in this Novitiate house of Monaco of the Turin

Province, and on the evening of the following day I have begun the first probation.³³

He spent two years, September 23, 1869, to August 1871, as a novice at the Jesuit novitiate in the principality of Monaco, known as Monaco Principato. The novitiate had been opened in 1862, in an abandoned monastery of the Visitation Sisters, to meet the needs of the Turin province, dispersed after being suppressed in Piedmont in 1848. Soon after, the teaching of rhetoric, philosophy and theology was introduced at the seminary, called the College of the Visitation. In 1870, a boarding school was opened next to the College for students from Piedmont and Liguria in Italy.³⁴ After a two-year novitiate, Bandini began in September 1871 the first of three years of study of philosophy at Monaco Principato.³⁵ On October 2 of that year, he took simple vows. The seminary archive has a record of that event:

I, Petrus Bandini, take temporary vows for a fixed time. I have been examined and scholastically approved, according to the forms and customs of the Society, on this 2nd of October. This is celebrated before Reverend Father Joanne Matteo Ciravegna, Superior Provincial. I clearly understand the words. I promise to enter into and continue these vows and obligate myself as a professed member in formation to follow any decrees whatsoever according to the proposals of the General for the greater glory of God as he sees fit.³⁶

³³ AGIS, Autografi novizi 1851-1887, vol II, f. 3-8, no. 139.

³⁴ ARSI, *CPTSI*, MDCCCLXX, 9, MDCCCLXXI, 8; Monti, *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, 379-83, 387. The Turin Province annual catalog starts the previous September. For a recent study on the Jesuits in Italy in the nineteenth century, see Giacomo Martina, *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia (1814-1893)* (Brescia: Editrice Morcelliana, 2003).

³⁵ ARSI, *CPTSI*, MDCCCLXXII, 6, MDCCCLXXIII, 6, MDCCCLXXIV, 5. See AGIS, *Judicia examinatum Philos. Theol. 1831-1904*, G 3.13, pp. 18, 42.

³⁶ AGIS, *Vota simplicia 1823-1897*, ms. E, G3,14.

In September 1874 Bandini began his first year of regency or teaching and prefecting at the College of the Visitation. The catalog for that academic year also listed Peter Paul Prando under teachers (“magistri”) at the college. Bandini and Prando will team up in 1887 to establish St. Francis Xavier Mission in Montana’s Crow Reservation. During that academic year, Bandini taught beginning grammar.³⁷ The following two academic years, September 1875 to August 1877, Bandini studied theology at the Jesuit seminary at Aix en Provence, Province of Lyons, France.³⁸ In June 1876 the *Lettres d’Aix*, under the heading “A Flower at the College of Monaco,” published a letter written in French in which Bandini recounted the tragic but inspiring story of one of his young students at the College of the Visitation at Monaco Principato. It is his first published letter and expressed the religious piety of that period as well as the values that the Jesuits tried to instill in their students, such as obedience, loyalty to the church, and unquestioning submission to God’s will. The letter was addressed to a Father of the province of Turin:

My Reverend Father

Peace of Christ

You asked for some details about Laurent Gavotti, my former student, who I knew perfectly well. This dear child, whom we loved to call *Laurentillo*, the son of Marquis Raphael Gavotti and Madame Costa di Beverino, came with his brother Louis as a resident of Monaco at the beginning of October. The college of Monaco, founded, as you

³⁷ ARSI, *CPTSI*, MDCCCLXXV, 5.

³⁸ ARSI, *CPTSI*, MDCCCLXXVI, 32, DCCCLXXVII, 31. See AGIS, *Judicia examinatorum Philos. Theol. 1831-1904*, G 3.13, p. 74. For the seminary at Aix, see Jean Bremond, “Aix-En-Provence. - XIXe siècle,” in *Les Établissements des Jésuites en France Depuis Quatre Siècles*, ed. Pierre Delattre (Enghien [Belgique]: Institut Supérieur de Théologie, 1949), I:90-98.

know, by the benevolence of Prince Charles III, was given to the fathers of the Company for the education of young Italians. It continues to flourish more and more. It was there that our Laurentillo, at the age of eight, had to spend fourteen months. From there he had to depart for heaven.

The change of life had in fact made him a little sad. However, he had all the good qualities and all the virtues that are the fruit of an excellent education. The sweetness and amenity of his character gained him in a very short time the affection of all his classmates. Teachers and students admired in this child a certain maturity of judgment, a rare piety, and an exquisite politeness.

Already, in the bosom of his family, his good parents had been touched by his obedience, his affectionate submission, and his fraternal love. He was so attached to his instructor that he could not be separated...At the college, he had the same love for his masters, the same agreeable expression. One day, he broke a rule, since he was less careful than usual. Then this child, with his natural burning desire, began to cry in a violent torrent of tears. He went in front of all his classmates, kissed the hand of the father, as a sign of respect and total filial submission, asked to be pardoned, and promised to never again fall into this fault. What can I say about all his other victories over himself? He placed a number of little paper notes at the foot of the statue of the Blessed Virgin. Here is one of those notes. "I have recited my prayers, for the love of Jesus. - I have assisted at the Mass with the most perfect respect possible, for the love of Jesus.

- During my studies, I have kept silent, for the love of Jesus..." He was a happy child, who knew how to walk in the steps of the young Louis of Gonzaga!

One day, during recreation, many students spoke of what they wanted to do later in life. "For me," said Laurentillo, "I want to be a *zouave of the Pope*. What can be more beautiful and more glorious than to defend the Church, and to give one's life for the sovereign Pontiff!" And this precious grace he asked of the good God, by the intercession of Mary, on the feast day of the beloved Pius IX.

This marvelous generosity at such a tender age was nurtured and fortified by devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, as well as devotion to St. Joseph. He wrote on his small paper note, "O Sacred Heart, help me to be good like the small Louis of Gonzaga. I would rather die than offend you. I would love innocence, because the standard of the Sacred Heart is white and pure. St. Joseph, help me to be obedient as Jesus obeyed you."

I will pass over in silence, the thousand of other traits of the tender piety of Laurentillo, of his love of virtue, of his union with God in his prayer, and I arrive at what you desire to know above all. Laurentillo had already spent one year with us, when in the first months of the second scholastic year he fell sick and had to go to the infirmary. He had a very dangerous throat infection. This child understood his situation right away. He recommended that all those who come to visit him should pray for him. However, he still suffered from this cruel pain. Breathing became more and more difficult. Yet he never said

the least word or gave the least sign of impatience. He was entirely resigned to the will of God. He experienced some distaste for certain remedies. However, they only had to say, "My child, accept this for the love of Jesus and Mary" and all the repugnance disappeared. His spiritual father never left him for a minute. He said, "My small Laurent, you suffer much." Laurent responded, "My father, I do not suffer anything when you are near to me." As the sickness grew, the father said to him: "Are you ready to go to heaven?" - "Yes, my father, if God wills it." - "Are you willing to make the sacrifice of your life, of your whole heart to the good God?" - "Yes, with all my heart, with all my heart."

During this time, everyone in the college was asking Our Lord not to deprive us of such a dear child. In the same vein, his classmates wrote a letter to Our Lady of Lourdes and placed it on the altar during the Holy Sacrifice.

Four doctors, who cared for the child, judged that it was necessary to proceed with a dangerous but necessary incision. "Do not fear anything, my child, one of the doctors said to him, we will cure you." - "No, you are not able to do that, only if the good God himself wills it." It was resolved to give him the last sacraments, and to bring him Holy Communion for the first and last time. How are you able to recount this touching scene? As soon as the divine Eucharist entered his room, Laurentillo fixed his eyes on it with the total brightness of heavenly innocence. This angel received his God with such glee so that he remained for some time totally absorbed in the ineffable communication with his Most Beloved. He

then left filled with a totally new courage, ready to confront the operation that had been planned for him. This courage never diminished for an instant, despite the cruel incisions that he endured. He never moved in the least way. When all was finished, Laurentillo thanked the doctors, astonished that he seemed to have recaptured such a virile energy for a child of nine years. The operation resulted well, and we expected a prompt recovery. However, the next day all hopes were lost. This child, despite all this, was always smiling. One would say that he was like an angel ready to fly. Seeking the eyes of his father, the Marquis Gavotti, who was ever present with a great sorrow, he extended his small hands to him as a sign of farewell. Then having put on the holy scapular that had been given to him, he sweetly rendered his beautiful soul to his Creator. Meanwhile, his pious mother was prostrate in the chapel before the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes. In the view of one of our own who entered there: "My father, she asked, is all hope to be lost?" - "Madame, if Mary wishes to have your child next to her, could you refuse him to her?" The mother understood and could only respond with a torrent of tears. - The body of Laurentillo lay exposed for two days, and many persons who came near him repeatedly said, "Look, another Louis of Gonzaga!" There was a magnificent funeral, and he was placed in the tomb of our fathers. He stayed there until he was transported to the family sepulcher in Savona, where he happily awaits the resurrection, under the protection of the Mother of Mercy.

Thus Laurentillo died, but his example lives on. The loss of a child so pious, so obedient, so pure

touches our heart. Nevertheless, we hope that from high in heaven he will contribute by his prayers to the prosperity of our dear little college at Monaco.³⁹



Residence and Church of S. Antonio in Chieri; Archivio Gesuiti Italia Settentrionale, Gallarate, Italy.

After only two years of theological studies, Pietro Bandini was ordained a deacon on September 22, 1877, in the convent church

³⁹ “Une Fleur du Collège de Monaco. Lettre du F. BANDINI á un Père de la province de Turin,” *Lettres d’Aix* 2 (Juin 1876): 40-41.

of the Augustinian nuns in Forlimpopoli, and a priest on September 30, 1877, in the Bertinoro seminary church by Bishop Camillo Ruggeri of the Bertinoro Diocese.⁴⁰ During the next two academic years, September 1877 to August 1879, he taught grammar and French at the seminary of Bertinoro.⁴¹ He spent the following academic year, September 1879 to August 1880, completing his tertianship at the novitiate in Chieri, near Turin, which also served as a house for the 3rd year of probation.⁴²

After his tertianship, Bandini was sent to the new Jesuit foundation at S. Remo, established in 1879 northeast of Monaco, where he spent the next two years.⁴³ He was assigned to the church of S. Vincenzo de' Paoli, near the port, where he served as chaplain to the brothers of the oratory of Our Lady Mother of Mercy. On June 29, 1881, with the approval of his superiors, Bandini established at S. Vincenzo a congregation for boys and girls dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. This gave rise to an outcry against the Jesuits at S. Remo on the part of those who opposed the Jesuits' influence.⁴⁴

Jesuit Indian Missions

The Society of Jesus, whose members are known as Jesuits, has played a major role in Catholic missionary work among the Indians of North America from the earliest days of European exploration

⁴⁰ ASDFB, Sem., Ordinationes 1857-1986, 66; ADLR, PBF, Censi note, Bertinoro, Italy, November 30, 1898. See Tobia Aldini, *Storia di Forlimpopoli* (Cesena: Società Editrice "Il Ponte Vecchio" 1999).

⁴¹ ARSI, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXVIII*, 11, *MDCCCLXXIX*, 11.

⁴² ARSI, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXX*, 9; Monti, *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, 411-13.

⁴³ ARSI, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXXI*, 12, *MDCCCLXXXII*, 14; Monti, *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, 418.

⁴⁴ ARSI, Prov. Taur., Hist. dom. 1831-1889, 1601, ff. 772-774, Litt. ann. 1831-1889, 679-680; Monti, *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, 419-20.

and settlement.⁴⁵ Spanish Jesuits began to work among Indians in New Spain as early as 1566, not long after the Society's founding by the Spaniard Ignatius of Loyola in 1534.⁴⁶ French Jesuits began their missionary work among the Indians in New France in 1632.⁴⁷ Bishop Louis William DuBourg of Louisiana and the Floridas was

⁴⁵ For a general history of Catholic missionary work in the United States, see Angelyn Dries, *The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998). For general histories of Catholic missionary work among Indians in the United States, see Christopher Vecsey, *American Indian Catholics*, 3 vols. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996-99), Margaret and Stephen Bunson, *Faith in the Wilderness: The Story of the Catholic Indian Missions* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 2000); Marie T. Archambault, Mark G. Thiel, and Christopher Vecsey, eds., *The Crossing of Two Roads: Being Catholic and Native in the United States* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003). For an old but still valuable general history of Catholic missionary work among Indians in the United States, see John G. Shea, *History of the Catholic Missions Among the Indian Tribes of the United States, 1529-1854* (1855; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1973). For a general history of Jesuits in the United States, see Raymond A. Schroth, *The American Jesuits: A History* (New York: New York University Press, 2007).

⁴⁶ See Jerome V. Jacobsen, *Educational Foundations of the Jesuits in Sixteenth Century New Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938); John H. Hann, *A History of the Timucua Indians and Missions* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1996); Charles W. Polzer, *Kino: A Legacy: His Life, His Works, His Missions, His Monuments* (Tucson, Arizona: Jesuit Fathers of Southern Arizona, 1998); Jerald T. Milanich, *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999); John J. Martinez, *Not Counting the Cost: Jesuit Missionaries in Colonial Mexico - A Story of Struggle, Commitment and Sacrifice* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 2001); Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Nicholas P. Cushner, *Soldiers of God: The Jesuits in Colonial America, 1565-1767* (Buffalo, NY: Language Communications, 2002) and *Why Have You Come Here?: The Jesuits and the First Evangelization of Native America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

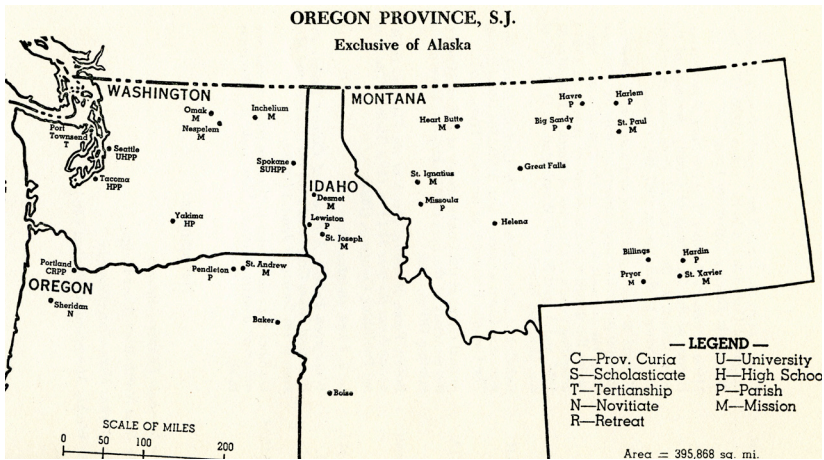
⁴⁷ See Francis Parkman, *The Jesuits in North America* (1867; repr., Williamstown, MA: Corner House Publishers, 1970); Allan Greer, ed., *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000) and *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Tracy N. Leavelle, *The Catholic Calumet: Colonial Conversions in French and Indian North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

instrumental in bringing Belgian Jesuits to labor among the Indians in his far-flung diocese. The first group arrived in St. Louis in 1823 and included 22-year old Peter John De Smet who was, as one historian put it, “perhaps” the most “conspicuous figure” of the Jesuit entry into mission work among the Indian tribes west of the Mississippi River.⁴⁸ In 1833, the bishops at the Second Provincial Council of Baltimore asked the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith or Propagand Fide, which had jurisdiction over the American Church, to give the Society of Jesus responsibility for the Indian missions of the Far West. Permission was granted the following year.⁴⁹ Starting in 1840, De Smet traveled and evangelized among many Indian tribes of the Plains and Rocky Mountains. In response to Indian requests for “Blackrobes,” the Indian name for Jesuits, missionaries were sent to this vast area, where they founded missions. By the time he died in 1873, the Jesuits were solidly established among the Indian tribes of the Pacific Northwest.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Gilbert J. Garraghan, *The Jesuits of the Middle United States*, 3 vols. (New York: America Press, 1938), I:432; Annabelle M. Melville, *Louis William DuBourg: Bishop of Louisiana and the Floridas, Bishop of Montauban, and Archbishop of Besançon, 1766-1833*, 2 vols. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1986), II: 623-43. See E. Laveille, *The Life of Father De Smet, S.J., 1801-1873*, trans. Marian Lindsay (1915; repr., Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 2000).

⁴⁹ Peter Guilday, *A History of the Councils of Baltimore, 1791-1884* (1932; repr., New York: Arno Press, Inc., 1969), 106-07; William N. Bischoff, *The Jesuits in Old Oregon* (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1945), 8.

⁵⁰ See; John J. Killoren, “Come, Blackrobe”: *DeSmet and the Indian Tragedy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994); Robert C. Carriker, *Father Peter John De Smet: Jesuit in the West* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995).



Map of Oregon Province, S.J., Exclusive of Alaska; Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, 566-01

Helena

In 1854, the Jesuit California and Rocky Mountain missions, as they were known, were placed under the dependency of the Jesuit Turin province. This gave the dispersed Turin Jesuits an area of missionary activity and growth.⁵¹ A report on the Jesuit missions of the Rocky Mountains in 1881, listed six missions, four in Montana Territory and two each in Idaho and Washington Territories. The Montana missions included Helena, St. Peter's, St. Ignatius, and St. Mary's. The Idaho missions included Sacred Heart and St. Joseph's and the Washington

⁵¹ Gerald McKeivitt, *Brokers of Culture: Italian Jesuits in the American West, 1848-1919* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 96. See M. McCulloch, "Jesuits. California-Rocky Mountain Mission," in *The Catholic Church in the United States of America*, 3 vols. (New York: The Catholic Editing Company, 1912), I:286-302; Monti, *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, 572-88; Bischoff, *The Jesuits in Old Oregon*; Wilfred P. Schoenberg, *Paths to the Northwest. A Jesuit History of the Oregon Province* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1982) and "Missionaries: The Jesuits," in *Religion in Montana: Pathways to the Present*, 2 vols., ed. Lawrence Small (Billings Montana: Rocky Mountain College, 1992), I:47-76; Gerald McKeivitt, "Northwest Indian Evangelization By European Jesuits, 1841-1909," *The Catholic Historical Review* XCI (October 2005): 688-713. For Jesuits in Italy at this time, see Martina, *Storia*, 115-43, 345-61.

Territory missions included Colville and Yakima.⁵² The *Woodstock Letters*, citing the 1884 catalogue, reported that the Turin Province, despite a dispersion of more than twenty five years, had 325 members, 164 of whom were in the missions of California and the Rocky Mountains. In California there were 44 priests, 31 scholastics, and 35 brothers. In the Rocky Mountains, there were 26 priests, 2 scholastics, and 26 brothers. A year later, the province had 340 members, with 173 in California and the Rocky Mountains.⁵³ Fr. Joseph Cataldo was the superior-general of the Rocky Mountain missions from 1877 to 1893.⁵⁴ One of his tasks was to recruit Jesuit missionaries for the American missions in Europe. His success in doing so during his extended 1885 trip to Europe helped save the Rocky Mountain mission. During that trip, he was able to get the support of Pope Leo XIII and the Prefect of Propagand Fide:

Fr. Cataldo whilst in Rome, in the interests of the Mission of the Rocky Mountains, was very kindly received by the Holy Father and Cardinal Simeoni. The latter in a testimonial addressed to European bishops, speaks in the highest terms of the Society's work amongst the Indians, and urges the Ordinaries to allow such priests as are fit for, and willing to undertake, the labor to do so.⁵⁵

⁵² "The Missions of the Rocky Mountains in 1881," *WL* XI (1882): 43-56.

⁵³ "Varia, Turin," *WL* XIII (1884): 95-96 and XIV (1885): 301.

⁵⁴ *The Italian American Experience: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Salvatore J. La Gumina et al. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000), s.v. "Cataldo, Joseph Mary (1837-1928)," by James Divita. See George F. Weibel, "Rev. Joseph M. Cataldo, S.J. Jubilarian," *Gonzaga Quarterly* 16 (February 1928): 74-109; Albert R. Bandini, "Il Grande Veglio delle Montagne Rocciose," *Il Carroccio* XXVIII (Ottobre 1928): 297-300; G. Giardina, *Il P. G. Cataldo S.I. Apostolo dei Pellerossa* (Palermo: Ediz. "Regina Apostolorum," 1928); Robert C. Carriker, "Joseph M. Cataldo, S.J.: Courier of Catholicism to the Nez Percès," in *Churchmen and the Western Indians, 1820-1920*, ed. Clyde A. Milner II and Floyd A. O'Neil (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 109-39.

⁵⁵ "Varia, Turin" *WL* XIV (1885): 301; Gerald McKevitt, "The Jump That Saved the



Church of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in Helena, MT; Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, 44.1.01.

The Montana Territory, established in 1864, was part of the Jesuit's Rocky Mountain Mission that also included present-day Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Wyoming.⁵⁶ In 1883, Montana was named a vicariate apostolic and a year later was established as the diocese of Helena. John B. Brondel served as the first bishop from 1884 to 1903.⁵⁷

Rocky Mountain Mission': Jesuit Recruitment and the Pacific Northwest," *Pacific Historical Review* 55 (August 1986): 427-53.

⁵⁶ Lawrence B. Palladino, *Indian and White in the Northwest. A History of Catholicity in Montana, 1831 to 1891*, 2nd ed. (Lancaster, Pa.: Wickersham Publishing Company, 1922), 289; McKevitt, *Brokers of Culture*, 122.

⁵⁷ Cornelia M. Flaherty, *Go With Haste Into The Mountains: A History of the Diocese of Helena* (Helena, MT: Falcon Press Publishing Co., Inc., 1984), 28-60; On the history of the diocese of Helena, see also L. B. Palladino, "The Catholic Church in Montana,"

Fr. Bandini, who apparently volunteered for the missions, left for Montana on September 19, 1882.⁵⁸ He spent his first year in the American Jesuit missions at the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Church in Helena, where Fr. Lawrence Palladino was the superior. Others in residence were Frs. Peter Barcelò and Hermannus Kamp, and Brother Paschalis Megazzini.⁵⁹ Helena was the territorial capital and the largest city in Montana, with a mix of ethnic and religious groups. In his autobiography, Phil Weinard recalled that in 1880 Helena “was still a long way from a Railway, and all merchandise was brought in by mule and ox teams. Like all mining towns, everything was wide open. Gambling and Dance halls were licenced...All games were on the square.”⁶⁰ In Helena, Bandini performed various religious services at the parish and studied the English and Indian languages. Local Indian tribes such as the Flathead, Kalispel, Kootenai, Coeur d’Alene, Spokane, and Colville understood the Salish language.⁶¹

WL IX (1880): 95-106 and *Indian and White*, 290-94; Henry Van Rensselaer, “Sketch of the Catholic Church in Montana,” *The American Catholic Quarterly Review* XII (July 1887): 492-507; Wilfred P. Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest, 1743-1983* (Washington, D.C.: The Pastoral Press, 1987), 264-66; William Greytak, “The Roman Catholic Dioceses of Montana: An Abbreviated History,” in Small, *Religion in Montana*, 2:31-84.

⁵⁸ ARSI, Prov. Taur., Hist. dom. 1831-1889, 1601, f. 774, Litt. ann. 1831-1889, 680. For the route to the Rocky Mountain Mission, see “Across the Continent. III. - Montana to Washington,” *WL XI* (1882): 141-63.

⁵⁹ ARSI, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXXIII*, 28. See AGIS, Residentia Soc. Jesu a Stmis Cordibus Jesu et Mariae nuncupata Helenae in Montana. On Palladino, see Umberto Torretta, *Padre Lorenzo Palladino S.J. Da Badia di Tiglieto al Far West*, trans. and pub. the author (Badia di Tiglieto, 2008).

⁶⁰ *Encyclopedia of Immigration and Migration in the American West*, ed. Gordon M. Bakken and Alexandra Kindell (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2006), s.v. “Helena, Montana,” by Ellen Baumler; K. F. Weinard, ed., “Montana Episodes. Phil Weinard Remembers Early Helena, 1880,” *Montana The Magazine of Western History* 43 (Summer 1993): 65.

⁶¹ DHA, Series 2002.006.005 microfilm #1, Marriage Register Vol. I (Ser.), Charles Callaghan-Bridget Monroe wedding, May 1, 1883; ARSI, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXXIII*,

The Jesuits promoted the study of native Indian languages to make their work more effective.⁶² At the age of 31, Bandini's education and formation were now mostly behind him and a life of unrelenting work and challenges lay before him.

28; "Letter from Mr. Post," *WL* XVII (1888): 194-95.

⁶² See Gerald McKeivitt, "Jesuit Missionary Linguistics in the Pacific Northwest: A Comparative Study," *The Western Historical Quarterly* XXI (August 1990): 281-304 and "The Art of Conversion: Jesuits and Flatheads in Nineteenth-Century Montana," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 12 (Fall 1994): 49-64.

Chapter II

Missionary in Montana, 1883-1889

St. Ignatius Mission

In September 1883, Bandini was stationed at St. Ignatius Mission, Flathead Agency, Montana, where Fr. Palladino was the superior. Others in residence were Frs. Leopold Van Gorp and Pietro P. Prando.¹ The mission had originally been founded in the spring of 1845 by Frs. Peter DeSmet and Adrian Hoecken at the Bay of the Kalispels on the Pend d'Oreille River in the northeastern part of the present state of Washington, about 14 miles west of the Idaho border. Flooding by the river each spring forced the moving of the mission east of the mountains to a valley called the Rendezvous, in northwestern Montana. The valley, which served as a place for bartering and gaming, was a common ground for several Indian tribes, the Kalispels, Kootenais, Pend d'Oreilles, and Flatheads. Fr. Hoecken arrived at the Rendezvous on September 24, 1854, and began the building of the new St. Ignatius Mission. In 1856 a school was opened but had to be closed the following year because of a lack of supplies. In 1864 four Sisters of Charity of Providence, the first in the state, arrived at the mission to open a boarding school for girls and a hospital. The girls were taught domestic skills such as sewing, cooking, laundry, dairy work, and gardening. The boys' boarding school was reopened, emphasizing manual training such as leather, iron, and wood work.²

¹ See ARSI, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXXV*, 27.

² Wilfred P. Schoenberg, *Jesuits in Montana, 1840-1960* (Portland, Oregon: The Oregon-Jesuit, 1960), 24-27; Bischoff, *Jesuits in Old Oregon*, 76. For detailed histories of St. Ignatius Mission, see Palladino, *Indian and White*, 91-103; William L. Davis, *A History of St. Ignatius Mission* (Spokane: C. W. Hill Printing Co., 1954); Gerald L. Kelly, "The History of St. Ignatius Mission, Montana" (master's thesis, Montana State University, 1954); Ella E. Clark, "Mission in the Wilderness," *Montana Magazine of History* 5 (Winter 1955): 51-57. For background information, see the *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year[s] 1882-86* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1882-86), 102-04, 99-101, 111-14, 126-29, 178-81. On the Kalispels, see Robert C. Carriker, *The Kalispel People* (Phoenix: Indian Tribal Series, 1973). On the Flatheads, see Peter Ronan, *History of the Flathead Indians* (1890; repr., Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, Inc., 1965) and John

In 1875, a printing press was purchased and installed.³ The federal government, which did not have its own schools for Indians, relied on missionary schools and in the 1870s began to contract mission schools by which the government paid an annual amount for each student enrolled. These government subsidies, as Francis P. Prucha has pointed out, “together with the gifts of Katharine Drexel and the teaching staffs of priests and nuns, provided the necessary support for the schools, and it was easy to expand under such circumstances.”⁴

A report on St. Ignatius Mission for 1881 noted that the mission served some two thousand Indians, almost all of them practical Catholics. It also noted that there were three thousand white inhabitants in Missoula County, where the mission was located. It added:

The church is one hundred by forty-five feet; it is built of wood, but solid, and has a belfry fifty feet high. The orphanage, under the Sisters of Charity, cares for forty Indian girls; our school has some thirty boys; both of these institutions are sustained in part by a Government appropriation. Nearly all the Indians come to the Mission four or five times a year, at the principal festivals. Sick calls, to a distance of thirty, fifty and eighty miles, keep one or two Fathers busy a great portion of the time, entailing very severe

Fahey, *The Flathead Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974). On the Sisters of Charity, see Lawrence Crowley, “Coming of the Sisters of Providence, 1864” in Small, *Religion in Montana*, 1:261-75 and Suzanne H. Schrems, *Uncommon Women, Unmarked Trails: The Courageous Journey of Catholic Missionary Sisters in Frontier Montana* (Norman, OK: Horse Creek Publications, Inc., 2003), 11-39.

³ Wilfred P. Schoenberg, *Jesuit Mission Presses in the Pacific Northwest: A History and Bibliography of Imprints, 1876-1899, Plus Other Early Catholic Presses and a Critical Study of the Lapwai Press, 1839-1846* (Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1994), 12-13. See “Varia, Flathead Mission,” *WL* XIII (1884): 416.

⁴ Francis P. Prucha, *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 3.

labor in winter by snow, ice and cold; in spring by swollen streams; and in summer by the excessive heat. Furthermore, one of the Fathers is obliged, three or four times each year, to make a round of visits to different Indian camps, remaining in each some days, or even weeks, according to the wants of the sick and infirm.

The appended annual report listed the following activities for 1881: 12,500 confessions, 11,000 communions, 75 baptisms of children, 5 adult baptisms, 45 first communions, 250 days of missionary travel, 240 sermons, and 800 instructions.⁵

At. St. Ignatius, Bandini continued to study the Indian language and was appointed preacher in the church and traveling missionary, performing the activities described in the 1881 report cited above.⁶ Since little correspondence relating to him is available for the little over three years that he was at St. Ignatius, references to him in newspapers, magazines, letters by other Jesuits, and reports written and sent by him to his superiors provide information on his activities at this time. Much of this information describes Bandini's formation of a musical band made up of Indian boys from the mission and its participation in various events and celebrations.⁷

⁵ "The Missions of the Rocky Mountains in 1881," *WL* XI (1882): 47-48. See "Extract of a Letter from Fr. Luigi M. Folchi to Fr. Piccirillo," *WL* X (1881): 140; "V. - Letter of Father J. Guidi to Father J. Cataldo," *WL* XII (1883): 51-53; *Encyclopedia of Immigration and Migration*, s.v. "Missoula, Montana," by Brandon Davis.

⁶ See ARSI, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXXVI*, 27, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXXVII*, 30; DHA, Series 2002.006.005 microfilm #16, Baptisms, Vol. I 1874-1893, November-December 1884 baptisms, 71, October-November 1886 baptisms, 85.

⁷ See John M. Trepp, "Music at St. Ignatius Mission, 1854-1900," (master's thesis, University of Montana, 1966), which does not mention Bandini and his musical band.



St. Ignatius Mission, MT, c. 1893; Jesuit Province Archives , 114.1.05a.

Though the following references are selective, inasmuch as they focus on Bandini and his activities, they and letters written by him during his subsequent tenure at St. Francis Xavier's Mission touch on some of the larger issues regarding Indians and their relationship to the wider American society in the late 19th century. These issues include the view of many white Americans that Indians were wild and immoral savages who needed to be civilized, the need to educate Indian children so as to give them the knowledge and skills required to become productive and independent adults, the constant need for funds to build, expand, and maintain mission schools, the bad influence of some whites on Indians, the confiscation by whites of Indians' natural resources, the relationship between Indians and the federal government, and the importance of giving Indians Christian values. This last issue involved a conflict between Catholics and Protestants as to whose Christian values were to prevail in the education of Indian children and the debate over putting their education in the hands of the government. Despite the conflicts and debates, it is probably accurate to assume that most Americans at that time viewed the schools as a

useful tool for assimilating Indians into American society. The debate on whether the schools did more harm than good to the Indians and their culture would take place, for the most part, after the middle of the 20th century in the wake of the black civil rights movement and continues to the present day.⁸

⁸ See Harry J. Sievers, "The Catholic Indian School Issue and the Presidential Election of 1892," *The Catholic Historical Review* XXXVIII (July 1952): 129-55; Henry E. Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation, 1860-1890* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963); Francis P. Prucha, "Indian Policy Reform and American Protestantism 1880-1900," in *People of the Plains and Mountains: Essays in the History of the West Dedicated to Everett Dick*, ed. Ray A. Billington (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1973), 120-45; Harvey Markowitz, "The Catholic Mission and the Sioux: A Crisis in the Early Paradigm," in *Sioux Indian Religion: Tradition and Innovation*, ed. Raymond J. DeMallie and Douglas R. Parks (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 113-37; Michael C. Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930* (Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 1993); George E. Tinker, *Missionary Conquest: the Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993); David W. Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence, KA: University Press of Kansas, 1995); Robert H. Jackson and Edward Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995); Robert Craig, "Christianity and Empire: A Case Study of American Protestant Colonialism and Native Americans," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 21:2 (1997): 1-41; James Carroll, "Self-Direction, Activity, and Syncretism: Catholic Indian Boarding Schools on the Northern Great Plains in Contact," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 16 (Spring 1998): 78-89; Frederick E. Hoxie, "The Curious Story of Reformers and American Indians," in *Indians in American History: an Introduction*, 2nd ed., ed. Frederick E. Hoxie and Peter Iverson (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidsson, Inc., 1998), 177-79; Paula M. Marks, *In a Barren Land: The American Indian Quest for Cultural Survival, 1607 to the Present* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002); James A. Sandos, *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004). For opposing contemporary views on the question of religious versus government Indian schools, see Martin Marty, "The Indian Problem and the Catholic Church," *The Catholic World* XLVIII (February 1889): 577-84, L. B. Palladino, *Education for the Indian. Fancy and Reason on the Subject. Contract Schools and Non-Sectarianism in Indian Education* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1892), Thomas J. Morgan, *Roman Catholics and Indian Education* (Boston: The American Citizen Company, 1893) and "The Roman Catholic Church and the Indians," in *Errors of the Roman Catholic Church*,

In an article on St. Ignatius Mission dated September 20, 1883, written by a visiting German invited to the opening of the Northern Pacific Railroad and published in the *Allgemeinen Zeitung* of Munich, Germany, there was a reference to “the two Bandinis, brothers, who spoke English rather indifferently.” Another translation from the German described their English as “frightfully fractured.” With the exception of obvious typographic errors, Bandini’s writings will be cited in their original form, both in terms of style and spelling, so as to document his developing proficiency in the use of the English language.⁹ Brother E. X. de Rougé wrote in a letter dated December 1883:

We have a new missionary who just arrived here. He is Father [Peter] Bandini. After only two months here, he mounted the pulpit the night of All Saints and gave an excellent sermon with the help of his manuscript; everyone admired him. This good Father is a musician and is working to form a group of artists among our children. He will succeed because he is full of zeal, and our little men are showing unexpected talent. At this moment we are building a sort of kiosk in the middle of the square for these musicians. It is hard work which takes many blows of the hammer on the fingers, and even some blood, but, nonetheless, we continue with courage.¹⁰

and Its Insidious Influence in the United States and Other Countries (Cincinnati, O.: John F. McCurdy, n.d.), xxxii-xlix. See also Donald L. Fixico, “The Literature of American Indian History,” in *A Century of American Historiography*, ed. James M. Banner, Jr. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2010), 170-82.

⁹ “A Visit to the Flatheads,” *WL* XIII (1884): 17; Davis, *History of St. Ignatius*, 132-35; Robert J. Bigart, ed., *A Pretty Village: Documents of Worship and Culture Change, St. Ignatius Mission, Montana, 1880-1889* (Pablo, MT: Salish Kootenai College Press, 2007), 124-26. The “two Bandinis” refers to Joseph and Peter, who were together at St. Ignatius Mission for one year, fall 1883 to summer 1884. All citations to Bandini in this study refer only to Peter. See McKevitt, *Brokers of Culture*, 167.

¹⁰ Bigart, *Pretty Village*, 128-29, 318. See “Rocky Mountains. Letter from Mr. Bougis,”

In a letter describing his visit to St. Ignatius Mission, dated May 13, 1884, Fr. Louis-Marie Ruellan made reference to the two schools there, one for boys and one for girls. He noted that "The arts are represented by a dozen artists who, under the direction of Fr. Bandini, blow their brilliant and loud brass instruments with all their breath. I took great pleasure from that for two days."¹¹

In August 1884, Eugene V. Smalley visited the Kalispel country and wrote an account of his visit for *The Century Magazine*. In his description of St. Ignatius Mission, he noted that the Jesuits who established the mission some thirty years ago "found the Indians entirely wild, not even understanding the first rudiments of agriculture." But the missionaries, "In the course of a generation...have civilized them so far as to induce them to live in log-houses a part of the year, to raise wheat, oats, and potatoes in little well-fenced fields, and to keep cattle and horses." A few, he wrote, "wear civilized dress, but most of the men stick to leggins and blankets." He added that "All profess the Catholic faith, and attend mass when not out hunting or roaming over the country; and they are sure to rally in force at the mission on St. Ignatius' day, Christmas, and other holidays." On the reservation there were 125 Flatheads, 965 Pend d'Oreilles, and 600 Kootenais for a total of some 1700 souls and they all speak or understand the Kalispel language. The Jesuits at the mission, the Italians Palladino and Bandini, the Belgian Van Gorp, and the noble Frenchman de Rougé, who had shown great hospitality, "hold very moderate views on the subject of educating and civilizing the Indian, not imagining

WL, XV (1886): 77-80, where it is noted that "The patient zeal of one of our Fathers impelled him to teach the boys instrumental music, and, as a reward for his labors, a well-trained band, in uniform, awake the echoes of our far-western wilderness, and strike with amazement not only the parents of the boys, but even the Governor of the Territory, and all other persons of note who happen to pass there."

¹¹ Bigart, *Pretty Village*, 141. See Cornelius M. Buckley, *When Jesuits Were Giants: Louis-Marie Ruellan, S.J. (1846-1885) and Contemporaries* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), 289-296.

that he can be turned into a white man in all save his skin by a few years of effort.” Smalley added that the “opinion of the missionaries is against attempting too much in the way of educating the Indians.” They held knowledge of arithmetic more important than reading and writing, to enable the Indians “to avoid being cheated in their buying and selling.” But “Most of all,” he pointed out, the missionaries “seek to teach them that it is honorable and profitable for them to work and be independent.” After listing the skills taught the students, he noted that “Father Bandini, fresh from Italy, and pining for music, has organized a band of boys which is beginning to be proficient in easy airs.” He added that “To see these little fellows blowing brass instruments, and keeping time with their moccasined feet, is a curious spectacle.”¹² By teaching music to Indians, Bandini was participating in an important and effective aspect in what Gerald McKevitt has called the Jesuits’ “Art of Conversion.”¹³

Traveling Missionary

In a long letter to Fr. Joseph M. Cataldo, superior of the Rocky Mountain Mission, written from St. Ignatius Mission and dated July 20, 1885, Bandini gave a detailed description of his work during the previous months. The letter, requested by Cataldo and written “spontaneously” and not in “any sort of set order,” began by noting that despite the record cold, Christmas services had been well attended, with many confessions and communions. During those days, Bandini

¹² Eugene V. Smalley, “The Kalispel Country,” *The Century Magazine* XXIX (January 1885): 447-55; Bigart, *Pretty Village*, 146-49. See “Varia, Rocky Mountains,” *WL* XIV (1885): 145.

¹³ McKevitt, “The Art of Conversion,” 49-64 and *Brokers of Culture*, 132-33. See Bigart, *Pretty Village*, 84; McKevitt, “Northwest Indian Evangelization,” 699-700; T. Frank Kennedy, “Music and the Jesuit Mission in the New World,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 39 (Autumn, 2007); Chad Hamill, *Songs of Power and Prayer in the Columbia Plateau: the Jesuit, the medicine man and the Indian hymn singer* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2012).

had meetings with different tribes. At one such meeting with the Kootenais, the topic was the education of Indian children, with one of the Indians suggesting that it might be a good idea to send the children to the schools at St. Ignatius. Bandini must have been surprised, for he wrote "To be truthful, the Kootenai tribe is the most reluctant to accept civilization among those who depend on our Mission. They are the poorest and the wildest. They live either in the woods or near lakes and live off of hunting and fishing." He added, "They live far away from the Mission and have contact with the whites to whom they sell fish and furs and from whom they do not learn anything good."

The letter went on to say that during this time, Bandini was worried about the typhus that was spreading among the Indians and taking many lives, and the \$14.21 that each Indian received from the sale of Indian land to the Northern Pacific Railroad. The money "was enough to arouse the youth to take up drinking and gambling." He described an incident in which he came upon some young Indians gambling, much to his dismay. Back at the mission, he spoke to members of the association for the Communion of Reparation about the gambling. After Bandini had spoken, "a few from the crowd spoke out and said they would pray with fervor and that they would take Communion for those sinners," which was the aim of the association. Bandini wrote that some good came of this. The same association also collected "a bit more than 60 dollars" from the Indians to purchase a pulpit for the church, an effort aimed at making the Indians understand their duty of helping the church and succeed on their own.

Meanwhile, typhus was spreading wildly, especially among the Kootenais. Called to visit the sick at the Ignatius camp, Bandini began the trip on horseback "with a terrible wind storm which made a whirlwind of snow as if it were sand and which found a way to go down my neck, blow in my face, or go up my arms regardless of how well I tried to cover myself." After a long and difficult journey, he

reached the Kootenai camp. He listened “first to the confessions of those who were on their feet and then of those who were sick.” Afterwards, they recited a few prayers together and he “gave them a little sermon and then sent them off in peace.” He was then “able to sit down and have some supper which had been prepared for me by the wife of the Chief. The supper consisted of a few boiled potatoes with no salt and no bread.” The following day, he said Mass and then brought Communion to the sick. Afterwards, accompanied by Chief Ignatius, Bandini made the rounds of the camp giving the sick castor oil and quinine sulphate. Before leaving the camp, he gave the seriously ill the last rites of the church.

Bandini then traveled some twenty miles north to the head of Flathead Lake, where some families from the Ignatius camp had gone to hunt. He heard confessions, gave Communion, and preached before returning to St. Ignatius. He returned to the Kootenai camp many times, including during Holy Week. Towards the end of his letter, Bandini described the celebration of the feast of *Corpus Domini* on June 4, 1885. He proudly pointed out that “The uniforms worn by our students in the band,” which took part in the solemn procession, “were not given to us by the States nor were they bought. I designed and cut them out of old material and then gave them to the Indian girls to be sewen [sic].” He concluded his long report by giving information on the school:

This school year [1884-1885], from November to the present, 99 boys entered our school. Just about the same number of girls entered the Sisters’ school. At first they feel the great sacrifice they must make on their liberty by chosing [sic] to go to school. Nevertheless, after just a short time, they become adjusted and learn to love the school and profit from all the sciences and arts that they learn there. The whitemen are always astonished to see

that our students can play music on wind instruments and read the notes. Certainly working with the band takes a lot of my time, as anyone might imagine since these are only young boys between nine and fifteen years old (only a few that are as old as fifteen). However, I must say that they show a great facility and inclination which is not so easy to find, even among the whites of whatever country! The young girls make equal progress both in school and in the feminine arts. Visitors who come and examine the handwriting of our students exclaim: "Is it possible? They write better than many whites."¹⁴

On August 7, 1885, the *Weekly Missoulian* published an account of the celebration of St. Ignatius Day at the mission named after the founder of the Society of Jesus. The gathering was presided by Bishop Brondel and attended by Senator George G. Vest of Missouri, a Protestant who had first visited the mission on September 8, 1883 and strongly defended and supported the Jesuits' work among the Indians. The opening address was given by a young Indian boy, Moise John, who said that "In our efforts to learn the useful ways of

¹⁴ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #4, frames 408-35, Bandini to Cataldo, St. Ignatius Mission (Montana), July 20, 1885. Peter Bandini's letter was translated from the Italian by Eliodoro Rodoni and Beatrice Steinmann. For the original Italian version of the letter, see "Lettera del P. Bandini al R. P. Cataldo. Saint Ignatius Mission (Montana) 20 Luglio 1885," in *LEPT* (Torino: Tipografia Giulio Speirani e Figli, 1887), 49-71. See Robert Bigart and Clarence Woodcock, eds. "St. Ignatius Mission, Montana: Reports from Two Jesuit Missionaries, 1885 & 1900-1901 (Part I)," *Arizona and the West* 23 (Summer 1981): 149-72; Bigart, *Pretty Village*, 176-94. For similar reports, see "Extracts from a letter of a Father of St. Ignatius' Mission," *WL* XI (1882): 183-84; "II. - Montana, St. Ignatius' Mission. Letter of Father J[oseph] Bandini to Father Cataldo," *WL* XI (1882): 275-79; JOPA, JBPP, 1:3, Estratto di una lettera del P. Giuseppe Bandini al P. Cataldo, St. Peter's Mission, Mont., March [18]86 and "Estratto da una lettera del P. Giuseppe Bandini al R. P. Cataldo, St. Peter's Mission, marzo 1886" in *LEPT* (Torino: Tipografia Giulio Speirani e figli, 1887), 72-73; JOPA, PBPP, 1:4, [Peter] Bandini to Cataldo, St. Ignatius Mission, March 29, 1886. See appendix I for the full text of the letter.

the white man, and the industries and habits of civilized living, we are but like little infants in their first attempts to stand on their feet and walk.” Addressing Senator Vest, he expressed gratitude for his support in the Senate of the school and its teachers. The newspaper account included the following:

A novel feature of the entertainment was the performance of the band. Ten Indian boys, dressed in a uniform consisting of blue coat, pantaloons and cap, trimmed with red, occupied a prominent position on the platform, and played several airs upon the usual band instruments—Fra. Bendine [Bandini] leading them. It could not be expected the Indian boys, who probably never heard any other band in their lives, should furnish music of an enchanting character, but their efforts were praiseworthy and were heartily appreciated. They seemed to play more by the aid of the notes from the baton of their priestly leader than from a comprehension of the soul in the written notes before them. The sight of a band of Indians tooting the great American horn and beating the time-honored snare drum was certainly a novelty to all of us of an entertaining character.¹⁵

The annual celebration of the feast of St. Ignatius in 1886 was again attended by Bishop Brondel and others who had come with him from Helena. An article on the event in the *Catholic Sentinel*, the Portland, Oregon, diocesan paper, noted that at the end of Mass, the bishop administered the sacrament of confirmation to about 100 Indians. It observed that during the service, “a brass band of fifteen

¹⁵ Bigart, *Pretty Village*, 115-23, 195-98. On Senator Vest’s 1883 visit, see JOPA, PNTMC, roll #1, frames 507-520, St. Ignatius Mission, Montana. Report of Subcommittee of Special Committee of United States Senate Appointed to Visit Indians Tribes in Northwestern Montana, 1883. See also “The Society’s Work Among the Indians,” *WL XIII* (1884): 201-04; Davis, *A History of St. Ignatius*, 136-38.

instruments, played entirely by Indian boys, rendered difficult selections in a surprising manner.” It added that the “degree of civilization, education and accomplishment to which the Indian boys and girls have been brought by the noble efforts of the Sisters and the Fathers is astonishing to all.” In fact, they “would open the eyes of [those] who believe there is no good in the Indian, and no possibility of reclaiming him from a state of barbarism.” The article pointed out that the bishop and those who had come with him “were royally entertained at the Mission. Fathers Palladino, Guidi, D’Aste and Bendini [sic] vied with each other in showing them around...” At the time there were 140 boys and 80 girls at the mission, representing six different Indian tribes: Kalispel, Pend d’Oreille, Flathead, Kootenai, Blackfeet, and Cree.

The *Missoula County Times* reported on August 25, 1886:

The boys in the Indian school at St. Ignatius Mission came up on the train Monday morning and went to Stevensville yesterday on a picnic. They passed through town yesterday with the brass band, composed of Indian boys, playing a tune. They attracted a crowd on the streets and were warmly praised for their musical talents and training. The boys were all dressed alike and were intelligent looking fellows.

Two days later the *Weekly Missoulian* gave a more detailed account:

Most of our citizens were not a little surprised on Tuesday morning to hear the notes of a band playing on the street, and a procession of seven two-horse wagons, filled with young Indian boys, neatly dressed, wearing caps similar to those worn by the U.S. troops. The band was at once recognized, by those who have previously been to the mission, as the St. Ignatius brass band. It was composed on this occasion of seventeen

Indian boy players, all packed in one wagon, and their music was creditable. They were under the care of Fra. Bandini, through whose careful direction they have been trained in their musical accomplishments. Behind the band came in procession six more wagons each driven by Indians and containing Indian boys, - there were sixty-two in the party - composed of Flatheads, Blackfeet, Calispels, Pen d'Oreilles [sic] and Kootenais; sons of fathers, who not many years back were deadly enemies, each race then trying to exterminate the other. These boys were now fast friends riding off for a picnic in the Bitter Root valley, near Stevensville, where they will spend several days. They have been confined in school duties at the mission for some time, and the fathers decided they ought to have a vacation and an opening of their worldly eyes. They were bright-looking little fellows, and seemed to look at our people with as much curiosity as we did at them. It is said they enjoyed their ride on the cars very much, most of them never having experienced that pleasure before. May they have a good time, and return to their studies with renewed vigor is the wish of their friends in Missoula.

Back at St. Ignatius, Bandini sent the following letter to the editor of the paper:

Allow me to make use of your paper to publicly tender my heartfelt thanks to all those worthy persons of Stevensville and environs who took so great interest in the welfare of the Indian boys of the St. Ignatius school during their short stay in the Bitter Root valley. So great, indeed, was the good will generally shown to them, and so large was the number of beneficent persons who loaded them with

presents of every description, that I can not risk to give their names lest I might forget many of them.

I therefore most sincerely thank all those generous people and wish to hereby testify the deep sense of gratitude I entertain for them; and which these Indian children intrusted to my care do likewise entertain. They will never forget those happy days spent in the Bitter Root valley, and its truly kind inhabitants who rendered them still happier.¹⁶

St. Francis Xavier Mission

Fr. De Smet first encountered the Crow Indians in 1840. On his visits, he was well received by them and described them as “without doubt the most enquiring, the most eager for instruction, the cleverest and most civilized of the Western tribes, and, furthermore, great friends and admirers of the white man.” In 1842 he promised to send the Blackrobes requested by them and on June 9, 1847, he baptized fourteen children, the first recorded baptisms among the Crows. On January 13, 1858, De Smet informed his friend Edwin Denig, an Indian trader, that “I have been strongly invited to commence an establishment either among the Crows or the Blackfeet; this would greatly strengthen our missions among the Flatheads and Pend d’Oreilles.”¹⁷ But a permanent Jesuit mission among the Crows would not be established until 1887.¹⁸

¹⁶ Bigart, *Pretty Village*, 220-23, 225-26.

¹⁷ Laveille, *Life of Father De Smet*, 149-50; Garraghan, *Jesuits of the Middle United States*, II:460-62; Killoren, “Come, Blackrobe,” 78, 218-19.

¹⁸ On the Crows, see “Indian Missions. I. - The Crow Indians,” *WL X* (1881): 137-39; P. B., “Missione dei Corvi. Avvertenza,” in *LEPT* (Torino: Tipografia Giulio Speirani e figli, 1889), 60; JOPA, SFXM, 4:1, Cataldo, “La Missione in mezzo alla tribù dei Corvi” c. 1892; Eloise W. Pease, “The Crow Indians,” *Montana Magazine of Western History* 123 (1994): 50-57; Frederick E. Hoxie, *Parading Through History: The Making*

Jesuit Fr. Peter Prando, who wrote several accounts of the founding of the mission among the Crows,¹⁹ recorded that fellow Jesuit Fr. Peter Barcelò was the first priest to visit the Crow Indians at the Old Agency at Stillwater in 1880. During that first visit Barcelò baptized 114 children. "Meeting an Indian very sick, he baptized him and conferred Extreme Unction upon him. The next day the Indian was up going around, eating with his friends and telling them what a big medicine man the Black-Gown was." In the next three years, Barcelò visited the Crow Indian Reservation several times from Helena. In 1883, Prando and Barcelò spent three months among the Crows "studying the language and baptizing the little children and some grown people among whom the Great Chief Iron-Bull." While there, they were visited by Fr. Cataldo and Bishop Brondel, who "administered the sacrament of confirmation to Iron-Bull and six others." According to Prando, "No mission had been built at the Old Agency, because the Indians were going to be moved from there. In fact in 1884 the Government located the Crows where they are now."²⁰ In November 1883, Bishop Brondel asked the Jesuits "to establish two new missions, one among the Crows, and the other among the Cheyennes."²¹ Prando's assignment to St. Labre's Mission among the

of the Crow Nation in America, 1805-1935 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); *Encyclopedia of Immigration and Migration*, s.v. "Crow Nation," by Daniel S. Stackhouse, Jr. For background information, see the *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (1882-90), 100-02, 98-99, 108-11, 119-26, 172-77, 133-36, 153-55, 223-27, 115-19.

¹⁹ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 258, 274-287, Peter P. Prando, St. Xavier's Mission, 1890 and frames 288-309, Prando, St. Xavier's Mission. This work cites the 1890 version, frames 258, 274-287, but adds references to frames 288-309. Both refer to the microfilm edition.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, frames 275, 288 and frames 2-23, Prando to Cataldo, Crow Camp, September 26, 1883, where he gives an extensive account of the visit which began on August 4. See Michael E. Engh, "'A True Gentleman and a Crow': Peter Paul Prando, S.J." (master's thesis, Gonzaga University, 1978), 9-11.

²¹ "Rocky Mountains," *WL* XIII (1884): 150-51. See AGIS, Brondel to Reverendi ad

Cheyennes in 1885 put him in close proximity to the Crow Indians, enabling him to visit the Crow reservation. That reservation had been originally assigned to the Methodists in 1870. But the termination in 1882 of what is now commonly referred to as President Ulysses S. Grant's Peace Policy, which had divided Indian reservations among various religious groups, opened it to all religious groups. Concerned that the Methodists might establish a mission before the Catholics, Prando kept reminding Cataldo of that threat. In July 1886, Prando informed Cataldo that the Unitarians were building a school on the Crow reservation, near Fort Custer, and again urged him to act.²² Prando's championing of the Crows would earn him the title "Apostle of the Crows."²³

In May 1886 Cataldo appointed Frs. Urban Grassi and Prando to select a site for a permanent mission among the Crows. They chose a site at the mouth of a small stream named Rotten Grass, where it joined the Big Horn River in the Big Horn valley. It was twenty-two miles from Fort Custer and about the same distance from the Crow Agency in southeastern Montana. In June, Grassi went out East to raise money to start the Crow mission.²⁴ The same month, Cataldo applied for permission to select a suitable tract of unoccupied land, 160 acres on the Crow Reservation for a mission school to be called St. Francis

modum Patres, Helena, Montana Territory, November 17, 1883, for the Latin text.

²² JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 275, 288-91, Prando, Sr. Xavier's Mission, 1890; Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 11-14. See Small, "Methodism in Montana" and James S. Masters, "Unitarian Universalists in Montana" in Small, *Religion in Montana*, 1:133-66 and 2:275-94. JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, Prando, Sr. Xavier's Mission, 1890, frame 291, mentions the Methodists' failed effort to build a mission at Little-Horn. On Grant's Peace Policy, see Peter J. Rahill, *The Catholic Indian Missions and Grant's Peace Policy 1870-1884* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953).

²³ See Michael E. Engh, "Peter Paul Prando, S.J., 'Apostle of the Crows,' and 'Father Peter Paul Prando's Crow Reservation Photographs,'" *Montana The Magazine of Western History* 34 (Autumn 1984): 24-41.

²⁴ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 276, 289, Prando, Sr. Xavier's Mission; Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 14-16; Palladino, *Indian and White*, 257.

Xavier, to Commissioner of Indian Affairs John D. C. Atkins. Fr. P. L. Chapelle, vice president of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, heartily approved the application, which was granted on October 9.²⁵



Photograph taken at St. Francis Mission, Montana, 1888. L. to r. Bishop John B. Brandel, Fathers Peter Bandini, Joseph Cataldo, and Peter Prando with Indian chief, Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, 147.2.01a.

Frs. Prando and Bandini were assigned to the new Crow mission, the latter as superior. They had worked together before as teachers during the 1874-1875 academic year at the College of the Visitation in Monaco Principato and later at St. Ignatius. Bandini was chosen because of his musical ability. As early as 1883, Prando had suggested him to Cataldo: "The Crows have a great desire to learn how to sing. And if Rev. Fr. P. Bandini could come among them with his music, activity and good manners he would cap[t]ure very quick their hearts, and then he could

²⁵ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #14, frame 646, Chapelle to Atkins, September 29, 1886; Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 88 (note 54), and 27 where he states that "On January 11, 1888, the Ursulines petitioned for and received a use permit from the Department of the Interior for 160 acres of land for their school."

dispose of them as he wishes with great profit of these souls.”²⁶

Frs. Prando and Bandini left St. Ignatius Mission and arrived at Helena on the last day of December, 1886, on their way to the Crow Reservation. Because of the snow, they had to remain at Bishop Brondel’s residence for 26 days. While there, they gathered supplies for the new mission. On January 26, 1887, accompanied by two young volunteers Eddie Dillon and Stanislaus, they left Helena. They arrived at Custer Station at 10 p.m. When they first got there, they were mistaken for a “dramatic company.” They spent the night at the Empire Hotel, the “poorest” hotel in Junction City. The next day they moved to a “decent” hotel known as the Server House but were told that it was full. Bandini described to Fr. Aloysius Ragaru, in the best English he could muster, how his group was finally allowed to stay there:

During dinner I heard somebody touching the piano very poorly. When dinner was over I step in the parlor to enjoy a little music, before to start [to another hotel]. Having a chance after awhile I dare to try a little myself. At once the people of the Hotel went to hear and forced me to continue for more time than I thought I could dispose. The proprietor and his wife beg me to stop in their house; that they had a nice room and good beds for us. What a change is able to perform a little music!

Afterwards I heard from other parties that the proprietor knowing we were priests told his friends he gave orders to his wife to send us away from his house, because he did not want any preachers in his house. But music had a shooting effect in his heart. He is now

²⁶ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frame 5, Prando to Cataldo, Crow Camp, September 26, 1883. See JOPA, PPPP, 1:17, Prando to Cataldo, Crow Agency, September 20, 1883; ARSI, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXXV*, 27, Prov. Taur., 1003 Pr. Missouri. 1885-1909, fasc. IV, Diomedi to Molto Revdo in Xto Padre (Anderledy), January 15, 1887; Hoxie, *Parading Through History*, 200.

our best friend.

On account of the deep snow they were forced to stay there for three weeks.²⁷ In a letter written at the time, Simeon S. Hobson, a rancher in central Montana, wrote: "We are having the worst weather ever heard of in this country. For the last six days the mercury has been from 20 to 40 below zero and storming most of the time...It is so cold that when an animal lies down their legs freeze. I think that 25 to 40 percent of the cattle in this range will die..."²⁸

In several telegrams and letters to Frs. Alexander Diomedi and Aloysius Ragaru from Custer Station, written in Italian, English, and French, Bandini described the problems the missionaries faced. Money was needed to purchase a team of horses available for \$212 and for construction, since the \$1500 given for building a school and residence was inadequate. By February 13 the temperature had climbed from -40° to +18°.²⁹ With the temperature rising and road conditions improving, the group left Custer Station on February 19 to establish the new St. Xavier's mission. Prando described the occasion:

...travelling three days over one foot of snow they arrived at Rotten-Grass on February 21st and clearing a patch of snow 12 x 9 they stuck the first tent which were their kitchen and every thing. The Indians came

²⁷ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 277-78, 281-82, 292, 296-97, Prando, St. Xavier's Mission, 1890, roll #14, frame 52, Bandini to Ragaru, Custer Station, Mont., January 28, 1887; Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 18-20. See "Varia, Rocky Mountains," *WL XVI* (1887): 118-19.

²⁸ "Barbara F. Rackley, "The Hard Winter 1886-1887," *Montana The Magazine of Western History* XXI (January 1971): 50. See Leland E. Stuart, "The Winter of 1886-1887 - The Last of Whose 5,000?" *Montana The Magazine of Western History* 38 (Winter 1988): 32-41; David Laskin, *The Children's Blizzard* (NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004), 62-63.

²⁹ JOPA, PBPP, 1:5, Bandini to Diomedi, Custer Station, January 30, 1887, PNTMC, roll #14, frames 53-64, Bandini to Ragaru, Custer Station, Mont., January 29 to February 16, 1887; Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 20.

and shook hands with the priests.

The Fathers had three saddle horses, but no stable, no hay, and no oats, and if the poor horses wanted to live, they were forced to paw the snow, and eat the grass they could uncover with their feet.

After some days, the weather getting milder, they put up two more tents one as a parlor and store room, and another as a chapel. They began to have the service every Sunday and the Indians would throng and fill up the large tent.³⁰

The founding of the new mission received public support from the bishop and extensive coverage in the local and national press. The *Helena Daily Herald* published an article on January 24, 1887, titled "The Crow Mission," which stated that "By this bold enterprise, which, we have no doubt, will achieve success, the Rev. Fathers Bandini and Prando, S.J., will add a new flower to the crown of merit which their order has acquired in this Western country by its untiring devotion to the cause of Indian civilization." The article went on to note that:

³⁰ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #14, frame 65, telegram, Bandini to Ragaru, Custer Station, Mont., February 19, 1887, roll #34, frames 282, 297, Prando, St. Xavier's Mission, 1890, SFXM, 4:1, Cataldo, "La Missione in mezzo alla tribù dei Corvi" c. 1892, which stated that "On February 21, 1887, Fr. Paulo Prando S.J. and another companion (I believe ex-P. Pietro Bandini) made a stable residence among the Crow tribe." See Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 20-21; Hoxie, *Parading Through History*, 201; JOPA, PNTMC, roll #15, frames 638-639, articles, "St. Xavier's Mission, St. Xavier, Montana" and "The Man Who Founded St. Xavier Mission," *The Oregon-Jesuit*, March 1954, 1-3, 9. Karen Watembach, "The History of the Catechesis of the Catholic Church on the Crow Reservation" (master's thesis, Montana State University, 1983), has argued in the abstract on page x, that St. Xavier mission and its boarding school represented a "European feudal model of church," built on the constructs of a stationary center, i.e. the boarding school, and a "philosophical-historical concept of world view." This, the author claimed, was in contrast with the fact that the Crows were "nomadic and held a cosmological concept of world view."



Tents used during building of St. Francis Xavier Mission, Montana, 1887; Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, 147.2 .07.

The fathers will leave the cars at Custer station. There they will secure a conveyance to carry them to the barren place where the mission is to be located, fifty-five miles from the railway, twenty-two miles from Fort Custer and about the same distance from the Crow Agency, at the mouth of Rotten Grass creek. It occupies the center of a valley thirty miles long and about twenty miles from the Big Horn range. In the way of habitation all they can look forward to are the wigwams and lodges of the Indians. The future mission is as yet only a site. Lumber cannot be obtained nearer than thirty miles, and the missionaries plan to spend the balance of the winter in a tent.³¹

G. Lamberty wrote an article titled "New Mission among the Crow Indians" for the *Catholic Sentinel* on February 3, 1887, in which he emphasized the importance of organizing a school for boys and one

³¹ Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 18; JOPA, PNTMC, roll #15, frames 629, 637, newspaper clipping, "The Crow Mission," *Helena Daily Herald*, January 24, 1887, roll #34, frames 278-79, 292-94, Prando, St. Xavier's Mission, 1890.

for girls at the new mission. He noted that “Father Bandini is eminently qualified for the important work of establishing schools, while Father Prando, who commands great authority among the Indians, will leave no lodge unvisited, no corner unexplored.”³²

“A Mission to the Crows” in the *New York Freeman’s Journal* for March 3, 1887, written by “A friend of the Indians,” dealt extensively with the work of Frs. Barceló and Prando among the Crows. It concluded by noting “that on January 26th Father Prando and Father Bandini, S.J., left Helena, M.T., to open a permanent mission among the Crow Indians, with due authorization from the Government.” But there was “no prospect of building at present, as the necessary funds are wanting, and the remainder of the winter will be spent by the missionaries in a tent.” In what appears to have been a pitch for financial help, the article went on to say that a chapel and school must be built, “but until the alms of some Catholics interested in the cause of missions provide the means, the Fathers will have to struggle on as best they can...May the needed means to establish this important mission on a proper footing be soon forthcoming.”³³

In “Pioneers of the Faith,” *The Catholic News*, announced the arrival in Helena of Frs. Bandini and Prando “on their way to the Crow reservation.” “Within forty-eight hours after the arrival of Rev. Fathers Bandini and Prando the news that the ‘Black-Gowns’ had fulfilled their promise and were among them was conveyed by mounted messengers to the scattered Crow tribes.” After a school for boys and one for girls has been built, “Father Bandini will call some Sisters to his assistance and will entrust them with the care of the girls, while he will himself devote his remarkable abilities to the

³² *Ibid.*, roll #15, frames 630-31, newspaper clipping, G. Lamberty, “New Mission among the Crow Indians,” *Catholic Sentinel*, February 3, 1887 (includes notice in *Avant Courier*), roll #34, frames 279-281, 294-96, Prando, St. Xavier’s Mission, 1890.

³³ *Ibid.*, roll #15, frames 632-34, newspaper clipping, “A Mission to the Crows,” *New York Freeman’s Journal*, March 3, 1887.

instruction of the boys.” Pointing to the “painful and laborious” effort to establish the mission, the article emphasized the fact that “Father Bandini has toiled four years among the Calispels and Kootenais, and Father Prando has lived among seven different tribes already. They both are veteran workers, and their experience is a human guarantee of the success of the enterprise.”³⁴

After the group had arrived at the new mission, Bandini wrote Ragaru that they were in “the promised land,” despite being crammed in a small tent. But he complained that supplies from Custer Station through Fort Custer were slow in arriving, the food was often spoiled, and liquids, including wine for Mass, did not survive due to freezing or breakage in transport.³⁵ Even ink was hard to get due to freezing and breaking, as he informed Ragaru in his best English:

In my trunk I found a little red powder and I could make some ink in a bottom of an empty can...and a splitten stick makes my... writing pen. I write to you kneeling down in my knees, as St. Francis Xavier use to write to St. Ignatius, not as much for humility sake as for necessity. We not yet have chairs or tables...fur blankets and 3 buffalo robes are our bed and bedding. We have some beef buried on the snow, 3 sacks of flour, a sausage; with a shotgun we killed 11 prairie chickens and we buried them...³⁶

The first few months continued to be difficult, as recorded in Bandini’s correspondence with Ragaru during March and April. There were problems with finances, freight expenses, and the two young

³⁴ *Ibid.*, frames 635-636, newspaper clipping, “Pioneers of the Faith,” *The Catholic News*, n.d.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, roll #14, frames 66-67, Bandini to Ragaru, St. Francis Xavier’s Mission, February 27, 1887; Engh, “A True Gentleman and a Crow,” 21.

³⁶ JOPA, PBPP, 1:5, Bandini to Ragaru, St. Francis Xavier Mission, March 3, 1887, Bandini to Diomedi, St. Francis Xavier Mission, March 1887, Engh, “A True Gentleman and a Crow,” 21.

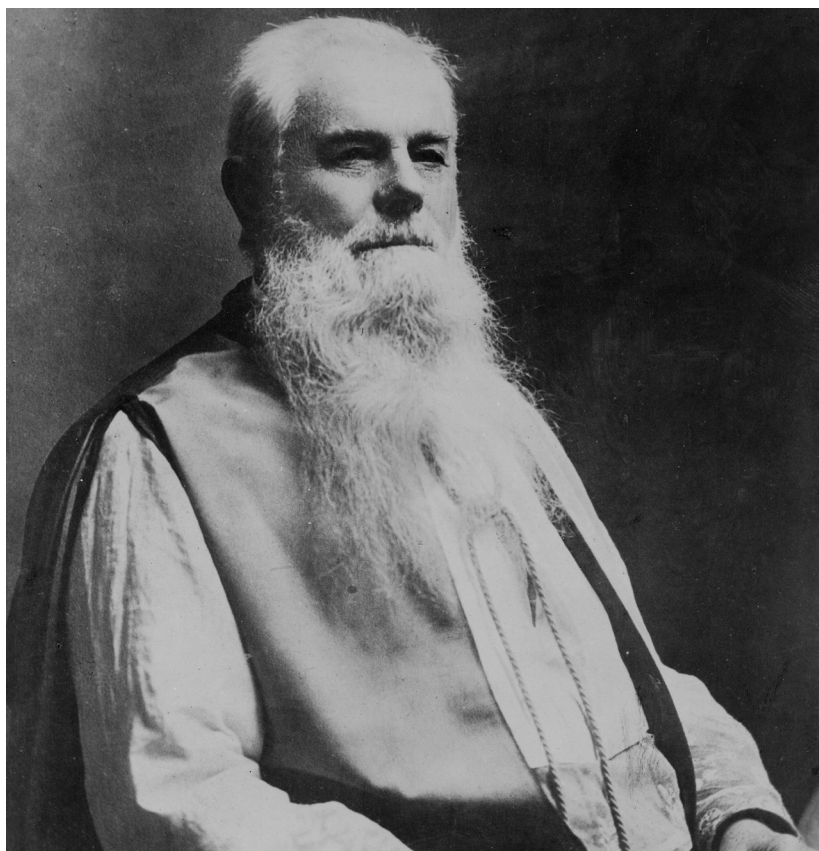
assistants. Eddie Dillon was doing well but Stanislaus suffered from “melancholy” and left by March to join the American army. He was replaced in April by 42 year-old Italian Jesuit coadjutor Brother John B. Rinaudo, who lasted one year.³⁷

“As soon as the snow disappeared and the ground got soft,” Prando recorded, “they put up a fence around the land, they broke land for a garden and gave the contract to build a school house two stories and a half high 60 x 40 feet. In the month of May the contractors came, and in September the school house was finished.” It cost \$7000, which was, as Bandini had pointed out, much more than the \$1500 that had been allotted. The high cost was due to the expense of building materials that had to be freighted across vast distances by the contractors from Bismarck, Dakota Territory. As Bandini wrote Ragaru, costs on the Montana frontier were “ten times [as much] for what you pay three times for in Helena.”³⁸

The available correspondence during the period June 1887 to April 1889, primarily between Bandini and Fr. Joseph A. Stephan, director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, and the wealthy heiress Katharine Drexel, indicates that he spent much of his time and effort building and expanding the boarding school, soliciting funds for it, and trying to make the mission as self-sufficient as possible. Bandini, in charge of both St Xavier’s and the nearby St. Labre’s Mission among the Cheyenne, which he visited about once a month, and visiting priest at Billings, began to seek the aid of the Catholic Bureau

³⁷ See *ARSI*, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCLXXXVIII*, 30, *MDCCCLXXXIX*, 39; JOPA, PNTMC, roll #14, frames 68-78, Bandini to Ragaru, March 17 to April 11, 1887; Engh, “A True Gentleman and a Crow,” 22.

³⁸ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 282, 297, Prando, St. Xavier’s Mission, 1890, roll #14, frames 69-71, Bandini to Ragaru, St. Francis Xavier’s Mission, March 21, 1887; ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Brondel, St. Xavier Mission, October 18, 1887; Engh, “A True Gentleman and a Crow,” 22-23.



Rev. Joseph A. Stephan; Marquette University Special Collections and University Archives, Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, ID 01603

for his boarding school while it was still being built.³⁹ The bureau had been formally established in 1879 to direct Catholic missionary work among the Indians and serve as liaison with the federal government

³⁹ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #15, frames 1082-1083, Bandini to Steven [sic], St. Xavier Mission, June 30, 1887; *ARSI, CPTSI, MDCCCLXXXVIII*, 30, *MDCCCLXXXIX*, 39. See Frederick G. Holweck, "Monsignore Jos Andr. Stephan," *Central-Blatt and Social Justice* 12 (September 1919): 181-85; John E. Rothensteiner, "The Champion of the Catholic Indian Schools," *Central-Blatt and Social Justice* 17 (August 1924): 161-63; Consuela M. Duffy, *Katharine Drexel: A Biography* (Cornwells Heights, Pa.: Mother Katharine Drexel Guild, 1972).

which, as already noted, had begun in the 1870's to contract with schools operated by various missionary societies whereby it agreed to pay an annual amount for each student enrolled. In 1884, the bureau was formally recognized by the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore as an institution of the Catholic Church and placed under the charge of a committee of five bishops.⁴⁰

At the end of June 1887 Bandini wrote to Fr. Stephan to inform him that he was "ready to open the school among the Crows, and the Ursuline sisters will be here in a few days to take charge of it." He asked Stephan to "make the contract for the first 6 months for 50 pupils" and added that the next contract should be for 100 pupils, noting that "the place is very suitable for a large and important school." Stephan wrote to the acting commissioner of Indian Affairs, A. B. Upshaw, asking that the Bureau be given a contract for the support and tuition of 25 Indian pupils during the current fiscal year at a per capita compensation of \$108 per annum. In September, Bandini was informed that the contract for the education of 25 Crow children had been granted and that he could procure the Indian children from the Crow Agency.⁴¹

Bandini's work at St Xavier's and the nearby St. Labre's Mission among the Cheyenne did not keep him from participating in a synod of the Diocese of Helena, June 22-24, 1887, two months later attending the blessing of a new church at Billings, where for some time he had conducted Catholic services, and participating in the examen of Fr. Balthasar Feusi on May 26, 1888, which he passed,

⁴⁰ J. A. Stephan, *The Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, 1874 to 1895* (Washington, D.C.: The Church News Publishing Company, 1895). See Guilday, *History of the Councils of Baltimore*, 241; *Acta et Decreta Concilii Plenarii Baltimorensis Tertii A.D. MDCCCLXXXIV* (Baltimore: Typis Joannis Murphy et Sociorum, 1886), 135.

⁴¹ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #15, frames 1082-1083, 1085-1088, Bandini to Steven [*sic*], St. Xavier Mission, June 30, 1887, Stephan to Upshaw, July 16, 1887, Chapelle to Bandini, September 16 and 21, 1887, Bandini to Chapelle, St. Xavier Mission, October 5, 1887. On the Ursuline sisters, see Schrems, *Uncommon Women*, 41-104.

as well as other community activities.⁴² He also found time to write reports on Jesuit missions besides the ones he wrote about the Crows and Cheyennes.⁴³

This was at a time when the Crow Indian Reservation was in a state of upheaval. Prando described it from his perspective in this unedited eye-witness account:

The Crows began early in the Spring of 1887 to be excited by a medicine man by the name of “...The-man-who-rides-a-horse-that-has-his-tail-wrapped-up.” He went on the mountains fasting as having communication with the Great Spirit. He visited the Sioux Indians and came back preaching all over that he had in his power great medicines. He had a sword, and only by brandying it, he would knock down from their horses all the white soldiers, and by spreading a little dust he had in a rag, he would blind them all. While all the Indians were camped at Soap Creek, a big storm rose from the mountains; the rascal got up, and told the Indians, he was causing the storm. The wind began to blow, and with great thunder and lightning the hail fell in such a way, as to scare all the Indians. The storm passed over, the medicine man rose up again, making speeches and stating he was the owner of heaven he could do any thing; bullets would not kill him. He could divide the waters of rivers by striking them with his sword. All the Crows were struck with terror, just like frogs. Some young

⁴² DHA, Acts of the Synod of the Diocese of Helena, June 22-24, 1887, 21, Scrapbook collection, Vol. I, 47, newspaper clipping, “New Church at Billings,” *The Catholic Sentinel*, c. August 22, 1887; Bigart, *Pretty Village*, 256.

⁴³ See Pietro Bandini, “Missione di Alaska. Notizie Generali” and “Missione delle Montagne Rocciose. Alcune notizie generali,” in LEPT (Torino: Tipografia Giulio Speirani e figli, 1889), 3-13, 32-43; Bigart, *Pretty Village*, 323-28.

men began to join and follow him. His plan was to exterminate white men and to make himself not only a king, but a God on earth as he was already saying: he was the son of God.

On the last day of September the medicine man with a band of warriors were riding around the Agency threatening to shoot at the Agency buildings.⁴⁴

On the same evening, the Ursuline sisters arrived at the Crow Agency from Miles City, in time for the school to open. The group included the superior, Rev. Mother Magdalene, Sister St. Joseph, and Sister St. Rose, accompanied by the general superior, Rev. Mother Amadeus, and Fr. Bandini. The sisters received an unexpected welcome. "When dark," Prando reported, "the Indians began to shoot really through the Agency buildings scaring all people. This was the welcome and serenade the Sisters had on their arrival." The next day, October 1, the sisters left the agency. According to Prando, "The excited Indian warriors set aside their hostility for a little while, went and shook hand with them. The Ursuline nuns arrived safely at St. Xavier Mission where they were received with great respect and devotion." Soon after the sisters' arrival, about twenty children entered the school. But while the mission had been left alone, the conflict between the Indians and the United States Army at Little Horn brought things to a stop. Prando reported that the medicine man was wounded in an arm during the fighting and ran away. "While crossing Little Horn, a mile below the Agency, Fire Bear, an Indian policeman, met him and seeing him bleeding, he understood how he deceived

⁴⁴ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 282-83, 297-98, Prando, St. Xavier's Mission, 1890. See Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 24; Colin G. Calloway, "Sword Bearer and the 'Crow Outbreak,' 1887," *Montana The Magazine of Western History* 36 (Autumn 1986): 38-51. For views on Indian religion, see "Estratto d'una lettera del medesimo [Prando] al P. Pietro Bandini," in LEPT (Torino: Tipografia Giulio Speirani e Figli, 1887), 45-47; Adrian C. Heidenreich, "History of Indian Religion in Montana," in Small, *Religion in Montana*, 1:1-46.

people with all his bogus medicines, and shot at him dead. The Indians then gave up those who fired at the Agency and that finished the Crow War.” By Christmas, about fifty children were at the mission school.⁴⁵



School house at St. Francis Xavier Mission, 1888; Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, 147.2.03.

The Ursuline sisters, from Toledo, Ohio, first arrived in Miles City, Montana, in January 1884 at the request of Bishop Brondel. In the same year, they established a second house at St. Labre’s Mission among the Cheyennes, where they met Fr. Prando.⁴⁶ When St. Xavier’s

⁴⁵ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 283-85, 298-300, Prando, St. Xavier’s Mission, 1890, roll #15, frame 640, article, Thomas M. McCarthy, “The Day the Ursulines Came To St. Xavier Mission,” *The Oregon-Jesuit* (March 1954), 5. See Engh, “A True Gentleman and a Crow,” 23-25; Schrems, *Uncommon Women*, 83.

⁴⁶ On the Ursuline sisters, see AUT, Sister Angela Abair, “A Mustard Seed in Montana. Recollections of the First Indian Missions In Montana,” (transcript), reprinted in *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 34 (Spring 1984): 16-31, Amadeus to Rev. Mother Superior, St. Peter’s Mission, Montana, September 5, 1887 and March 10, 1888; Irene Mahoney, *Lady Blackrobes: Missionaries in the Heart of Indian Country* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2006), 1-45; Marietta Devine, “The Ursulines of Montana from 1884” in Small, *Religion in Montana*, 1:299-322, 344-45; Schrems, *Uncommon*

Mission was established, an agreement was reached for the Ursulines to staff its school. The agreement or contract, drawn by Mother Amadeus and Fr. Bandini, was dated October 1, 1887, and outlined the duties and privileges of the Ursuline sisters. Its ten articles specified that the Jesuit priests will be the nuns' directors, have free board, washing, and mending, as well as free use of the chapel; the school house, which will be given to the nuns at cost, will belong to them, for which they will pay \$400 annually on a quarterly basis until fully paid; the priests will take charge of the boys and, until the boys and girls are separated, prefect them in the dormitory and during recreation; the nuns will provide two working men board free of charge in exchange for fuel, gardening, and freighting to and from Custer Station, but will not be required to do their washing and mending; the nuns will do sacristy work and washing for free; and five Ursulines will be assigned to the mission, including a music teacher. The contract shifted responsibility for the debt on the school house from the Jesuits to the Ursulines. In exchange, the sisters will receive the annual government subsidy of \$108 per student.⁴⁷

"The Crow children," Prando observed, "are really bright from eight to twelve years of age they learn easily. They show ability and talent in learning how to read and write, they succeed in arithmetic, music and in any thing they are set to." Like at St. Ignatius Mission school, the girls were also trained in housekeeping, needle work, and sewing and the boys in farming, herding cattle, carpentry, and baking "so as to be enabled to make a living when they will be at home." Since the school was located far from any settlement, the missionaries had to drive their horses in deep snow or mud every week to Fort Custer for fresh meat and bread. Prando recalled that "Once Father Bandini accompanied by Mr. Mayer went to Custer. The sleigh got broke in

Women, 41-63.

⁴⁷ For a copy of the contract, see JOPA, PNTMC, roll #15, frames 31-32, Contract with Ursuline Sisters to work at St. Francis Xavier's School, October 1, 1887 (copy) and Mahoney, *Lady Blackrobes*, 94-95. See also Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 26-27.

a drift of snow. They were bound to leave every thing in the hills and go back to Custer to save their lives.” They reached Custer with some difficulty due to the snow storm and cold. It took them nine days “before they could go back to the Mission. Mr. Mayer had both feet frost bitten.”⁴⁸

Katharine Drexel

Looking for additional funds to support the mission and the school, Bandini begged Bishop Brondel not to “forget the poor Crows” when advising Philadelphia’s wealthy Drexel sisters on how to spend a considerable amount of money they planned to donate for the Indian missions. The Drexel children had inherited a sizable fortune after their parents’ death. Katharine, who in 1891 founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People, gave much of her fortune in support of those missions. Using arguments that he will repeat consistently in his pleas for money, Bandini wrote the bishop on October 18, 1887, that beside his school, there were among the Crows two other non-Catholic schools. One was the government school at the Crow Agency and the other was the Unitarian school, established in March of that year by the American Unitarian Association. The latter, he pointed out, “must be very rich, as they spent so much in presents and money among the Indians.” Despite that, the Indians “like” and “prefer the Catholic priest.” He then laid out for the bishop what had been accomplished since they had arrived at Rotten-Grass on February 21st of that year, cleared a patch of snow 12 x 9 and stuck the first tent, as well as his future plans for the mission:

Anyhow I built the School-house which is
for the present the dwelling of the Sisters, school for
boys and girls and church. The lumber was brought
from St. Paul (as we have none around) to Custer

⁴⁸ JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 285, 300-01, Prando, St. Xavier’s Mission, 1890.

Station and from there to our site with wagon (62 miles). Cost me \$7000 (seven thousand dollars). The constructor insists we want be paid but I could collect only (by the way of Grassi) \$3000. And I have not a cent to pay the bills for provisions. I ought to build a church and a separate building for the boys. I ought to begin to work the land, so as to have some garden etc, but I have not a cent...And I may tell you (stricta confidentia) that I cannot neither write or expect great help from the Ordinary as he is not as you are toward us. And as I say (keep it for you only, necessity oblige me to tell you).⁴⁹

Some two weeks later, Bandini decided to contact Miss Drexel directly, apparently his first time. "I have not the honor of knowing you personally," he wrote, "but I know very well your generosity toward the Indian Mission and that is a sufficient title for a poor Indian missionary to write to you." He told her that he and Fr. Prando had passed the last nine months among the Crows in a small tent, suffering the winter cold and the summer heat. But the greatest "sacrifice for us is to see that for want of money we are not able to do to these poor Crows the good we wish." "They are very immoral," he added, "but nevertheless they leasten [to] the priest and we have no doubt, that if we can build a Church and a better accommodation for more children, we will have a success and the Crows will change their wild nature and become good Christian." He mentioned the government and Unitarian schools and that "the Crows want the Catholic priest only." Fr. Urban Grassi was working hard to raise money for the mission and Bishop

⁴⁹ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Brondel, St. Xavier Mission, October 18, 1887; Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 28. See Duffy, *Katharine Drexel*, 73-75; JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frame 291, Prando, Sr. Xavier's Mission. The "Ordinary" in Bandini's letter to Brondel likely referred to Cataldo who had dragged his feet in approving the Crow mission.



Katharine Drexel as bridesmaid at her sister Louise's wedding on January 17, 1889; Archives of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Bensalem, PA.

Brondel had limited resources. Meanwhile, he was saddled with a debt of more than \$3000 on the frame building being used for a school and a church.⁵⁰ Much to his surprise, Drexel sent him checks for \$500 and

⁵⁰ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, October 31, 1887. On Father Grassi, see "Fr. Urban Grassi," *WL* XIX (1890): 266-70.

\$100. She also inquired about the mission.⁵¹ Despite the fact that he had never met her, Bandini's letters to Drexel were longer, more informative, and more personal than the more business-like letters he wrote to Fr. Stephan of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. However, Bandini's well-intentioned but ambitious and expensive plans and his carelessness in handling official government correspondence which contributed to his constant financial problems would eventually put a strain between them. The Bandini-Drexel correspondence, outlined in great detail here, demonstrates not only the Jesuits' dependence on her generosity for the success of their Indian missions but also the reason why she insisted that her funds be only used to provide a permanent, and not a temporary, benefit to the Indians.

"In a few days," Bandini wrote Drexel a month after receiving the checks, "I shall send to you a letter of news about the Crows and St. Xavier, and I hope they will interest you very much." He then added a not so subtle request for additional funds for musical instruments:

I try to make my school more interesting I can for the Indians. I teach music and light gymnastic myself, until I can have somebody else to help me; and the old people and the pupils are very much delighted. I would try something else - that would be a great thing - to start a boys band. I did already among the Flatheads, and it succeed splendidly - but among the Crows it is a necessity and it would be something more than in any other school of the Reservation; as the Crows are crazy for music. But I don't know when I would be able to buy the instruments, as by the little experience I have in this matter; it is necessary for beginners to have very good instruments, very good tunes and easy, otherwise never they will succeed in performing musical ear.⁵²

⁵¹ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, November 7 and 9, 1887.

⁵² *Ibid.*, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, December 12, 1887.



Fathers Peter Prando and Peter Bandini with the Crow boys Mass band; Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, 45.01.

On December 3, 1887, the feast day of St. Francis Xavier, the mission's patron, the vested priests led a procession of nuns, school children, and adults from the school to a newly erected mission cross, twenty-two feet high. The cross was blessed and an inscription was placed at its base. Fr. Bandini preached in English and Fr. Prando in Crow. The singing of hymns concluded the ceremony, which could have also served as a celebration of the end of the mission's first year. In its report on the event, the *Catholic Sentinel* noted that the Indians saw the mission cross as "strong medicine."⁵³

Two days later, Bandini requested from Fr. Stephan a new appropriation for "75, or at least 50 pupils, as there is all the probability that we will [have] the number in very short time." He also requested information on the vouchers and report that had to be made. In his reply, Stephan informed Bandini that he had applied to Commissioner

⁵³ Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," 27.

of Indian Affairs Atkins for a contract for 25 Indian children in addition to the 25 already under contract with the Bureau, for a total of 50. He noted that "The vouchers for the past quarter should be drawn in duplicate, after the form enclosed herewith; should be certified to by the U.S. Indian Agent at the Crow Agency, and then forwarded to this Bureau." He then added that "The Reports should be made out in quadruplicate, and, after being certified by the Crow Agent, two copies should be sent by the Agent to the Indian Office, and one copy by you to this Bureau, accompanied by a statement giving the names of, and the dates of the arrival and departure of the pupils during the quarter. Such a statement should accompany each Quarterly Report." In his letter to Atkins, Stephan pointed out "that the Reports of your Office show that there are 690 children of school age on the Crow Reservation for whom there are no school accommodations," thus justifying the additional number of students at St. Xavier Mission. In January 1888, Stephan sent Bandini a copy of the contract for 25 additional Indian children for the period January 1 to June 30, 1888.⁵⁴

In keeping with his promise, Bandini sent Drexel in February 1888 the letter of news about the Crows and St. Xavier, that he hoped would interest her very much. That interest might translate into badly needed additional financial support for the school. The six-page letter was divided into eleven sections. The first section described the establishment of a permanent Crow mission in February 1887. In "July we began to build a school house for the children and for the Sisters, and a very small dwelling for us," i.e., Frs. Bandini and Prando. "The school-room is a chapel in the same time, until we will be able to have a better place." Sections two and three noted that the school-house and improvements, located on 160 acres given by the

⁵⁴ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #15, frames 1084, 1089-92, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, December 5, 1887, Stephan to Atkins, Washington, D.C., December 19, 1887, Stephan to Bandini, Washington, D.C., December 19, 1887, United States to Bandini, December 31, 1887, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, January 1, 1888, roll #17, frame 109, Stephan to Bandini, Washington, D.C., January 9, 1888.

government, belonged to us and that Catholic funds were used to pay for them. The next four sections indicated that there were already 20 children (9 girls and 11 boys) at the boarding school, "and as soon the Indian trouble will be over the Indians will bring their children at our school, as the Indians themselves say that 'the Priest is the owner of their children.' I intend fifty children, though the appropriation of the government is for 25 children only," at \$108 a year per child. The 20 children referred to the final quarter of 1887 and the 50 to the first half of 1888. Sections eight and nine noted that at present there were three Ursuline sisters, though two more had been promised, and two Fathers at the mission. The final two sections outlined his plans for the mission, identical to those he had mentioned to the bishop the previous October. The first need was for a church and the second was a separate building and school-house for boys. There was also need "To make some expenses for breaking sufficient quantity of ground so we may be able to have next year our vegetables without being obliged to buy them and freight them." Bandini brought up the need for a church and a separate building and school-house for boys, or an addition to the first building, in later correspondence.

He concluded his letter by offering Miss Drexel, "in strict confidence," his "humble opinion in the present governmental difficulties with the Crows." His opinion, which she had presumably sought, was blunt, detailed, and farsighted in arguing for greater Indian autonomy, a view perhaps not uncommon among his fellow missionaries:

From the very beginning I was afraid of a rebellion; as I found too much American Government among them, and the Crows kept more as slaves than free people. All over the Reservation was found Government employes under different names of Clerks, Boss-forman, farmers, herders & so nothing was left to the Indians, as generally these government

employes want be boss. They don't understand how to treat with Indians, and attend to make money for themselves and don't care at all of the Indians. The best Indians in Montana are those where the employes of the Government are few, and live to the Indians a kind of autonomy...The timber on the Reservation of the Crows has been given away to white people without benefit for the poor Crows. Has been sold the hay on the Reservation by contract to white people, who use to pay very little to the Indians for the hay cut inside at the private fences, and nothing for the hay outside of their very small fences. And such agreement with white people has been made by the employes of the government, and the Indians were bound to submit themselves to such an order.

Then a ditch was made at government expenses for the Indians on the Little Horn, but they cannot use it; All the benefit of that ditch goes to some white people who raise oats and hay on the Reservation on the Indian land. All things against the law. Some others things of the same kind are in my humble opinion the secret cause of the present trouble. An Indian, good man, was telling me few days ago "The Crows have been all the time friends to the white, but they deceived us. We have been as men under water, but now we raise our heads above the water and we see that the white man abuse us and steal from us every thing, and we ask what is that? They steal our hay, our wood, they get fat with our money, they have us under their feet; and we can't bear it any more. We want fight, and though we cannot overpower the white people, we prefer to die than to be slaves; and it will be a consolation for us to kill at

least some of the white and then die.” The medicine man is only a tool in the hand of some chiefs, more intelligent, than white people may think. And that is my humble opinion in the affair.⁵⁵

Bandini’s estimate of 20 school children in the final quarter of 1887 and 50 in the first half of 1888 proved conservative, as he had suggested. On February 5, 1888, he informed Fr. Stephan that “We have already more than 60 children at school, and more will come next Spring. So I guess it would be necessary to made another contract for 80 or 100 children altogether.”⁵⁶ The number of school children at the boarding school was critical since the federal government, as already noted, funded the schools on a per capita basis and additional boarders increased costs. Financially pressed, Bandini complained in several letters to Stephan in the first half of 1888 that his mission had not yet been paid for the Indian children educated during the quarters that ended on December 31, 1887 and March 31, 1888. In one of them, dated March 20, 1888, he gave Stephan an interesting snapshot of the mission and emphasized his financial needs:

1. For next spring I intend to break from 10, to 20 acres of land if possible. So we may avoid the heavy expenses of buying vegetables, potatoes etc. I should make an irrigating ditch, but I guess I will not have the money I need for this kind of work.
2. At present are in our school 60 indian children.
3. And many Indians ask and promise to bring their children to our school as soon will be possible to travel.
4. We have room for 75 children.

⁵⁵ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, February 6, 1888 and History of arrival at Crow Mission, St. Xavier Mission, February 26, 1887.

⁵⁶ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #17, frame 110, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, February 5, 1888.

5. There are at present 4 Sisters in the school, another will come in a month or so; so they will be five. I am waiting also for two Brothers, meanwhile I have several employes for teaching the pupils. The children are taught reading and writing, arithmetic, grammar, music etc. The girls are also taught sewing, embroidery and housekeeping, and the boys farming and carpentry.
6. We do not allowed our pupils to speak but in English; of course we cannot pretend to have it done from the very beginning; for the present we limited ourselves in encouraging the children with little rewards or prizes to express themselves in english if they can.
7. We must plant potatoes and vegetables, and oats and corn.
8. We have no sheep as yet. We have four horses and two cows. I did not pay them yet for want of money. They cost me \$125. We cannot buy cattle from the Indians among the Crows.
9. The country is a very good wool growing country.⁵⁷

Bandini sent a copy of the snapshot to Drexel along with an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to which she was devoted, two hymns in the Crow language, and promised to send her a copy of the catechism. As he had done before and would do so again, he told her about his great need for money to pay the contractors who had put up the first building. Not one to miss an opportunity to make his case for financial help, he mentioned to her a bill that had been passed by the Senate “providing for the compulsory education of Indian children.”

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, frames 111-17, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, February 18, March 7 and 20, May 15, 1888.

Should the bill become law, "It will be a great blow on the Catholic Missions who are not prepared to receive many children; and all the children who will be put outside of our school will be deprived of the benefit of our Religion." He told her that he wished he had the money needed to build a bigger school.⁵⁸

Drexel sent Bandini, through Fr. Stephan, \$2000. "I divided wright way your gift, some paying old bills, some to the builder, and the rest for the work of the farm and wages," he informed her. He also spent \$25 on the altar dedicated to St. Joseph.⁵⁹ But that was not enough. Testing Miss Drexel's generosity, he begged for more:

I take the liberty to write to you a few lines with the greatest simplicity...I have no one except you who may come and help us in the conversion of those poor Crows.

From the last time I wrote to you 21 more children came to our school...There are 22 more who ask to come to our school, and I cannot receive them for want of room...

Should be necessary to build at once a separate building for the boys, or if that it is impossible for want of money, we should at least build an addition to the present school-building. I made the plan of the addition and I send it to you.

Beyond a separate building for the boys or at least an addition to the present school building, Bandini also asked for financial support for a bigger chapel. "It is necessary to build a place for service. We have sometimes 500 people for Mass and instructions, and we have no room. Oh, I could build a...chapel 70 x 30." He added that while

⁵⁸ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, March 6, 9, and 17, 1888 (copy of Bandini report).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, April 6, 1888.

he found great success in converting and baptizing many Crows, he faced the problem of convincing some Indians to “separate” from their unlawful wives.⁶⁰

He followed up with a letter to Stephan, dated May 15, 1888, in which he noted the many expenses involved “in planting a Mission School far way from the railroad,” and that “we have our school filled up with pupils and I must find the way how to build at least an addition for too many ask every day to bring their children to the Mission School.” Bandini added that “The Crows are now very much attached to the priest, and the Catholic faith” and that “Every Sunday we have a great number of baptisms of adults and marriages, so in very short time the Crows will be all Catholics.” “This attachment,” Bandini pointed out, “explains the preference they give to the Mission School, while there are in the Reservation two other school (the Unitarians and the Agency School) who cannot succeed in getting the number required by their contract.” Finally, on May 19, 1888, Stephan sent Bandini the funds due the mission school for the fourth quarter of 1887 and the first quarter of 1888.⁶¹

Earlier that month, Bandini had visited the children at the Crow agency school, most of whom were baptized Catholics. He promised them that he would return and say Mass for them, as he had done at other times. The agent, Henry E. Williamson, did not object to this. When the Rev. H. F. Bond, the superintendent of the Unitarian school on the reservation, heard that a Catholic service had been permitted at the agency, he complained to the agent that it was against the law to allow such a service in a government school and told him “that he would inform the Indian Department etc.” The agent

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, May 2, 1888.

⁶¹ MUSUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #17, frames 115-118, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, May 15, 1888, Stephan to Bandini, Washington, D.C., May 19, 1888, frame 121, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, May 28, 1888 (includes signed receipts), frame 122, Stephan to Bandini, Washington, D.C., June 8, 1888.

withdrew his permission. Soon after that, Williamson, who had been friendly to Bandini and the Catholic mission, was replaced by a new agent, E. P. Briscoe. He told Stephan "I don't know yet how is the new Agent, Captain Briscoe, toward us."⁶²

At the end of the year, Bandini described the agent, Briscoe, as "polite" but "not friend of us or of our institution." He pointed out that "For several occasions children from that [agency] School begged to let them come to the Catholic, as they were Catholics and like to be trained in their religion. They have been refused. Some try to run away and quite a number of them did." Bandini claimed that three boys ran to the mission school begging to be allowed to stay there, but they were called back to the agency school, where "they had been by order of the Agent several days on bread and water. Many parents went asking absolutely to bring their children to our school, but they did not succeed." However, Bandini added, when Mr. Campbell from the government Indian boarding school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, came, the agent told him that he could go in any government or contract school and have all the children he could get. The head of that school, Richard Henry Pratt, was known for his anti-Catholicism. At the agency school he recruited fifteen students and at the Unitarian school he secured two more. Bandini concluded that "Even for this reason the Indians are very much...against the two said schools."⁶³

In another letter to Stephan on May 24, Bandini repeated that the Indians "like the priest, they like our Church and prefer our School to any other already existing on the Reservation." "Our School," he added, "is overcrowded and many yet asked to have their children in our School, but we cannot accommodate them." Though he asserted that the present school building was too small, he asked Stephan for a contract for 100 children starting in June of that year. Interestingly,

⁶² *Ibid.*, frames 119-20, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, May 20 1888.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, frames 135-37, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, December 20, 1888. On Pratt, see Prucha, *The Churches and the Indian Schools*, 39, 164-66.

he told Stephan that “I have been notified that it would be agreeable to the Indian Department to give every Indian child an English family name.” He then asked him “If now I give such a name would that bring any trouble for the Quarterly Report?” In August, the Bureau informed Bandini that a contract for the education of 100 Indian pupils at St. Xavier’s Mission School had been approved, effective July 1, 1888. The doubling in the number of approved students required a significant expansion of the original school building.⁶⁴

In June, Stephan sent Bandini a payment of \$2500 from Drexel. “I hope now,” he wrote Stephan, “I will perhaps succeed in getting the permission to begin at once the addition to the school. It is absolutely necessary and the Indians every day beg us to enlarge the house so they may be able to bring more children.” He noted that the addition would cost between seven and eight thousand dollars and that the new agent “seems very kind to us and he has projects in regard to our school that I must expose to you by the next mail.”⁶⁵ In his letter thanking Drexel for the \$2500, he gave her details on various estimates he had received for building a school and chapel or adding to the existing building. The price ranged between about eight to twelve thousand dollars. Drexel replied suggesting a donation of \$5000, but “if I were only sure that these buildings are perpetually to be used for the Indians.”⁶⁶

Towards the end of August Bandini, desperate for money, offered Drexel a “bargain,” a written guarantee, i.e. “paper,” that the money will be used in such a way as to give the Indians a permanent benefit:

⁶⁴ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #17, frames 122-26, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, May 24, Stephan to Bandini, Washington, D.C., June 8, Lusk to Bandini, Washington, D.C., August 11 and 26, 1888.

⁶⁵ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, June 24, 1888, and Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, February 5, 1889.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, July 12, 1888, Writings Number 3161, Drexel to Rev. & dear Father (Bandini), Torresdale, Pa., August 15, [1888].

The bargain I would propose is as follows. As I need very badly of the money I would say you could give the money with the condition that if the paper will be not satisfactory to you, I'll bound myself to give up the money in a year or two without interest. I feel shame and impudent in proposing such a thing but the necessity in one side and my conviction that the papers will be satisfactory to you and your kindness give me courage to propose you such a thing.⁶⁷



Jesuits' residence and St. Francis Xavier Mission Church, circa 1889; Jesuit Oregon Province Archives. 147.2 .05.

In early September, Bandini received another \$2000 from Stephan. In reply, he listed his expenses. The addition to the school house would cost \$7,285, to be paid in four monthly installments from August 15 to the projects' completion. The chapel would cost \$3,883, for a total of \$11,168, Various repairs and additions added \$1,424.73 for a total cost of \$12,592.73. He also needed \$500 for

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Drexel, August 29, 1888.

cows and money for “the irrigating ditch for gardening and farming purpose.” “And finally, another thing that would help us very much,” he told Stephan, “is a mail line from Fort Custer to our place, twice a week, with the name of St. Xavier P.O. Custer Co. Montana.” Bandini had been told by General Armstrong and Inspector Banaster “that by asking the proper party we could get it.” But he preferred that it be done by Stephan, “as you know good deal better how to succeed.”⁶⁸

Later that month, he informed Stephan that he had to pay the contractor \$2,095 for the third of four installments on the addition to the school house, due on October 15. But since he had not yet received “the compensation of the government for the quarter ending June 30 I was bound to settle some bills with some of the money of the deposit sent me from you for the purpose of paying the addition to the school house.” The bank deposit most likely referred to Drexel’s donation of \$5000, given on condition that it will be used in such a way as to give the Indians a permanent benefit.⁶⁹ The records show that, due to some problem with the vouchers that Bandini had submitted for the quarter ending June 30, they were returned and that the report for that quarter was not filed until September 14. As a result, Bandini did not receive payment for it amounting to \$1350 until October 24. Stephan explained that on top of the delayed filing, “The delay in the transmittal of these drafts is due to the fact that our Treasurer is absent and that I have just returned to the city.”⁷⁰ Bandini’s temporary diversion of \$3,056.91 earmarked for the addition to the school house to pay pressing bills angered Drexel, who rightly viewed it as “not fair” in light of their recent “bargain.”⁷¹

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, September 14, 1888, and Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, February 5, 1889, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, January 23, 1889.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, September 26, 1888.

⁷⁰ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #17, frames 126-28, Lusk to Bandini, August 26, 1888, Lusk to Upshaw, September 14, 1888, Stephan to Bandini, Washington, D.C., October 24, 1888.

⁷¹ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, October 21, 1888. See

Eager to retain Drexel's generous financial support, which included Mass stipends, Bandini apologized for the pain he had caused her with his last two letters to Stephan, on September 14 and 26. He explained that he had diverted funds which she had sent him and had been deposited in the First National Bank of Billings since he had not received the government payment for the quarters ending June 30 and September 30 and pointed out that he wanted to avoid borrowing \$3000 and pay interest on it. His aim was to return the money when the government paid for the two unpaid quarters. The records indicate that the payment for the quarter ending September 30 was made on December 17. He promised that he would not do so again, asked for \$500 to pay for the cows, and gave her the news that the addition to the school would be completed by the beginning of December. In his account, Prando noted that "Soon the first building was too small and an addition was made 100 x 24 feet, two stories and a half high. And a Church 75 x 36 feet put up, noting that "Miss C. Drexel furnished the most of the money."⁷²

Drexel's financial support had been very important for the Jesuit Indian missions. In a November 15, 1888, report to the Jesuit Father General Anton Anderledy, Fr. Cataldo, the superior of the Rocky Mountain Indian Mission, acknowledged that up to now Drexel had given the Jesuit missions more than \$20,000, making her a "special Benefactor of the Missions," deserving of masses and prayers. He also mentioned her request that her aid permanently benefit the Indians:

The great material assistance for the Mission of the Gros Ventres [St. Peter's Mission], and especially for that of the Crows, has come to us from a lady in Philadelphia, called Miss Kate M. Drexel,

McKevitt, *Brokers of Culture*, 155.

⁷² ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, October 21 and November 2, 1888; MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #17, frame 134, Lusk to Bandini, December 17, 1888; JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 285, 301, Prando, St. Xavier's Mission, 1890.

who has had an inspiration from God to spend a part of her wealth (along with that of her two sisters) on behalf of the savages. She has already given more than 5000 dollars for the Mission of the Gros Ventres, and had given as much to the Mission of the Crows when I went during my last trip out East to visit and thank her. She asked me whether we could oblige ourselves to use the money that she would give us for the Crows on behalf of the savages in perpetuum; if not, she would not be disposed to assist us any more; if yes, she would give us all the money necessary to complete the house and build a church at the Mission of the Crows. I replied that we were almost exclusively engaged with the savages, and therefore there was no difficulty in taking on such an obligation.

After his return from the East, Cataldo went to the Crow Mission and found out that Drexel had already sent Bandini more than \$7000. As a result, the building of the house was going ahead at full speed. He also found a document written by Drexel regarding the obligation mentioned above. Since his mission consultants were not there and not wanting to delay the matter, he consulted with Frs. Prando and Bandini. They decided to slightly revise the document, sign it, and send it to her. A copy of the signed document was also sent to the Jesuit father general for his “beneplacito” or approval, which he gave by June 1889. In the same report, Cataldo told the father general that Frs. Pietro Bandini and Prando “labor there like brave Missionaries,” an interesting comment given events just a few months later.⁷³ The document, signed by Bandini and Cataldo, was the “paper” mentioned in the “bargain” Bandini had offered Drexel:

We the undersigned oblige ourselves and

⁷³ ARSI, Prov. Taur., 1003 Pr. Missouri. 1885-1909, fasc. I, Cataldo to Molto Revdo in Cto Padre (Anderledy), De Smet Mission, November 15, 1888 (includes P.S.).

our successors in office to employ for the Crow Indians in perpetuum all money already received or to be received of Miss K. M. Drexel either directly or through the Cath. Indian Bureau for building school houses, churches and missionary residences among the Crows. So that in case the property in which said buildings are located should be by us bought from the Government, said property and houses must be always employed for the benefit of said Indian tribe, and in case such Indians should be removed...to other locality, said property must be sold by us, and the proceedings applied by us toward building other missionary buildings for said tribe where they would be newly located.

And in case that said Indians should disappear altogether, then said property must be employed by us, or our successors for other Indians under our charge, and should we be unwilling to do so, then said property must be disposed of according to discretion of Catholic Indian Bureau directed by those Bishops to whom it may concern.⁷⁴

In early December, Bandini sent Fr. Stephan a letter for the holidays and included signed letters from the Crow girls and the altar boys at St. Xavier's Mission school. He also sent the children's letters to Drexel.⁷⁵ Later that month, he asked Stephan for a contract for 150

⁷⁴ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, October 1, 1888 (Agreement for instruction of Crow Indians included). See *ibid.*, Cataldo to Drexel, Holy Family Mission, January 9, De Smet Mission, April 2 and 13, Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, June 13, 1889; ARSI, Prov. Taur., 1003 Pr. Missouri. 1885-1909, fasc. I, copy - St. Xavier Mission, Crow Indian Reservation, Montana, Octob. 1st 1888; JOPA, SFXM, 1:25, St. Xavier Mission, Crow Indian Reservation, Montana, Octob. 1st 1888 (copy).

⁷⁵ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #17, frames 129-33, Children to Stevan [*sic*], St. Xavier Mission, December 1 and 4, 1888, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission,

children. "The big Indian Chief," he wrote, referring to Plenty Coups, "told us that we should get ready for 400 children because he decided that all their children should go to school and no to other school but to the Catholic." He recommended using the present school for 150 girls and building a new school for 150 boys. There should also be carpenter and blacksmith shops, "as the other two school the Agency and the Unitarian have already."⁷⁶ According to Bandini, the Crow Chief Plenty Coups, whom he referred to as "Plenticoos," had requested a priest and a chapel at his camp at Pryor Creek, some 150 miles from St. Xavier's Mission, in exchange for becoming a "good Christian" and sending his Indian children to the mission school. Bandini told Drexel that the Crow Chief told him that "If the priest don't come I call another white man, because I am in hurry to become white and I want see all my children white." Drexel sent "\$ Ch. 500 for chapel for chief." She also promised to answer the children's letters as soon as possible.⁷⁷ In 1889, Bandini had requested permission from the commissioner of Indian Affairs to build a chapel and school for the Crow Indians at Pryor Creek, Montana. It was named after St. Charles.⁷⁸

December 7, 1888; ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, December 17, 1888 and January 24, 1889.

⁷⁶ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #17, frames 135-37, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, December 20, 1888; ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to O'Connor, St. Xavier Mission, December 7, 1888.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, December 20, 1888, and January 24, 1889, Bandini to Stephan, Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, February 5, 1889. See Frederick C. Krieg, "Chief Plenty Coups: The Final Dignity," *Montana The Magazine of Western History* XVI (October 1966): 28-39; Norman B. Wiltsey, "Plenty Coups: Statesman Chief of the Crows," *Montana the Magazine of Western History* XIII (Autumn 1963): 28-39.

⁷⁸ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #21, frames 205, 217-27, 230, 945-47, Cataldo to Lusk, De Smet Mission, January 30, 1890, Stephan to Morgan, February 12, 1890, Morgan to Stephan, Washington, D.C., March 25, 1890 (includes Noble letter), Stephan to J. Bandini, Washington, D.C., March 27, 1890, Cataldo to Stephan, St. Ignatius Mission, April 3, 1890 (includes Plenty Coups [sic] petition), Stephan to Cataldo, April 9, 1890. See Palladino, *Indian and White*, 265-66.

In a letter to Stephan, dated January 1889, Bandini included the receipt for the two drafts he had received covering the amount due for the quarter ending September 30, 1888. He added that he had already sent the report for the quarter ending December 31, 1888.⁷⁹ Charles J. Lusk, secretary of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, sent Bandini a sharp response on his last report:

This Bureau is just in receipt of Vouchers, Report and Statement of Attendance of your School for the Quarter ending Dec. 31, 1888.

The Vouchers are not made out properly. They should be in form of this Bureau. The date of the contract is June 30, not July 1, and the contract requires that they be certified by the U.S. Indian Agent, and not by the Supt. of the School. I have therefore indicated on the enclosed Voucher, in red ink, the changes necessary to be made, from which please draw up new Vouchers, in duplicate, and send them to agent Briscoe for certification and transmittal to this Bureau.

It was not the first time that Bandini had submitted improperly done vouchers. The reply to Lusk's request for new vouchers did not come from Bandini but from Fr. Leopold Van Gorp, who was attending to the mission during his absence. Bandini's carelessness in handling official correspondence with the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions explains why some payments to the mission were late, contributing to his constant financial problems. It also may have put a strain on his relationship with his superior, Cataldo, who was surely interested in maintaining a good relationship with the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and Drexel, whose financial support was essential for the very survival of the missions.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #19, frame 16, Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, January 1889.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, frames 13-15, Lusk to Bandini, January 15, 1889, Van Gorp to The Bureau of

Bandini had left for DeSmet Mission among the Coeur d'Alene, in Farmington, Washington Territory, to make a spiritual retreat in preparation for taking final vows. He informed Drexel:

I am going to make my spiritual retreat in the Coeur d'Alene Mission; and as soon I have finished; that it will be on the 2d of Febr. I leave to start for the Cheyennes where I [plan] to open again the school and see what can be done for them. I have to stay over there for about a month, as the General Superior wants me forme a good judgment of that tribe and see if really could be possible to do some permanent good; then I have to go work among the Crows.

He gave her his address during his stay with the Cheyennes as well as a listing of the bills he had to pay with a bank loan totaling \$12,592.73. Finally, he told her that "Fr. L. Van Gorp of St. Ignatius' Mission is taking my place on St. Xavier among the Crows for the time I will be absent."⁸¹

Writing from DeSmet Mission, Fr. Cataldo, informed the Jesuit Father General Anton Anderledy that "We have here now Fr. Pietro Bandini from the Crows, and Fr. [Joseph] Treca who are making the holy exercises for their vows [grado] on February 2." The Jesuit Roman archives hold a copy of the vows:

To Our R. Father

I, Peter Bandini, promise to almighty God, before his Virgin Mother, and the whole heavenly court, and to you, Reverend Father Joseph M. Cataldo General Superior of the Rocky Mountain Mission, Vice Provincial General of the Society of Jesus, and to his successors, who take the place of God, perpetual poverty, chastity, and obedience according to the

C.I.M., St. Xavier Mission, January 21, 1889.

⁸¹ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, St. Xavier Mission, January 23, 1889.

particular studied precepts in the apostolic letters as expressed in the constitutions of said Society.

In the mission of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Rocky Mountains, known as the De Smet Mission, Farmington P.O. United States of America on February 2, in the year of our Lord 1889, in the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.⁸²

In his own letter to the father general, Bandini thanked him for the “excessive kindness that you have shown toward me, in admitting me to final vows, while I was still completely unworthy.” He told him that from the Coeur d’Alene Mission he would go among the Cheyennes to reorganize the mission and school. After that, he would return to the Crows “and from there I will send you a report on that Mission,” referring to the Cheyennes. He attached a letter from the Crow children congratulating the father general on his golden jubilee. It was signed by Martha Addison, “Child of Mary.”⁸³

Even while he was on a spiritual retreat preparing to take final vows, Bandini could not get the Crow mission and its financial problems off his mind, as can be seen in a long letter he sent Drexel from DeSmet Mission, on January 24, 1889, the starting date of his retreat. In it, he praised the Catholic faith of the Coeur d’Alenes, “one of the best Catholic civilized tribes of Indians we have now in our Missions.” He described them as self-supporting and very pious. “How I pray God”, he added, “to have mercy on my poor Crows and make of them such good Christians as the Coeur d’Alenes are now!” Referring

⁸² JOPA, RMM=Cataldo, 1:9, Cataldo to Molto Rev. in C.to Padre Nostro (Anderledy), Farmington, Wash. Ter., January 26, 1889; ARSI, Ass. Italiae, Vota 17, *CPTSI, MDCCCXC*, 63 (gradus). See ADLR, PBF, Personal Visitation, Tontitown, Ark., February 9, 1914, where Fr. Peter Bandini, in reply to the question “Were you ever a novice or member of any order or congregation?” wrote “Yes but never professed.”

⁸³ ARSI, Prov. Taur., 1003 Pr. Missouri. 1885-1909, Fasc. IV, Bandini to Molto Rev. P. Generale (Anderledy), De Smet Mission, January 24, 1889 (includes Crow children’s letter, dated January 14, 1889, to P. Generale).

to his religious profession, he noted that “19 years and 4 months ago I entered as a novice in the Society of Jesus, and now the Society thinks proper to put an end to the long trial by ordering me to make my last vows on the Feast of the Purification of the blessed Virgin.” He begged her to give him for a present, as was customary on such occasions, about \$6000 to settle the remaining debt at St. Xavier’s. He offered the following reason for such a remarkable request:

If we were, as many other Schools and Missions are, without any opposition inside of the Reservation we could go perhaps more slowly, but when we have the greatest opposition from the government School, from the Unitarian School, and from the Presbyterians who are trying very hard to have a foot on the Reservation, we cannot go very slowly without danger of losing everything; and we must have everything satisfactory to the government, when we know that there are officers around us fishing every nook to find something to report against the Catholic School.

While Bandini’s argument may have had some merit, his assertion that the other schools on the reservation were a threat to his school was not supported by his consistent claim that the Indians preferred the Catholic school and by his enrollment numbers. Comparing the three reservation schools at that time, he noted that the agency school had 30 pupils and the Unitarian 9 or 10, while the Catholic school had “already more than 100 pupils.” He concluded his letter by informing Miss Drexel that he would be in Helena on February 8, after which he will go to the Cheyenne St. Labre’s Mission “to organize the school.” Then “I shall be back to my place among the Crows.” He gave her his Helena and St. Labre’s addresses and suggested that she send any help directly to the First National Bank of Billings, “with whom I use to deal.” There is no record of Drexel’s reply to Bandini’s request.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, De Smet Mission, January 24, 1889. Lawrence

Two weeks later, he repeated much of what he had said in the Drexel letters of January 23 and 24 to Fr. Stephan of the Catholic Indian Bureau. "I am in hurry & in route back to my Crows at present." The new addition to the school was finished and occupied. The chapel and some smaller buildings were also finished. The already paid bills totaled \$12,592.73. Adding to that employee wages, some improvements, and provisions, he found himself short by about \$8000 at the end of 1888, "which I preferred take from the Bank, than to have all over the country bills unsettled." The First National Bank of Billings had not charged him interest for a while. But if payment were not made soon, it "will charge us 12/100 per annum." Bandini expected \$2279 from the government for the quarter ending December 31, 1888. As mentioned above, he hoped that the balance of \$6000 would come from Drexel. Despite his unpaid balance, Bandini, citing Chief Plenty Coups' decision to send the Indian children to his school, told Stephan that he had "made already a rough plan of school-house and all the necessary accommodations for 200 boys, which it would cost about \$30,000."⁸⁵

Bandini, who had spent a big part of his life in institutional settings, had not yet developed the ability to balance his missionary zeal with administrative and financial skills. His expectation that the Catholic Indian Bureau and Miss. Drexel would continue to underwrite his increasingly bigger and more expensive building projects based on the same old and exaggerated argument was at best naive. It was therefore not surprising that his superior, Cataldo, saw him as a potential threat not only to St. Xavier's Mission but to all the other missions that depended on funding from the bureau and Drexel. Interestingly, seven years later New York's Vicar General Bishop John

F. Small and Frederick I. Kuhns, "Presbyterianism in Montana" in *Small, Religion in Montana*, 1:167-200, note that "Some consideration was given to a mission on the Crow Reservation, but that evidently failed to get Home Mission backing" (p. 190).

⁸⁵ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Stephan, Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, February 5, 1889; MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #19, frame 22, Willard to Bandini, February 12, 1889.

Farley would blame Bandini for his parish's financial problems there: "Fr. Bandini was utterly incompetent as an administrator. We had to pay several thousand dollars of his debts from time to time since he took charge. And he left this diocese against my express prohibition, leaving \$1200 of debt for us to pay."⁸⁶

Fr. Van Gorp, temporal administrator at St. Ignatius Mission, had been sent to St. Xavier's to see about the financial difficulty there. "I am here," Van Gorp informed Lusk on February 2, 1889, from St. Xavier Mission, "on business in connection with this school." He requested an additional 50 pupils and noted that he had forwarded the vouchers for the school to the agent "about two weeks ago," probably referring to the quarter ending September 30, 1888. He added that it would take him a few days to return the vouchers for the quarter ending December 31, 1888.⁸⁷

A week later, Van Gorp asked the bureau to send the check for the quarter ending December 31, 1888, either to him or to Mother Mary Magdalene, "as Father Bandini will not probably be back here for a couple of months." No reason was given for his unexpected lengthy absence from St. Xavier's. As recently as January 24, 1889, Bandini had informed Miss Drexel that he would be in Helena on February 8, after which he would go to St. Labre's Mission and from there back to St. Xavier's. On February 5 he had told Fr. Stephan "I am in hurry & in route back to my Crows at present."⁸⁸ In a letter to Lusk on March 10, 1889, from St. Xavier Mission, Van Gorp complained that "We are in terrible stress here for want of money; I am looking daily for

⁸⁶ ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Farley to Satolli, New York, April 15, 1896 (201-204).

⁸⁷ ASBS, H10B 03, Cataldo to Drexel, De Smet Mission, April 2, 1889; MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #19, frames 17-19, Van Gorp to Lusk, St. Xavier Mission, February 2, 1889.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, frames 20-21, Van Gorp to The Bureau Cath. Ind. Miss., St. Xavier Mission, February 8, 1889. See ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, De Smet Mission, January 24, 1889, Bandini to Stephan, Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, February 5, 1889.

the check of last year's quart. Not a dollar on hand for either paying debts or making current expenses." In early March, the vouchers for the second half of 1888 were allowed and the funds were transmitted soon after. With that settled, vouchers for the school were submitted properly and allowed on time.⁸⁹

In August Fr. Raphael Crimont was appointed acting superior of St. Xavier's Mission. He requested that the Catholic Bureau increase the number of allowed pupils from 100 to 150, noting that "Major Wyman began to take measures to have the three schools of the Reservation filled up, Mr. Bond's (Unitarians: 35 pupils, average 17), the Agency School, and ours." He added that "The Indians prefer our school to the others; hence the children, if obliged to go to school, will naturally drift towards us."⁹⁰ In October, 1889, Fr. Joseph Bandini, Peter Bandini's older brother, replaced Crimont at St. Xavier's Mission. Writing to Fr. Stephan on November 28, Fr. Cataldo pointed out that there were 139 children at St. Xavier, even though the contract allowed only 100. He warned of financial difficulties unless the contract allowed an additional 50 pupils starting January 1, 1890. "Unless this additional contract will be obtained," he wrote Stephan, "they will be obliged to dismiss some of the children, or to bury themselves into eternal debts. And I am sure Your Reverence will approve neither the first, nor the second."⁹¹

⁸⁹ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #19, frames 23-32, Van Gorp to Lusk, St. Xavier Mission, March 10, 1889, Willard to Van Gorp, Washington, D.C., March 7, 11, 18, and May 2, 1889, Van Gorp to Willard, St. Xavier Mission, March 19 and May 9, 1889.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, frames 34-39, Crimont to The Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, St. Xavier Mission, August 4, 1889, Willard to Crimont, August 15, 1889, Crimont to Willard, St. Xavier Mission, August 29, 1889.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, frames 40-52, Willard to J. Bandini, October 21, 1889, Cataldo to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, November 28, 1889, Stephan to J. Bandini, December 4 and 24, 1889, J. Bandini to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, December 6 and 11 (includes Cataldo note), 1889, J. Bandini to Walter, St. Xavier Mission, December 20, 1889 and n.d. See JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 285, 301-02, Prando, St. Xavier's Mission, 1890, where Prando says that from March to October, 1889, Frs. Van Gorp, Paul Muset, and Crimont

St. Joseph Labre's Mission

Founded by Bishop Brondel of Helena in 1884, St. Labre's Mission was located in southeastern Montana, where the Otter Creek flows into the Tongue River, part of the Tongue River Agency. It had a stormy history, caused by the interference of the whites who wanted to take the land from the Cheyennes.⁹² Lacking diocesan priests, the bishop asked the Jesuits to take charge of the mission and Frs. Aloysius Van der Velden and Peter Prando were assigned to it in October 1885.⁹³ Things went smoothly until 1888, when a medicine man called Porcupine introduced the ghost dance among the Cheyennes. The dance became a symbol of the restoration of Indian supremacy and deepened the conflict with the whites. The Indians withdrew their children from the school and stopped attending services, forcing the

served at the mission and that in October 1889 Fr. Joseph Bandini, Peter Bandini's brother, was appointed superior, SFXM, 3:9, Neill R. Meany, List of Jesuits who served at St. Francis Xavier Mission, 1880-1965, 4:1, Cataldo, "La Missione in mezzo alla tribù dei Corvi" c. 1892, states that "At this time the work of the mission is done by Frs. Crimont, Bandini J. and Prando." Engh, "A True Gentleman and a Crow," notes on p. 33 that St. Xavier's school closed in 1921. For Joseph Bandini's 1890 and 1893 reports on St. Xavier's school, see the *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (1890 and 1893), 122, 181.

⁹² Palladino, *Indian and White*, 236-50. On the Cheyennes, see "The Cheyenne Indians," *WL* XIX (1890): 50-55; Verne Dusenberry, "The Northern Cheyenne. All They Have Asked Is To Live In Montana," *The Montana Magazine of History* V (Winter 1955): 23-40; Orlan J. Svingen, *The Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, 1877-1900* (Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1993); *Encyclopedia of Immigration and Migration*, s.v. "Cheyennes," by Janne Lahti. For background information, see the *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (1886-90), 185-86, 147-50, 165-68, 234-37, 133-35.

⁹³ Palladino, *Indian and White*, 249. For histories of St. Labre's Mission, see Emmanuel Roets, comp., *Historical Sketch. St. Labre's Catholic Indian Mission. Northern Cheyenne Indians. Tongue River Agency, Montana* (Detroit: The Capuchin Fathers, 1927); Carlan Kraman, *A Portrait of Saint Labre Indian Mission Through One Hundred Years* (Ashland, Montana: 1984).



St. Joseph Labre's Mission, July 1897; Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, 100.05.

Jesuits and the Ursulines to leave the Mission.⁹⁴ On October 3, Bishop Brondel informed Fr. Stephan that the school had been suspended for three months. In February 1889, Brondel appointed Fr. Van der Velden superior of St. Labre's Mission. Soon after, the latter informed Stephan that the school would reopen on the first of March. "The Indians," he added, "got a good lesson by taking off the Sisters. They see all right enough they must not fool too much with their children, otherwise all will be lost." Moreover, the Indians promised 40 to 50 children. At the end of March, Van der Velden was able to report that "The school is getting along nicely," with 46 children and more to come. "The

⁹⁴ Bischoff, *The Jesuits in Old Oregon*, 127; Schoenberg, *Paths to the Northwest*, 137. See Dorothy M. Johnson, "Ghost Dance: Last Hope of the Sioux," *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 6 (Summer 1956): 42-50; Frank D. McCann, Jr., "The Ghost Dance, Last Hope of Western Tribes, Unleashed the Final Tragedy," *Montana The Magazine of Western History* XVI (January 1966): 25-34.

Indians,” he wrote Stephan, “are showing at the same time a better disposition for the Catholic religion.”⁹⁵

Despite the fact that Van der Velden had been appointed superior of the St. Labre Mission by Bishop Brondel, Bandini claimed a major role in its successful reopening. He told Stephan and Drexel that he had passed about all of March among the Cheyenne Indians dealing with some difficulties. Elaborating on details reported by Van der Velden, he informed Stephan that “I left the Cheyenne on the best dispositions toward the Church and School; and perfectly willing to send their children to St. Labre School and to keep them there. I received myself 32 children, and on reaching New York I received news that the children in the School were already 46.” The statement appears to imply that Bandini went from St. Labre’s to New York and from there returned to Italy.⁹⁶

In a long letter to his provincial, dated March 20, 1889, and sent from St. Labre’s Mission, Bandini gave a colorful and probably exaggerated account of his brief experience at St. Labre. He left St. Xavier’s because the bishop had obtained from the Jesuit general the assistance of the Society of Jesus with the Cheyenne Mission. He, four Ursuline sisters, who were to reopen the school on March 1, 1889, and a young Indian student, left St. Xavier’s on two horse-drawn sledges on a very cold February 21, 1889. A few miles from St. Francis Xavier’s, Bandini’s sledge broke and the group had to spend the night in the cold wind and snow. Early the following day, he went for help on horseback to Fort Custer, some three miles away. The group arrived

⁹⁵ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #17, frames 248-51, Brondel to Stephan, Helena, October 3, 1888, Sr. St. Ignatius to Stephan, St. Labre’s Mission, October 10, 1888, roll #19, frames 201-02, 205-07, 212, 216-18, Brondel to Stephan, Helena, February 14, 1889, Willard to Brondel, February 20, 1889, Van der Velden to Stephan, St. Labre’s Mission, February 20 and March 31, 1889, Willard to Oberly, Washington, D.C., March 1, 1889. See “Varia, Montana,” *WZ* XVIII (1889): 125.

⁹⁶ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #19, frames 221-23, Bandini to Stephan, R.M.S. “Adriatic,” April 17, 1889; ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, R.M.S. “Adriatic,” April 17, 1889.

at St. Labre's Mission "the evening of the first Friday of the current month," March 1. The following Sunday, Bandini spoke through an interpreter to a large crowd of Cheyennes and proposed the reopening of the mission and school with five conditions, which he did not list in his letter. In his reply, the great chief confessed sorrow for past events and promised that in the future the priest would be fully obeyed, the children would attend the school, and the people would come to church on time. Despite the opposition of some in the tribe, the school was reopened, as noted above. Some time after that, Bandini traveled on horseback to the Cheyenne Agency where the Cheyennes at Rosebud also wanted to send their children to the mission school. Bandini concluded his letter by noting that he had set to music the sign of the cross in Cheyenne and that he was setting to music the *Pater noster* and the *Ave Maria*. He added that he had formed a congregation for children thirteen years and older who did not attend the school because of their age but who attended catechism class.

Despite such a glowing account of his successful work among the Cheyennes and his plea that additional missionaries be assigned to that mission,⁹⁷ the "General Superior," most likely the provincial, Fr. Carlo Torti, "called" Bandini from the Rocky Mountain Mission. According to Prando, he was called back to Europe in March 1889. As previously noted, Fr. Van Gorp kept his place at St. Francis Xavier's Mission for a short time, then Frs. Paul Muset and Raphael Crimont until October of the same year when Fr. Joseph Bandini, Peter Bandini's brother, was appointed superior.⁹⁸

In a letter to Stephan from the R.M.S. "Adriatic," dated April

⁹⁷ "Missione dei Cheyennes. Lettera del P. P. Bandini al Rev. P. Provinciale. St. Labre's Mission. Ashland P.O., 20 Marzo 1889," in *LEPT* (Torino: Tipografia Giulio Speirani e figli, 1889), 91-102.

⁹⁸ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, R.M.S. "Adriatic," April 17, 1889; JOPA, PNTMC, roll #34, frames 285, 301-302, Prando, St. Xavier's Mission, 1890; MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #19, frames 41-42, Cataldo to Stephan, St. Xavier Mission, November 28, 1889, where he said that Bandini "went to Europe last March."

17, 1889, Bandini noted: "I am going to Europe called by my General Superior on business connected with our mission." He added: "I hoped I will not be detained long time in Europe and I shall be able to come back soon to my dear Indians." Often critical of government policies that broke up native communities and separated them from churches and missionary schools, he expressed in what was probably his last letter to Fr. Stephan his concerns about efforts to remove the Cheyennes:

I heard that white people are trying very hard to have the Cheyennes removed from the Tongue River and open the Reservation of the Crows. Russell Harrison, the son of the President, is very much interested in cattle business in that section of the country, he is also the secretary of the Stock Grover Co. residing in Miles City, Montana, and it is said he promised he would do all what in his power to succeed on the above plan of removing the Cheyennes from the Tongue River and have the Crow Reservation open. As far the Cheyennes concern, I think that really something should be done; as the Tongue River is not the place for them and the good work of the Sisters and Fathers is spoiled by the white people, who is in the midst of them.⁹⁹

On the same date, he wrote Drexel to thank her for her great charity. "It has been very hard for me," he told her, "to obtain permission from my Superior to leave Europe on the first time and to consecrate myself to the conversion of the Indians. I trust on the

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, frames 216-18, 221-23, Bandini to Stephan, R.M.S. "Adriatic," April 17, 1889, Van der Velden to Stephan St. Labre's Mission, March 31, 1889, where he wrote that "The Whites at Rosebud and Tongue River are putting up a petition to have moved the Indians from here. If there is any hope of success for them please inform me as not to go in useless expenses." See Suzanne H. Schrems, "The Northern Cheyennes and the Fight for Cultural Sovereignty. The Notes of Father Aloysius Van Der Velden, S.J.," *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 45 (Spring 1995): 18-33; McKevitt, *Brokers of Culture*, 286-87.

prayers of my good friends, that no obstacle will be put for my coming back to the Indians.” He expected to pass Easter Sunday in Paris and the next day take the train for Florence. He planned to visit many sanctuaries of the Blessed Virgin, where he would celebrate Mass and remember his great benefactor Drexel.¹⁰⁰ Unlike the first time, however, his superior would not grant him permission a second time to consecrate himself “to the conversion of the Indians.”

It’s baffling that Bandini was allowed to take final vows on February 2, 1889, but then called back to Italy the following month and not permitted to return to the American mission, which needed all the recruits it could get. It’s clear from the correspondence cited above that Bandini planned to return to the Crow mission after taking vows. Did something warranting such an important decision happen soon after taking vows or did something from the past come to light? As late as January 26, 1889, Fr. Cataldo had informed the Jesuit father general that “We have here now Fr. Pietro Bandini from the Crows, and Fr. [Joseph] Treca who are making the holy exercises for their vows [grado] on February 2.” There was no mention of any problems. The available record shows that Bandini’s last letter to Drexel from St. Francis Xavier’s was dated January 23, 1889, after which he wrote her on the next day from De Smet Mission. On April 17 he sent what were most likely his last letters to Drexel and Stephan from R.M.S. “Adriatic.” His last letter to Stephan from St. Francis Xavier’s was dated January 1889, after which he wrote him from Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, on February 5, stating “I am in hurry & in route back to my Crows at present.” In a March 20, 1889, letter to his provincial from St. Labre’s Mission, he claimed to have left St. Xavier’s on February 21, 1889, for that mission. Obviously, he had not returned permanently “back to my place among the Crows,” as he had told Drexel he would. There was also no mention of any major personal problem. If something happened after taking vows, it would

¹⁰⁰ ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, R.M.S. “Adriatic,” April 17, 1889.

have occurred between February 2 and the time he was called back to Europe in March 1889. The available documentary evidence on what prompted his superiors to call Bandini permanently back to Italy will be described in the next chapter.

Chapter III

An Imprudent and Independent Spirit, 1889-1891

San Tommaso d'Aquino in Cuneo

Back in Italy, Bandini was appointed superior of the small Jesuit community and vice rector or prefect at the College of St. Thomas Aquinas in Cuneo, a school in southern Piedmont whose direction the Turin province Jesuits had just taken over. The small community included Fr. Aloisius Inzoli and Ernestus Delpiano. At the time, the school had some 33 students and was in serious financial difficulties. Bandini remained in this position for one academic year, 1889-1890, during which the school incurred a deficit of over 9000 lire. According to the province's historian, Alessandro Monti, "But...a serious drawback on the part of the Vice Rector Fr. Pietro Bandini, which could have had lamentable consequences, had to be deplored, but it led only to his departure from the Society. He was replaced by Fr. Emanuele Badino."¹ Much more revealing was the account in the house history of the college at Cuneo: "At that time Fr. [Peter] Bandini, often imprudent, was not far from entirely losing a college that was still doing well and therefore he was expelled from the Society. This would not have happened had he observed the rule of reserve that forbids anyone from touching others even in a playful way." The house history added that "After Bandini in the months of July and August the college was directed by Fr. Carrega who sent the students home until the first of September."² According to the new Turin provincial, Fr. Fortunato Giudice, some time in 1890 Bandini was "advised to leave the Society for the little circumspection shown by him recently in his behavior, and for some imprudences he has committed."³

Monti, referred to "a serious drawback" on Bandini's part, without describing it. The Cuneo house history pointed to his failure to observe "the rule of reserve that forbids anyone from touching others

¹ ARSI, *CPTSI, MDCCCXC*, 22; Monti, *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, 478-81.

² ARSI, *Prov. Taur., Hist. dom. 1889-1904*, 1602, f. 78.

³ AGS, DH 02, Giudice to Revmo Signore (Rolleri), Chieri, Italy, February 21, 1891.

even in a playful way.” The provincial, Fr. Giudice, stated that Bandini was “advised to leave the Society for the little circumspection shown by him recently in his conduct, and because of some imprudences he has committed,” but gave no examples. The “little circumspection shown by him recently in his conduct” could only have referred to something that happened at Cuneo. The “imprudences he has committed” may well have referred to something that happened in the American mission for which he was called back to Italy. None of these accounts provided specific information on what Bandini had done, though they all pointed to some imprudent behavior on his part, serious enough to have him called back from America in March 1889 and dismissed from the Society of Jesus in July 1890.

The most pointed allegation came from Archbishop Michael Augustine Corrigan of New York. In 1891, the year Bandini arrived in New York, the archbishop informed Propaganda Fide that he had been expelled from the Society of Jesus for an offense against the sixth commandment, i.e., you shall not commit adultery. Similar allegations against Bandini would be made by Jesuit Fr. Clemente Vigna in November 1892 and in a letter sent from New York to the Roman Vicariate in July 1894, after which Propaganda Fide would recommend to the apostolic delegate in the United States, Francesco Satolli, that he keep an eye on Bandini even if no charge had yet been proven. The 1892 and 1894 allegations will be described elsewhere in this study.⁴

The archives most likely to hold more specific information on these sensitive allegations include the Jesuit Oregon Province Archives in Spokane, Washington, the Archivio Gesuiti Italia Settentrionale in Gallarate, Italy, which has the Turin Province material, the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu and the Archivio Generale Scalabriniano

⁴ APF, NS, vol. 332 (1905), rubr. 153, ff. 9-11, Corrigan to Simeoni, New York, October 9, 1891 (9-11), vol. 30 (1904), rubr. 5, f. 665, Laurenti for Ciasca to Satolli, Rome, August 27, 1894 (665). See ASV, IX. New York v.s., 34 Rev. Pietro Bandini, italiano di New York, e suo caso. (1894-1895), Laurenti for Ciasca to Satolli, Rome, August 27, 1894 (05); Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 394 (#712).

in Rome. Surprisingly, the Oregon and Gallarate archives hold no information on this topic. The Roman Jesuit archive has valuable correspondence between Fr. Carlo Torti, the Turin provincial from July 18, 1887, to August 8, 1890, and Fr. Anton Anderledy, the Jesuit father general from March 4, 1887, to January 18, 1892. The Scalabrinian archive holds some correspondence on this topic by Fr. Bartolomeo Roller, the Scalabrinian superior, who made inquiries about Bandini when he applied for membership in the Scalabrinian congregation in late 1890 and again in late 1892.



College of St. Thomas Aquinas in Cuneo, Italy; Archivio Gesuiti Italia Settentrionale, Gallarate, Italy.

The Torti-Anderledy correspondence, in which Bandini was mentioned, covered the period from June 2, 1889, to July 10, 1890, dates that corresponded with Bandini's assignment to the Jesuit residence at Cuneo. It provided the story from inside the highest levels of the Jesuit Society. In his June 2, 1889, report to the father general on whether the Rocky Mountain Mission should or should not be annexed to the Jesuits' New York Province, Torti noted that he had

requested the views of his consultors, along with those of Frs. Bandini and James Razzini, both of whom had worked in the American missions. The report, which included the written responses of all those he had consulted, summarized their negative view of the proposal. In his lengthy reply to the provincial, Bandini argued that he saw no need for such an annexation and that it would cause grave suffering for the Rocky Mountain Mission. Bandini's letter was divided into four parts. In part one, he saw no need as knowledge of the English language was not a serious difficulty since young missionaries have spent some time studying and, unlike the older missionaries, find themselves in contact with whites which forces them to learn English. Moreover, government inspections have been partly favorable and the mission schools can always use lay teachers and utilize the priests for ministry. In part two he argued that annexing the Rocky Mountain Mission to an American province would ruin the mission since the American clergy lacked the missionary spirit. There were great prejudices against the Indians and they would find it difficult dealing with them as well as the inevitable hardships of missionary life. In part three, he suggested that in the new missions the sisters teach both girls and boys as was done in parochial schools, easing the demand for missionaries. In part four he recommended building a college in Helena, Montana, which along with the one at Spokane Falls, will suffice to meet the needs of young Catholics for a long time.⁵

Dismissal from the Society of Jesus

Bandini, eager to return to the missions, requested permission to do so. But Fr. Joseph Cataldo, superior of the Rocky Mountain mission, firmly refused the request, a position made clear to Torti, who relayed the decision to Anderledy on June 15, 1889:

⁵ ARSI, Prov. Taur., 1011 Pars I Generalia 1885-99, fasc. II, 37, Torti to Molto Reverendo in Cristo Padre Nostro (Anderledy), Genoa, June 2, 1889, 37a, Bandini to Rev. C. Provinciale (Torti), n.d.

I have finally received Fr. Cataldo's reply regarding Fr. Bandini's return to that mission. The answer is one I could suppose, namely that the Father cannot return to any station of the Mission without danger that what is now secret may become public, and will remain secret if he does not return. Fr. Cataldo adds that when the secret would become public the Mission would surely incur very grave harm. Which is why he (Fr. Cataldo) cannot in conscience grant Bandini's [request] to return, although he is willing to submit to the dispositions of the major superiors. And he finds the desire that Fr. Bandini shows to return true blindness. But he has declared to me that he is ready to accept the judgment of the superiors. Therefore so far as I am concerned, I will keep Fr. Bandini in Italy and I will try to [arrange] in the best way possible and in agreement with him his stay in the Province. Y. P. let me know your decisions and desire.⁶

Interestingly, in his references to Bandini in 1888 and early 1889, Cataldo had not shown any concern about his behavior. In his January 7, 1888, report to the Jesuit provincial Fr. Carlo Torti on the Jesuits working under him, Cataldo included this observation: "Fr. Peter Bandini is a little too shabby for himself and for the others, but he has good manners, and does very well with the Indians, even when he knows little or nothing of the language, he works very much indeed he sacrifices himself for the good of the souls. He has put himself in charge of the Crows, and he does very well; but he has only one subject, that is Fr. Prando, who is known in all places."⁷

In his November 15, 1888, report to the Jesuit Father General

⁶ *Ibid.*, fasc. II, 38, Torti to Molto Reverendo in A. P. N. (Anderledy), Chieri, June 15, 1889.

⁷ JOPA, RMM=Cataldo, 1:9, Cataldo to Rev. in C Fr. Provincial (Torti), Farmington, Wash. Terr., January 7, 1888 (transcript).

Anderledy, Cataldo added a private postscript in which he included a brief report on St. Francis Xavier Mission. In it, he mentioned Fr. Prando but not Fr. Bandini and concluded “for the rest, there is nothing serious.”⁸ And, as previously noted, on January 26, 1889, Fr. Cataldo had informed the Jesuit father general that “We have here now Fr. Pietro Bandini from the Crows, and Fr. [Joseph] Treca who are making the holy exercises for their vows [grado] on February 2.” There was no mention of any problems, although something could have come to his attention soon after that date.

A month later, July 16, Anderledy replied to Torti’s June 15 letter:

Concerning the Fr. Peter Bandini letters, that were very humble and full of love that he sent to me urgently demanding a date for his possible return to the Rocky Mountain Province. He believes that he is strong enough now so that he does not need to stay in Europe, but that he could go to the Missions. Perhaps he could go to some other remote region of the Rocky Mountain Province, where there is no risk, or nothing to be feared. He is certainly not to go back to his old residence, but perhaps destined to a new place like Alaska. In the meantime, Fr. Cataldo replied cheerfully that he would defend me if I approved any exceptions. I trust his wisdom and advice on what needs to be done.⁹

Apparently Bandini had sent a number of letters to the father general requesting his return to the Rocky Mountain Mission. Anderledy’s comment that Bandini “could go to some other remote region of the Rocky Mountain Province, where there is no risk, or

⁸ ARSI, Prov. Taur., 1003 Pr. Missouri. 1885-1909, fasc. I, Cataldo to Molto Revdo in Cto Padre (Anderledy), De Smet Mission, November 15, 1888 (includes P.S.).

⁹ ARSI, Prov. Taur., Registri, VI, 9 Januarii 1869-19 Maii, 1899, Anderledy to Torti, July 16, 1889, 262.

nothing to be feared,” or that he could be “destined to a new place like Alaska,” implies that his alleged transgression occurred in one of the missions where he had been stationed, viz., Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in Helena, St. Ignatius Mission, St. Francis Xavier Mission, and St. Joseph Labre’s Mission, all in Montana. His admonition that “He is certainly not to go back to his old residence” implies that the alleged transgression occurred either at St. Francis Xavier or St. Joseph Labre’s. A week later, July 22, Torti informed the father general:

I urged Fr. Bandini to resign himself. He will write to the Mission that he will not return now because I need his help here. The Fr. Superior of the Mission would surely not receive Fr. Bandini with open arms (*libenti animo*), but on the contrary would be very displeased, since he is convinced that his presence would be very dangerous and would perhaps expose the entire Mission to grave harm. Truly before God it does not seem to me prudence nor good advice to send him back to the [Rocky] Mountains, and not even Alaska. But to alleviate some of Fr. Bandini’s pain I added that later when the Superior will change sending him to the Mission will be considered again.¹⁰

Four months later, on November 17, Torti informed Anderledy that “Fr. Bandini has found in that boarding school an occupation able to mitigate the pain of his permanence in Italy. But he always sighs for the Mission. And indeed, in closing, at least on our part, that boarding school we will examine again the appropriateness of his return to the Mission and if not to the [Rocky] Mountains at least to Alaska.”¹¹

On June 16, 1890, Bandini sent the father general some observations regarding the Jesuit residence at Cuneo. In doing so,

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1011 Pars I Generalia 1885-99, fasc. II, 40, Torti to Molto Reverendo P. N. (Anderledy), Chieri, July 22, 1889.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, II, 45, Torti to Molto Reverendo P. N. (Anderledy), Chieri, November 17, 1889.

he was by his own admission going over the head of his provincial, Fr. Torti. His big concern was the imminent closing of the College of St. Thomas Aquinas, which he opposed despite the provincial's decision to do so. He claimed that the provincial had kept the decision secret during the entire academic year, saying that he would make a determination at vacation time. Meanwhile he was preparing for the closing, leaving students and their families in the lurch for the coming 1890-1891 academic year. He included in his observations several reasons why the school should remain open. These included the fact that the city looked favorably on the school, the ease of finding good licensed teachers in Cuneo, the students come from good families that pay well, and the local bishop opposed the idea of closing the school. This would not be the only time that Bandini would by-pass the institutional chain of command, opening himself up to criticism and even enemies in the process.¹²

Less than two weeks later, June 27, Torti, writing from Monaco, informed Anderledy of the complicated situation at Cuneo:

I reply to your venerated [letter] of the 25th of this month, even though occupied on account of my conscience and in doing the triduum of renewal for these dear teachers and prefects of Monaco. I am confused by my inability to see not even a part of those bad things which I have seen in what has been written to you...I willingly confess being blinded by unknown passion which does not allow me to see what many others see. If I were not like this, I would not have remained imprudently undecided and almost adverse to the continuation of the College of Cuneo (on the contrary I have a firm idea that only grave evils

¹² *Ibid.*, 1012 Pars II Domicilia et Miscellanea 1885-99, fasc. III, 1, Bandini to Molto Reverendo Padre (Anderledy), Cuneo, June 16, 1890. See *Ibid.*, 1011 Pars I Generalia 1885-99, fasc. II, 51, Torti to Molto Reverendo in Cristo Padre (Anderledy), Chieri, March 11, 1890.

will befall if we will keep the college, which was also begun by me, open in the present circumstances. It seems to me that sooner or later the scandal of Genoa will be repeated; and now I add a greater [scandal] if Fr. Bandini will remain, who, despite the explicit prohibition given, beats the boys improperly (*batte indecenter*). Nevertheless I could not remove that Father, believed to be the true cause of the increase [in the number of students] ...).¹³

The phrase “beats the boys improperly” very likely signaled grave excesses on Bandini’s part in applying disciplinary sanctions on the students, imposing on them heavy physical punishments not permitted by the school’s regulations because of their humiliating character. It did not necessarily imply sexual misconduct on his part. Nonetheless, had his behavior become public, it could have seriously damaged the school’s reputation and enrollment and possibly its very survival. This is probably what the province’s historian Monti meant by “a serious drawback on the part of the Vice Rector Fr. Pietro Bandini, which could have had lamentable consequences...but... led only to his departure from the Society.” The same holds for the account in the house history of the college at Cuneo, that “At that time Fr. [Peter] Bandini, often imprudent, was not far from entirely losing a college that was still doing well and therefore he was expelled from the Society.” On July 9, Anderledy told the provincial that “If Father Bandini does not seem fit to govern the college...he may well be called to be placed somewhere else.”¹⁴

On the following day, July 10, the provincial wrote to the father general what appears to have been his last official letter relating

¹³ *Ibid.*, fasc. II, 58, Torti to Molto Revendo P. Nostro (Anderledy), Monaco, June 27, 1890. See Monti, *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, 479.

¹⁴ ARSI, Prov. Taur., Registri, VI, 9 Januarii 1869-19 Maii, 1899, Anderledy to Torti, July 9, 1890, 283.

to Bandini before his dismissal from the Society of Jesus:

I return immediately to Chieri so as to better and more quickly carry out my desired change. Fr. Bandini will have arrived there. I telegraphed him immediately. With that Father I will act in conformity with the instruction that you sent me through the Rev. Fr. Assistant. I enclose a letter of the Fr. Rector of Chieri regarding Fr. Bandini.

I am saddened by the facts indicated in it. Since I must add that, if they are true, one could presume great pretense on the part of Fr. Bandini.¹⁵

The last sentence in Torti's letter, difficult to translate accurately from the Italian, indicates that he had a hard time believing the charges made against Bandini, which did not seem consistent with his usual conduct. The letter of the rector of Chieri regarding Fr. Bandini could not be found. Whatever the "facts indicated in it" were, they were the straw that broke the camel's back. Bandini left the Jesuits on July 22, 1890, some eighteen months after having taken final vows (*gradus*) on February 2, 1889. He was given a letter of dismissal by the provincial, Fr. Torti, and a testimonial by the new provincial, Fr. Fortunato Giudice. Neither of those documents could be found.¹⁶ He was replaced at Cuneo by Fr. Emanuele Badino.¹⁷

Neither the *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu* nor the *Archivio Generale Scalabriniano*, as will be detailed below, has any document that specifies the allegations against Bandini. The most the Jesuit and Scalabrinian sources seem to come up with is that Bandini was called from the Rocky Mountain Mission and advised to leave

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1011 Pars I Generalia 1885-99, fasc. II, 59, Torti to Molto Reverendo P. Nostro (Anderledy), San Remo, July 10, 1890.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1803, f. 352; AGS, DH 02, Giudice to Revmo Signore (Rolleri), Chieri, Italy, February 21, 1891.

¹⁷ ARSI, *CPTSI*, MDCCCXC, 22; Monti, *La Provincia Dispersa e Ristabilita*, 481.

the Society of Jesus for little circumspection in his behavior and other imprudences, including grave liberties with young people. It is not clear whether “grave liberties” referred to something more sexually explicit than behavior involving the improper beating of boys and familiarity or playful physical contact with young people deemed inappropriate for a priest. His independent nature was also noted and it may have had a bearing on the allegations of little circumspection in his behavior and imprudences made against him. At the same time, the consistency of these allegations, made by different individuals at different times and in a variety of positions, indicates that they had merit. Bandini’s imprudence, at least at this point in his life, made him vulnerable to serious criticism and revealed a serious character flaw, especially for a priest. His independent spirit, on the other hand, would serve him well, especially at Sunnyside and Tontitown in the American state of Arkansas. But his imprudence and independence were more than his fellow Jesuits, and later fellow Scalabrinians, could tolerate. Other allegations would surface in 1894, though apparently none were ever proven.

Bishop Scalabrini’s Congregation

After leaving the Society of Jesus, Bandini resided for some time in Imola with Dr. Giovanni Gambetti, a college classmate. He also traveled to various parts of Italy. The available correspondence for the period October 1890 to March 1891 finds him at Imola on October 1, Castellamare di Stabia and Pompei, where he visited the sanctuary, on December 20, Forlì on December 27, Imola on January 12, Forlì on February 23, Piacenza on March 6, Forlì again on March 10, and in Milan on March 13 on his way to sailing on *La Champagne* on March 21.¹⁸ While in Forlì Bandini, who had inherited from his

¹⁸ See AGS, DH 02, postal cards, Bandini to Roller, Forlì, Italy, March 10 and Milan, March 13, 1891; ACMS, 005, box 1, Smith to Bandini, Castellamare di Stabia, Italy, December 15, 1890.

father land outside the city and had bought and sold land there over the years, sold his properties, which apparently had been handled by his brother Vincenzo when he was a minor, to his brother Antonio. By now, most of Bandini's family had died. His half-siblings Carlo and Carlotta were still alive, but would die within a year or two. Of his surviving siblings, Giuseppe was in the United States and Antonio was the only one left in the family's hometown. It made sense that Bandini's estate be sold to him. His brother Federico's daughter, Giulia, almost 30 years old, was still in Forlì. His brother Vincenzo's son Tito was at Bertinoro, not far from Forlì.¹⁹



L. to r. Angelo Scalabrini, Bishop Giovanni Battista Scalabrini of Piacenza, Italy, and his secretary Mons. Camillo Mangot; Archives of the Center for Migration Studies, New York.

¹⁹ ASFO, Catasto Gregoriano, Catastino D'Impianto, 1885 ca., reg. 39, cc 88-93, Archivio Notarile Distrettuale di Forlì, Notaio Veggiani Enrico, 1890, vol. 10, Catasto Gregoriano, Partita No. 94A, Catasto Gregoriano, Partita No. 103A.

In his letter to Fr. Bartolomeo Rolleri, the Scalabrinian superior, Fr. Giudice, the Turin Jesuit provincial, had described Bandini as a “man full of activity and of zeal, and he has the greatest desire to return to the Missions.”²⁰ Bandini acted quickly on that desire. On October 1, 1890, he wrote to Bishop Giovanni Battista Scalabrini of Piacenza, from Imola, inquiring about the aim of a congregation of priests he had recently founded:

Excuse me for the liberty I take in addressing myself directly to Your Excellency in order to know on behalf of a person dear to me the aim of a Congregation of priests founded by Your Excellency. I am told, but I am not sure, that the aim of the Congregation are the missions in North America. If this is the aim, I would like to know the conditions required in order to be able to join that Congregation.

In the hope of receiving a response, I have written my address at the bottom of the page...²¹

On December 20, 1890, Bandini wrote to Scalabrini from Castellamare di Stabia requesting admission into the congregation:

Having the desire to give myself to the foreign missions whether for the Italians or also other people and knowing sufficiently the English and French languages I present myself to Y. E. with a note of recommendation by Monsignor Jacobini Secretary of Propaganda. I truly could not decide on which mission to dedicate myself, but the repeated advice of the above-mentioned Monsignor has convinced me

²⁰ AGS, DH 02, Giudice to Revmo Signore (Rolleri), Chieri, Italy, February 21, 1891.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Reverendissimo Monsignore (Scalabrini), Imola, Italy, October 1, 1890. For an account of the founding of the Scalabrinian congregation, see the first volume (*Inizi*) of Mario Francesconi's six volume *Storia della Congregazione Scalabriniana* (Roma: Centro Studi Emigrazione, 1969-82).

that it is God's will that I place myself in the hands of Y. E. and that you send me for the good of Italian and American souls to the place that you believe best. I hope to be able to be in Piacenza and receive your blessing on Christmas Eve, finding myself now on a return trip from the sanctuary of Pompei.²²

In his note of recommendation, Monsignor Domenico M. Jacobini paid his respects to Scalabrini and recommended Bandini to him, stating that the latter was furnished with "regular documents" and "desires to go to the missions of the Italians in the United States." The note did not specify what documents he had.²³ On his way back from Castellamare di Stabia and Pompei, Bandini stopped at Forlì, staying at Via St. Anna 4. Unable to make it to Piacenza on Christmas Eve, he assured Fr. Rollereri that he would be there at the end of the month.²⁴

Fr. Rollereri, the Scalabrinian superior, made inquiries about Bandini when he applied for membership in the Scalabrinian congregation and again in late 1892. The initial Rollereri correspondence covered the period from January 10 to February 23, 1891. It provided valuable additional information on Bandini's departure from the American missions and dismissal from the Jesuits. Rollereri wrote to Can. Carlo Nardi, vicar general of the Fiesole diocese, for information on Bandini. On January 10, 1891, Nardi replied that he was not familiar with him and that he did not belong to that diocese.²⁵ Rollereri also wrote to Baldazzi, pro-vicar general of the Imola diocese, for information on Bandini. On January 13, 1891, Baldazzi replied that Bandini had stayed for several months with a wealthy family in

²² AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), Castellamare di Stabia, Italy, December 20, 1890.

²³ *Ibid.*, note, Jacobini to Scalabrini, December 19, 1890.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Revdo Signore (Rolleri), Forlì, Italy, December 27, 1890, Imola, Italy, January 12 and postal card, Forlì, Italy, February 23, 1891.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, postal card, Nardi to Rollereri, Fiesole, Italy, January 10, 1891.

Imola, old friends from College. He was referring to the family of Dr. Giovanni Gambetti, Bandini's classmate at Bertinoro. He mentioned that Bandini belonged to the Jesuits and that he had no criticism of his conduct. From what he had been told, Bandini had left for Milan.²⁶ Rollerli followed up with a letter to Rev. Emmanuele Badino, S.J., at the Collegio Convitto S. Tommaso D'Aquino in Cuneo on February 19, 1891, for information on ex-Jesuit Bandini who had served as vice rector there during the 1889-1890 academic year. Badino replied on February 20, 1891, that he didn't know Bandini well and that he would forward the letter to Rev. Fortunato Giudice, Jesuit provincial as of August 8, 1890. Giudice replied to Rollerli from S. Antonio in Chieri on February 21, 1891:

From a letter by Fr. Badino that has just reached me I have come to know that you desire information about the Rev. Pietro Bandini; and I will certainly satisfy you. That priest belonged to our Society for about twenty years; eight or ten of which he spent in the United States of America working actively in our Rocky Mountain Mission. He was recalled from there and then advised to leave the Society for the little circumspection shown by him lately in his behavior, and for some imprudences he has committed.

On the other hand he is a man full of action and zeal, and has the greatest desire to return to the Missions.

He is from a wealthy and respectable family.

With this information, of a confidential nature, I hope to have satisfied your desires...

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Baldazzi to Pregmo Signore (Rollerli), Imola, Italy, January 13, 1891. See ACMS, 005, box 1, Plummer to Bandini, Cairo, Egypt, February 25, 1891 and St. Cloud, Minnesota, January 14, 1892.

In a P.S. at the bottom of the letter he added that “I forgot to tell you that Bandini must have with him the letter of dismissal given to him by my predecessor (Fr. Carlo Torti) and a testimonial that I gave him.”²⁷ There is no evidence that Bandini submitted or Rolleri requested the letter of dismissal and the testimonial mentioned by the provincial. In his carefully worded letter, Giudice attempted to strike some kind of balance. On the one hand, he alleged that Bandini lacked circumspection and had acted imprudently. On the other hand, he described Bandini, who at this point was almost 39 years old, as full of action and zeal. Moreover he had the greatest desire to return to the missions and came from a wealthy and respectable family. Leaving out the lack of circumspection and prudence, hopefully something that could be overcome with time and experience, he was the perfect candidate for Bishop Giovanni Battista Scalabrini of Piacenza’s fledgling congregation of missionaries to the Americas.

Finally, Rolleri wrote to the seminary in Verona. Fr. Samuel Asperti, spiritual prefect at the seminary, replied on February 23, 1891, that the Fathers there had no knowledge of Bandini.²⁸ Rolleri’s initial investigation into Bandini’s background had surfaced two important pieces of information. First, Baldazzi, pro-vicar general of the Imola diocese, had informed Rolleri on January 13, 1891, that Bandini had stayed for several months with the family of his Bertinoro classmate Dr. Giovanni Gambetti at Imola and that he had no criticism of his conduct. That last statement would seem to question the serious charge made in a letter from New York addressed to the Roman Vicariate on July 21, 1894, that Bandini had impregnated a girl in a town of the diocese of Imola, and then endowed her to marry her off. Second, Giudice, the Turin Province provincial, had clearly indicated that Bandini had committed indiscretions serious enough to warrant his

²⁷ AGS, DH 02, Badino to M. R.do Superiore (Rolleri), Cuneo, Italy, February 20, 1891, Giudice to Revmo Signore (Rolleri), Chieri, Italy, February 21, 1891.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, postal card, Asperti to Rolleri, Verona, Italy, February 23, 1891; ARSI, CPVSI, MDCCCXCI, 29.

recall and banishment from the American mission and later dismissal from the Society of Jesus.

While no documents have surfaced specifying the reasons for Bandini's recall and banishment from the American mission and later dismissal from the Society of Jesus, some of the reasons can be drawn from the already cited available documents. On their surface, none of these reasons would have been sufficient to warrant his recall and dismissal. But cumulatively they, along with some instances where documentation is no longer available, could have provided sufficient grounds for such drastic actions. So far as his recall from Montana is concerned, it's evident that Bandini was careless in his handling of official correspondence with the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. His management of finances at St. Francis Xavier's, including the funds given by Miss. Drexel, left a lot to be desired. Such carelessness and possible manipulation could have jeopardized future funding for the mission and thus its very survival. Moreover, in a letter to Bishop Brondel on October 18, 1887, he had criticized his superior Cataldo: "And I may tell you (*stricta confidentia*) that I cannot neither write or expect great help from the Ordinary as he is not as you are toward us. And as I say (keep it for you only, necessity oblige me to tell you)." Since he was writing to Brondel, the local "Ordinary," the term could have only referred to Cataldo, who had dragged his feet in approving the Crow mission and had provided it with limited financial resources. If nothing else, Bandini was critical of his superior, not a good trait for a Jesuit expected to be loyal, obedient, and discreet. So far as his dismissal from the Society of Jesus is concerned, his conduct at the College of St. Thomas Aquinas in Cuneo was at best problematic. He was clearly unhappy at not being allowed to return to the American mission. He had failed to observe the "rule of reserve that forbids anyone from touching others even in a playful way." He had imposed on the students at the College heavy physical punishments not permitted by the school's regulations because of their humiliating or possibly sexually charged character. Finally, he had intentionally

gone over the head of his provincial, Fr. Torti, to the father general on the question of the imminent closing of the College of St. Thomas Aquinas, which he opposed despite the provincial's decision to do so.

Almost two years later, Rolleri did another investigation on Bandini, who was well into his second year in New York. It was likely prompted by a letter, now unavailable, sent by the Rev. Domenico Vicentini, the superior in New York, to Scalabrini regarding Bandini and the situation there. Rolleri contacted Vicentini on November 28, 1892, seeking more information. In his reply on December 9, 1892, the latter reported:

I don't remember having written you recently that Bandini now has a singing school for girls. I could not write about it since after he left our house on White St. I have never taken care to know about it; even though I could presume that he does that.

When he lived with us on White St. he had a singing school for some girls (from 14 to 16 years old) for the church on Mulberry and once in a while also for Roosevelt...but however not only by me, but by other priests in the house it was noticed that he allowed himself too much confidence and liberty with the same girls joking and taking them by the hands and arms more than what is appropriate for a priest. And since he held the school in a room that faced the street a good number of other girls gathered sometimes under the windows. And it also happened that some boy from the neighborhood called the girls and made fun, for which one day at table I told him that it was a rich scandal and a dishonor for us, so that an English Catholic lady from the nearby house told someone: those priests are good to those who like them, but they are too easy in taking girls in the

house. I said this to Fr. Bandini, who after that did not have the school in the house or very rarely.

Vicentini went on to point out that it was common in New York churches for the greater part of choirs to be made up of girls. He added that Bandini had a girls' choir in his new chapel and that he trained them, "but I cannot say anything on how he carries out this office." He mentioned the recent letter to Scalabrini that likely prompted the investigation and emphasized that Bandini "considers himself independent from all at least here."²⁹ Bandini's independent spirit, which he manifested as a Jesuit and now as a Scalabrinian, would surface again after he became a diocesan priest in the Diocese of Little Rock, Arkansas. It was his weakness from the institutional point of view, but his strength as a pioneer confronting great obstacles.

On November 24, 1892, Rolleri wrote to Rev. Clemente Vigna, S.J., rector of the seminary in Ventimiglia, for information on ex-Jesuit priest Bandini. Vigna replied on November 26, 1892, that "Properly for certain unworthy and very grave liberties with young women and young men P.B. was first sent back to Europe. But the lesson was of little use and with great difficulty such a punishment disappears! For the same reason he was dismissed from the S[ociety]. And now you write me that B. has a singing school for girls. Enough now, *principiis obsta*...every caution will never be too much."³⁰ As noted in the previous chapter, Bandini began the spiritual exercises on January 24, 1889, in preparation for taking final vows on February 2. After that, he planned to go to Helena and from there to St. Labre's Mission among the Cheyennes before returning among the Crows at St. Xavier's. Bandini told both Fr. Stephan and Miss Drexel that he had passed about all of March among the Cheyenne Indians. At

²⁹ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Rolleri, New York, August 29, 1892, Vicentini to Rolleri, New York, December 9, 1892. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:365 (#589).

³⁰ AGS, RC 02, Vigna to Revmo Sig. Superiore (Rolleri), Ventimiglia, Italy, November 26, 1892; ARSI, *CPTSI*, *MDCCCXCII*, 23.

some point, he traveled on horseback to the Cheyenne Agency, where the Cheyennes at Rosebud demanded access for their children to the mission school. During that period, the provincial, Fr. Carlo Torti, “called” Bandini from the Rocky Mountain Mission.³¹ If Fr. Vigna was correct that “Properly for certain unworthy and very grave liberties with young women and young men P.B. was first sent back to Europe,” then those “liberties” must have taken place either soon after he had taken final vows on February 2, 1889, or before that date but came to light only afterward. Either way, the available documents in the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu and the Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, both in Rome, while they complement each other, do not specify when, where, and how those alleged “liberties” occurred or their nature.

Despite the troubling information provided by the Jesuit provincial, Scalabrini accepted Bandini into the congregation because of his knowledge of English, necessary for the person assigned to work at the port of New York. He asked him to go there to establish a branch of the emigrant aid society that he had founded in Italy. Bandini, who had expressed to Scalabrini the idea of founding a colony, accepted the assignment with great reluctance but promised to work at it for at least one year, to get it started.³²

³¹ See MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #19, frames 221-23, Bandini to Stephan, R.M.S. “Adriatic,” April 17, 1889; ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, R.M.S. “Adriatic,” April 17, 1889; “Missione dei Cheyennes. Lettera del P. P. Bandini al Rev. P. Provinciale. St. Labre’s Mission. Ashland P.O. 20 Marzo 1889,” in *LEPT* (Torino: Tipografia Giulio Speirani e figli, 1889), 91-102.

³² AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Scalabrini, New York, April 11, 1894; Gregori, *La Vita e l’Opera*, 389; Scalabrini to Zaboglio, March 18, 1891, in Giovanni B. Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 13 vols. (Roma: Congregazione Scalabriniana, 1980), 1:315. For a detailed account of the emigrant aid society in Italy, see Antonio Perotti, “La società italiana di fronte alle prime migrazioni di massa. Il contributo di Mons. Scalabrini e dei suoi primi collaboratori alla tutela degli emigranti,” *Studi Emigrazione*, V (Febbraio-Giugno 1968): 13-190, and reprint, *La società italiana di fronte alle prime migrazioni di massa* (New York: Arno Press, 1975). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:319-20 (#437), 391(#692).

Bandini wasted no time looking for a steamship sailing for New York.³³ On March 6, 1891, he informed Fr. Zaboglio that he would depart for New York on March 21, 1891:

Monsignor Bishop of Piacenza, who has just left for Florence, has ordered me to write you that Saturday the 21st six Sisters of St. Anna and two missionaries of the Institute Don Paolo Manente and the writer will board for New York on a ship of the Solita Co. As for the rest the same Monsignor Bishop telegraphed you from Florence. He also wants to add that he desires that I be destined to the commission to be established for the landing etc. of the Italian emigrants, and for the purpose of beginning the necessary negotiations.³⁴

On board *La Champagne*, Bandini sent Bishop Scalabrini a brief note: "At the point of leaving land I hasten to send Y. Reverend E. two lines, so that you may know that until now the voyage has been very successful and the sea today is very quiet." He asked for the bishop's blessings and prayers and told him that upon arrival in New York he will write him at length.³⁵ The bishop had informed Corrigan of Bandini's arrival in a letter dated March 18: "The bearer of this letter is Father Pietro Bandini who is coming there to accompany the Sisters of St. Anne who are destined for the administration of the Columbus Hospital."³⁶ On the same day, he had also informed Fr. Zaboglio,

³³ See ACMS, 005, box 1, Smith to Bandini, Paris, January 25, February 15 and 19, 1891, Graefe to Smith, Paris, February 16, 1891.

³⁴ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Reverendo Superiore (Zaboglio), Piacenza, March 6, 1891. See Scalabrini to Simeoni, March 10 and to Zaboglio, March 13, 1891, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 1:312-14; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:317 (#428),

³⁵ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), On Board *La Champagne*, March 21, 1891. See *Ibid.*, DH 02, postal card, T. Bandini to Rolleri, Bertinoro, Italy, March 29, 1891; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:320 (#443).

³⁶ Scalabrini to Corrigan, Piacenza, March 18, 1891, Corrigan to Scalabrini, New

requesting his support: “Fr. Pietro Bandini, excellent Missionary of our Institute, who comes to accompany five Sisters for the Hospital and who is destined, as I have already written you, to service at the port, will bring this letter. He also has the idea of founding his own colony. You can support him, if and how you will believe convenient. It is very important however that there always be a Missionary at the port, every time Italians arrive.”³⁷ Bandini arrived in New York on the morning of March 29, Easter Sunday, where he began the task of establishing the St. Raphael’s Italian Benevolent Society to assist the Italian immigrants arriving at that port. He remained in New York for five years, building on the work of those who had preceded him, before turning to his goal of founding a colony for Italian immigrants.³⁸

Initial Catholic Efforts to Aid Italian Immigrants³⁹

New York, the port through which the vast bulk of Italian immigrants arrived in America, contained also the largest and most important Italian settlement in the country. The city’s Italian community did not begin to grow in size until after 1880, when it numbered some 20,000 people (12,000 foreign born). After that, it grew at a very rapid pace: 114,877 by 1890 (foreign born and of foreign born parentage), 225,026 by 1900, 340,765 by 1910 (foreign born), and 390,832 by

York, April 3, 1891, in Silvano M. Tomasi, ed., *For the Love of Immigrants: Migration Writings and Letters of Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini 1839-1905* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 2000), 270-71. See Francesconi, *Storia*, II:20; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:320 (#438), 321 (#444).

³⁷ Scalabrini to Zaboglio, Piacenza, March 18, 1891, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, I:315. See Scalabrini to Zaboglio, Piacenza, March 18, 1891, in Francesconi, *Storia*, II:171; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, I:120 (#271), II:319 (#434).

³⁸ For a detailed account of the Italian St. Raphael Society in the United States, see Edward C. Stibili, *What Can Be Done to Help Them?: The Italian Saint Raphael Society, 1887-1923* (Staten Island, New York: Center for Migration Studies, 2003). For Bandini’s role, see chapters 6-7.

³⁹ A version of the rest of this chapter first appeared in *ibid.*, 32-34, 111-20.

1920 (foreign born). While these immigrants settled in almost every part of the city, most preferred to live in distinctly Italian quarters. The first Italian colony of the city centered around Mulberry Street, in the Bowery section of lower Manhattan. In time, other colonies developed near Washington and Union Squares, in upper Manhattan's East Harlem, and elsewhere.⁴⁰

Prior to 1880, the Catholic Church as an institution had almost no presence in the city's Italian community, a major problem once the Italian immigrant population began to grow rapidly after that year. In 1859, Fr. Antonio Sanguinetti leased an old French church

⁴⁰ George E. Pozzetta, "The Italians of New York City, 1890-1914" (Ph.D diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1971), 71-107 and "The Mulberry District of New York City: The Years before World War One," in *Little Italies in North America*, ed. Robert F. Harney and J. Vincenza Scarpaci (Toronto: The Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981), 7-40. See Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 111. On Italians in New York, see Charlotte Adams, "Italian Life in New York," in *The Italians: Social Backgrounds of an American Group*, comps. Francesco Cordasco and Eugene Bucchioni (Clifton, N.J.: Augustus M. Kelley, Publishers, 1974), 129-137 and Wayne Moquin, ed. with Charles Van Doren, *A Documentary History of the Italian Americans* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974), 39-44; Viola Roseboro, "The Italians of New York," *The Cosmopolitan* IV (January 1888): 396-406 and Moquin and Van Doren, *A Documentary History*, 299-303; Bernard J. Lynch, "The Italians in New York," *The Catholic World* XLVII (April 1888): 67-73; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 62, fasc. 803, article, George J. Manson, "The 'Foreign Element' in New York City. V.-The Italians," *Harper's Weekly* (Supplement), October 18, 1890, 817-820; Joseph H. Adams, "In the Italian Quarter of New York," in *Italians in the United States: A Repository of Rare Tracts and Miscellanea*, ed. Francesco Cordasco (New York: Arno Press, 1975); Antonio Mangano, "The Italian Colonies of New York City," in *Italians in the City: Health and Related Social Needs*, ed. Francesco Cordasco (New York: Arno Press, 1975) and "The Associated Life of the Italians in New York City," in *The Italian in America: The Progressive View, 1891-1914*, 2nd ed., ed. Lydio F. Tomasi, (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1978), 153-61, Cordasco and Bucchioni, *The Italians*, 143-151, and Moquin and Van Doren, *A Documentary History*, 321-25; John F. Carr, "The Coming of the Italian," *The Outlook*, February 24, 1906, 419-31; Workers of the Federal Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration in the City of New York, *The Italians of New York* (1938; repr., New York: Arno Press, Inc., 1969); Samuel L. Bailly, *Immigrants in the Lands of Promise: Italians in Buenos Aires and New York City, 1870-1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

at 265 Canal Street, which had been used by the St. Vincent De Paul Society, and established St. Anthony of Padua parish, the first attempt to organize an Italian parish in the New York metropolitan area. But the church closed after a few months for lack of financial support. In 1866, Franciscan Fr. Leo Pacilio reorganized St. Anthony of Padua parish when he bought an old Methodist church on Sullivan Street and converted it for Catholic use. Financial problems forced Archbishop John McCloskey to include non-Italians in the parish, creating a mixed congregation. The Franciscans remained the only religious congregation providing pastoral care for Italians in the city until 1883.⁴¹ In an 1889 article on Italian missions in New York, Thomas S. Preston, the vicar-general, noted:

It is now twenty-two years since the Church of St. Anthony of Padua was founded in Sullivan street by Italian Fathers of the Order of St. Francis. This church has been devoted to the interests of the Italians, who are the chief care of the Franciscan Fathers. The priests who labor in this church are nearly all of them Italians themselves. The instructions given at the High Mass and at Vespers are always in the Italian language, and there are also societies in this church for the Italians. Occasionally, in addition to the work accomplished by these Fathers in the parish of St. Anthony, they

⁴¹ Giovanni Schiavo, *The Italian Contribution to the Catholic Church in America, vol. II of Italian-American History* (New York: The Vigo Press, 1949), 468-69; Stephen M. Di Giovanni, "Michael Augustine Corrigan and the Italian Immigrants: The Relationship Between the Church and the Italians in the Archdiocese of New York, 1885-1902" (Ph.D. diss., Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1983), 252-53 and *Archbishop Corrigan and the Italian Immigrants* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1994), 112-13. See Nicholas J. Reagan, "The Italian Custody of the Immaculate Conception," in *The Catholic Church in the United States of America*, I:236; Silvano M. Tomasi, *Piety and Power: The Role of the Italian Parishes in the New York Metropolitan Area, 1880-1930* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1975), 61-116;

have been missionaries to the Italians in all parts of the city, visiting them in their sickness, as so far as in their power extending to them the consolations of religion in poverty or distress.⁴²

German Pallottine Fr. Emiliano Kirner, who had studied in Rome, spoke Italian, and had worked among the Italians in London, was sent to New York to minister to the Italians in the city. He arrived there on May 26, 1884, and was received on the same day by Cardinal McCloskey. He was assigned to the Italian community in East Harlem. Plans were made to build a church “on the property bought near the extreme end of 115th St., towards the East River.” In the words of Domenico Pistella, “It would be a church built by the Italians and the first to be called without equivocations ‘the parish of the Italians in New York’.” Funds were collected and parishioners, along with their pastor, joined the bricklayers in constructing the walls of the church, dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. By the end of the year, the church building had been completed and the first baptism was recorded on November 29, 1884. Soon after, a school was built next to the church. According to Pistella, it was “the first Italian Parochial School, exclusively for the Italians in the city of New York...” It was put in the care of the Sisters of Charity, a congregation founded by Mother Elizabeth Seton. On October 18, 1887, Fr. Kirner went “to inspect the roof of the school where the workers were finishing a section of the new addition. Suddenly a wall crumbles ruining that entire section of the building and at the same time injuring Fr. Emiliano and the workers who were there.” He died 24 hours later.⁴³

⁴² Thomas S. Preston, “The Italian Missions,” *The Catholic Review*, January 26, 1889, 50-51 and “The Italians of New York City” *New York Freeman’s Journal and Catholic Register*, February 2, 1889, 8.

⁴³ Domenico Pistella, *The Crowning of a Queen*, trans. Peter J. Rofrano (New York, 1954), 45-63; Corrigan to Scalabrini, New York, October 28, 1887, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 237-38. See Schiavo, *The Italian Contribution*, II:770-72; Di Giovanni, “Michael Augustine Corrigan,” 266-86; Robert A. Orsi, *The Madonna*



Rev. Emiliano Kirner; Domenico Pistella book, p. 51.

Busy as he was at his parish, Fr. Kirner was also assigned to assist the thousands of Italian immigrants coming through Castle Garden, the government port where the immigrants landed. It was the

of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950, 2nd ed. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002), 53-54, 58-59; Jan Kupka, "Rapporti tra Scalabriniani e Pallottini. Appunti per la Storia dei Legami," in *L'Ecclesiologia di Scalabrini*, ed. Gaetano Parolin and Agostino Lovatin (Roma: Urbaniana University Press, 2007), 533-56; *Migrazioni: Dizionario Socio-Pastorale*, ed. Graziano Battistella (Milano: Edizioni San Paolo, 2010), s.v. "Pallotti (San) Vincenzo e la Missione dei Pallottini per i Migranti," by Jan Kupka.

first Catholic effort dedicated specifically to assisting incoming Italians. In a letter to Cardinal Giovanni Simeoni, prefect of Propaganda Fide, dated June 10, 1884, Peter P. Cahensly wrote that the “Rev. Dr. Kirner, chaplain for the Italians in London, has been sent to New York to organize there this Society [of St. Raphael],” founded to assist German immigrants. He added that “During my stay in America, which lasted eighty days, I tried to stimulate some interest also for the Italians. But I found little understanding for my cause among Italian priests. I encountered so many difficulties with the German immigrants, that all my time was taken up with that.” Cahensly also made the following observation on Protestant activities at the immigrant depot:

Let me briefly mention how the Protestants take care of the immigrants in a truly extraordinary way. The Methodists give to each migrant in the ports of embarkation a booklet similar to the one that I take the liberty of enclosing for Your Eminence, with the help of which he finds, soon after his arrival, a brother who looks after him. I myself have seen in Castle Garden twelve Protestant missionaries taking turns and being fully active. They give out bibles and booklets freely, not only to the Germans, but also to the English, Norwegians, Scotch, and finally to all the peoples coming from the Protestant countries of Northern Europe, while only one old man was hired by us, who did what he thought best. The Protestants have a house for migrants near Castle Garden, where some of the migrants lodge freely and are treated well.

May the time not be far away when the migrants of all the Catholic countries, Germans, Italians, Poles, and Bohemians, will find a similar support in the New World.

May God will that we may come to see a

house built where the migrants of every country may find co-religionists and support, so that their faith and morality be protected, and that they may remain faithful to the Catholic Church.⁴⁴

From November 13 to December 13, 1883, representative members of the American hierarchy met in Rome with officials of Propaganda Fide at the latter's request to prepare for the projected plenary council to be held at Baltimore in November 1884. At the eighth session on December 1, which dealt with the care of immigrants, it was agreed to establish committees for Italian immigrants in the United States and it was suggested that similar committees be established in Italy and that an active correspondence be kept up between the American and Italian committees. The officials of Propaganda Fide commended the Society of St. Raphael in Germany and said that it should be given a wider extension and a more precise form of organization. They promised to write to the archbishops of Naples and Genoa regarding the establishment in their cities of the above-mentioned committees.⁴⁵ Soon after the meeting had ended, Cardinal Simeoni sent a letter to the archbishops of Naples, Genoa and Palermo, the principal Italian ports, requesting them "to study the manner of giving to the emigrants suitable material and spiritual care." The three Italian archbishops replied, saying that they had or would establish commissions to look after the immigrants. The archbishop of Naples added that he would ask Vincenzo Galatola, who was going to settle in New York, to get in touch with the Catholic committee

⁴⁴ Cahensly to Simeoni, Limburg an der Lahn, Germany, June 10, 1884, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 175-77. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:238 (#16).

⁴⁵ "Minutes of Roman Meeting Preparatory to the III Plenary Council of Baltimore," *The Jurist* XI (October 1951): 538-39. The minutes of the Roman meeting were originally published in *Relatio collationum quas Romae coram S. C. de P. F. Praefecto habuerunt Archiepiscopi pluresque Episcopi Statuum Foederatorum Americae*, 1883 (Baltimore, 1884).

in that city and to correspond with the committee in Naples.⁴⁶ New York's Archbishop Corrigan was not interested in Galatola's services. He told Simeoni that "Everything that Mr. Galatola intended to do with an annual salary, a good Pallottine i.e., of the Pious Society of the Missions, does now and does better." He was obviously referring to Fr. Kirner. He added that "To tell the truth, there is not much to do, considering that ships come from Italy only twice a month, at the most. Besides, the work of many migrants is already mortgaged to the *padrones*, who import them paying the expenses of the journey. In this way the migrants become almost their slaves, until they have paid the last penny." Corrigan further pointed out that Galatola, a layman, could not get permission to enter Castle Garden where a priest easily could, that he did not know English well, did not know the city, and would not have the trust of the immigrants the way this priest would. He then remarked that "Up to now there does not exist here any Italian Catholic committee" and that "Mr. Galatola did not know anything about the committee in Naples. If it exists, it would be very desirable that there should be some relationship with the above-mentioned priest."⁴⁷ After Fr. Kirner's death in 1887, Fr. Michael Callaghan, the director of the Irish Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary, had assumed the task of caring for Italians at the immigrant station, as Bandini acknowledged in his *First Annual Report*:

There is one, however, to whom I owe special thanks, for to his advice and experience is due the practical success of the Society. I mean Fr. Callahan [sic], Director of the Mission of the Rosary for the

⁴⁶ Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 142-43, 160-62. For the original document, see APF, ACTA 1887, vol. 257, f507r-529r, "Rapporto sull'Emigrazione Italiana con Sommario," Rome, November 1887. For an English translation, see Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 139-77.

⁴⁷ Corrigan to Simeoni, New York, August 4, 1884, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 163; AANY, G-74, Simeoni to Galatola, Rome, May 9, 1884, Simeoni to Corrigan, Rome, July 15 (?), August 29 and September 19, 1884.

Protection of Irish Immigrant Girls, who cared for the welfare of the Italian immigrants, even before our Society was established at the Barge Office. It was he who insisted upon the necessity of having an Italian priest to look after the interests of the Italian immigrants, and when I was assigned to the work he left nothing undone and spared no pains to render me every assistance possible. He has played a leading part in all that has been done for our immigrants.⁴⁸

Michael A. Corrigan, third archbishop of New York from 1885 to 1902, had the task of providing for the spiritual care of the many Catholic immigrants who were arriving and settling in the city. Of these, the Italians were the largest group. Corrigan, who had been the bishop of the Diocese of Newark since 1873, was named coadjutor archbishop with the right of succession to Cardinal John McCloskey of New York in 1880. Given the lack of worthy and dedicated priests among the Italian immigrants, he sought the help of bishops and religious communities in Italy. During a visit to Rome in 1883 for the meeting preparing for the Third Council of Baltimore, Corrigan contacted Fr. Giovanni Bosco, founder of the Salesians, but with little success. He continued his search for Italian priests after succeeding McCloskey in 1885.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report of St. Raphael's Italian Benevolent Society (July 1st, 1891, To June 30th, 1892.), 27. See Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 307-35. On the Irish Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary, see John J. Riordan, "The Priest at Castle Garden," *The Catholic World* XLII (January 1886): 563-70; Helen M. Sweeney, "Handling the Immigrant," *The Catholic World* LXIII (July 1896): 497-508.

⁴⁹ Di Giovanni, "Michael Augustine Corrigan," 171-86, 382-83; Florence D. Cohalan, *A Popular History of the Archdiocese of New York* (Yonkers, New York: United States Catholic Historical Society, 1983), 158. See Editorial, "The Italian Influx," *New York Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register*, March 28, 1891, 4; Mary E. Brown, *Churches, Communities, and Children: Italian Immigrants in the Archdiocese of New York, 1880-1945* (Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies, 1995); Thomas J. Shelley, *The Bicentennial History of the Archdiocese of New York, 1808-2008* (Strasbourg, France:



Archbishop Michael Augustine Corrigan of New York; *The Catholic Church in the United States of America*, III:285.

Corrigan, who had heard of the plans of Bishop Scalabrini of Piacenza to establish a missionary institute to prepare priests for work among the Italians in America, began to correspond with him in 1887, a correspondence that lasted from the summer of 1887 to the winter

Éditions du Signe, 2007); Terry Golway, ed., *Catholics in New York: Society, Culture, and Politics, 1808-1946* (New York: Fordham University Press/Museum of the City of New York, 2008).

of 1902. On August 18, 1887, Scalabrini acknowledged receiving a letter from Corrigan, which had arrived on July 24. He agreed with Corrigan's complaints about the Italians, but drew a line between northern and southern Italians. He mentioned founding the *Catholic Catechist* (*Catechista Cattolico*) and sent him a few issues. Finally, he noted that "up to now the priests who have left for America, with few exceptions, were nothing more than rejects of Italian dioceses. Now we would like to send priests worthy of their vocation, men who are prudent, zealous and unselfish, and who would be at the total disposal of the bishops of America." For that purpose, he planned to open in Piacenza a house of formation, but needed financial support. Corrigan, eager to have reliable priests for his growing Italian flock, obliged.⁵⁰

On February 27, 1888, Scalabrini wrote that within a few months he would send three missionaries and a brother catechist:

...But it would be necessary that a house be made available there as a residence since they should lead a life in common *as far as possible*; and a church too, for now even a basement or an underground hall, where they could freely exercise the sacred ministry, but always under the absolute dependence on Your Excellency. If it were possible, convenient and prudent to remove Italians from the (territorial) parish jurisdiction and entrust their spiritual care to our Missionaries everything would succeed marvelously...

As far as I am concerned, I would really like that you . . . were the first of the American bishops to open a house of our priests. . . From the house in New York, the Missionaries, increasing in numbers as time

⁵⁰ Scalabrini to Corrigan, Piacenza, August 18, 1887 and January 7, 1888, Corrigan to Scalabrini, New York, December 16, 1887 and February 10, 1888, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 235-41. See Di Giovanni, "Michael Augustine Corrigan," 190-92.

goes on, could spread out, as from a coordinating center, into other dioceses requesting them. Then in New York, in my opinion, some schools for the children of Italians could be started, including some kindergartens under the direction of nuns. Committees for assistance to our emigrants could be established on the example of the St. Raphael Society for the Germans, and as it is also done for the Irish.⁵¹

Bishop Scalabrini sent Fr. Francesco Zaboglio, who had joined the congregation on April 10, 1888, to New York to lay the foundations there for the coming of his missionaries. He charged Zaboglio, who left Le Havre, France, on June 9 and arrived in New York on June 17, 1888, with two tasks. First, he was to study the organization of the committees to assist the immigrants established by other nationalities, especially the Irish and the Germans, so as to be able to do something similar for the Italians. Secondly, he was to work out with Corrigan the conditions under which the missionaries would establish themselves in New York. Scalabrini, aware of the difficulties experienced by other Italian priests in the United States, wanted to guarantee their own residence for his missionaries, where they could live in common, and their own church, where they could serve the Italians as fully and freely as possible.⁵² On July 12, 1888, he informed Corrigan that he was sending two missionaries, Fr. Felice Morelli and Fr. Amos Astorri, and a lay catechist, Pietro Pizzolotto. On February 3, 1889, they were joined by two other missionaries, Fr. Giacomo Annovazzi and Fr. Oreste Alussi.⁵³ Within a couple of years, the

⁵¹ Scalabrini to Corrigan, Piacenza, February 27 and April 30, 1888, Corrigan to Scalabrini, New York, April 13, 1888, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 242-45.

⁵² Francesconi, *Storia (Inizi)*, I:83, 94; Scalabrini to Corrigan, Piacenza, June 2, 1888, Corrigan to Scalabrini, Ellenville, Ulster Co., N.Y., June 21, 1888, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 245-47.

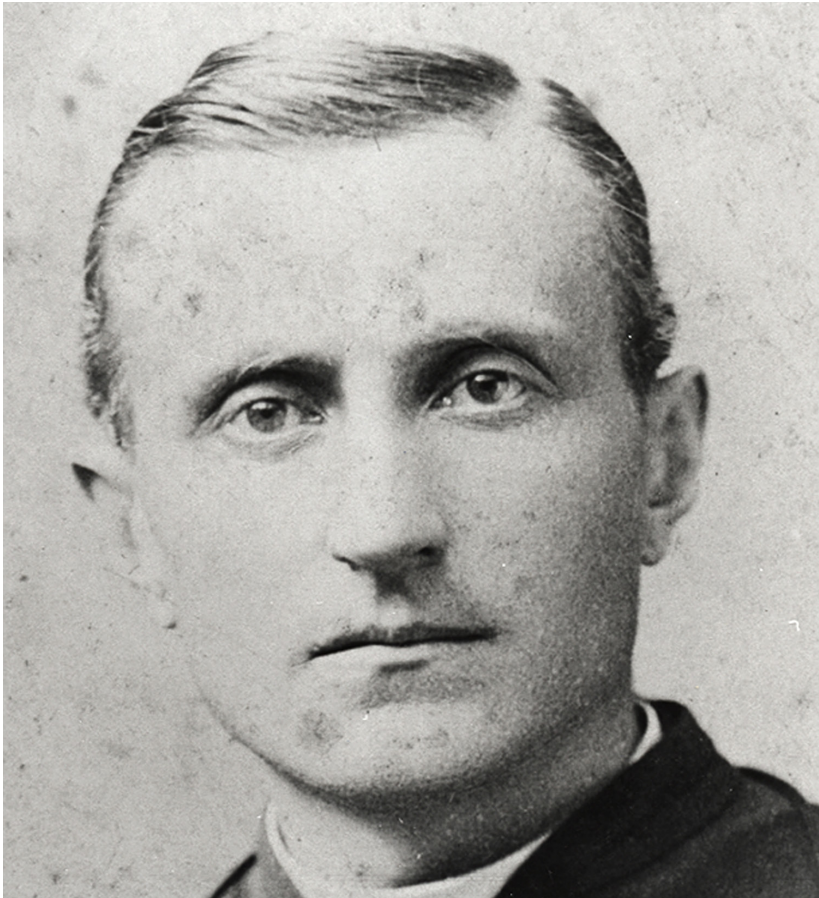
⁵³ Scalabrini to Corrigan, Piacenza, July 12, 1888 and January 23, 1889, Corrigan to Scalabrini, New York, February 5, 1889 in *Ibid.*, 247-49, 253-55.

missionaries had established the Church of the Most Precious Blood on Baxter Street and the Church of St. Joachim on Roosevelt Street in Manhattan. Fr. Morelli was also involved in the establishment of an Italian hospital, called Cristoforo Colombo, on 109th Street. Financial difficulties, due mostly to Morelli's lack of administrative ability, forced the missionaries to give the Church of the Most Precious Blood to the Franciscans in 1894, and the hospital to the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, a community founded by Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini. The missionaries' financial difficulties threatened their two other institutions in the city, St. Joachim's and the St. Raphael Society. Both managed to survive the crisis, but financial problems continued to plague the St. Raphael Society. Nonetheless, the missionaries were able to establish other parishes in New York and elsewhere.⁵⁴

In a letter to Scalabrini, written about two weeks after his arrival in New York, Zaboglio reported that, as regards assistance for the Italian immigrants, the archbishop had appointed a committee composed of the president of the Irish society, two pastors and Zaboglio himself. The task of the committee, apparently, was to look into the matter. Three weeks later, Zaboglio wrote to Scalabrini that nothing else had been done regarding the committee to aid the immigrants, since he had been too busy to do anything about it. But "Once the affairs relating to our parish have been settled, I will see to that matter. He added "Recent concerns, however, with crowding and a threatened epidemic around Mulberry Street have set in motion some of the (lay) Italian benevolent societies existing here, and I understand that they are up to something."⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Mary E. Brown, *The Scalabrinians in North America (1887-1934)* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1996), 37-63. Francesconi, *Storia*, II:32-70, gives a detailed account of the establishment of the churches of the Most Precious Blood and St. Joachim, the arrival of Mother Cabrini and some of her nuns, and the founding of the hospital Cristoforo Colombo.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, I:97, 100. Zaboglio was probably referring to efforts started at that time to establish the Italian Home. See AANY, C-18, Corrigan to Dear Monsignor (De Concilio),



Rev. Francesco Zaboglio; Archives of the Center for Migration Studies, New York.

The available correspondence between Zaboglio and Scalabrini shows that from the summer of 1888 to the summer of 1890, when he returned to Italy, Zaboglio was occupied with the establishment of parishes in various parts of the country, including the Church of the Sacred Heart in Boston's North End, and did

New York, June 28, 1888, where Corrigan writes: "To show my goodwill, (although I do not attach much importance to the formation of such a Committee, I instantly gave the Rev. Gentleman a letter looking to such an organization."

nothing about setting up a branch of the association of assistance in New York.⁵⁶ In December 1890, Zaboglio attended, along with the Marchese Giovanni Battista Volpe Landi, the Lucerne Conference in Switzerland. Prior to that conference, Zaboglio and Volpe Landi had discussed the need of establishing a branch of the association in New York. In a letter to Francesco Viani, the secretary of the Genoa committee of the association, dated December 6, 1890, Volpe Landi reported that he and Fr. Zaboglio, the vicar general of the congregation, had “reached the opportune agreements in order to be able to have constant, regular, and accurate information regarding the condition of the Italian immigrants to the United States so as to establish in New York a committee with agents who would aid them and give them direction as soon as they land.” After the Lucerne Conference, Zaboglio returned to New York. There is no evidence, however, that he did anything relating to his agreements with Volpe Landi, at least for several months.⁵⁷

On March 11, 1891, Volpe Landi raised the matter again with Fr. Domenico Vicentini, who had recently replaced Fr. Morelli as pastor of St. Joachim’s:

I should have written you some time ago to beg you to send me whatever information might interest the emigrants whom we must direct and advise, and also to find out if, and how, that work of effective protection that is desired by Msgr. Scalabrini might be brought about jointly by us and the zealous missionaries of the Istituto Cristoforo Colombo...

Father Zaboglio and perhaps even you might know the “Leo Hauss” [sic], established there to

⁵⁶ Francesconi, *Storia*, II:71-122. On pp. 133-234 of this volume, Francesconi reprints the correspondence between Scalabrini and Zaboglio from September 19, 1888, to December 28, 1896.

⁵⁷ See Perotti, “La società italiana,” 96-97, footnote 105.

receive the German immigrants who disembark at their arrival in New York. Wouldn't it be possible to do the same for the Italians? We propose to print tickets of recommendation to give those emigrants recommended by our Society. I beg you to let me know whether you will authorize us to stamp on these tickets your address in New York and that of the other Missionaries in the other cities of the United States, so that, where needed, the emigrants might present themselves to them.⁵⁸

Finally, urged also by Archbishop Corrigan, Fr. Michael Callaghan, the director of the Irish Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary, who had assumed the task of caring for Italians at the immigrant station, and supported by Fr. John Reuland, the director of the German St. Raphael Society in New York, Zaboglio decided to assume responsibility for the job himself. Establishment of a branch of the Italian association of assistance had already been delayed too long, due to the lack of an available missionary who spoke English, an essential requirement for such a position. On March 20, 1891, Zaboglio informed Scalabrini:

I have decided to take up myself the care of the Italian immigrants, until another Missionary is found who can take my place. It is time to get started . . . Hence, I have seen the Archbishop, who approved my idea, and tomorrow he will give me a letter of recommendation for the authorities at Castle Garden (now the Barge Office), so as to receive permission to enter there.

Then yesterday, with the greatest pleasure, I received a letter from Father Bandini in which he told

⁵⁸ AGS, RC 04, Volpe Landi to Vicentini, Piacenza, March 11, 1891; Francesconi, *Storia*, II:46. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:318 (#431).

me that it is your wish that he be appointed to the mission at the port. Hence, if he should prove able, as I think he will, I shall help him at the beginning and then leave the work to him.⁵⁹

Interestingly, Scalabrini advised Zaboglio to give Bandini some freedom and independence so as to allow him to focus on his “particular Mission”:

I am very happy that the Mission at the port has begun under such good auspices. It is a work of great importance, appreciated here by us in a special way especially by the laity, and it will be best to attach great care to it. It is therefore necessary that Father Bandini have a certain liberty of action and nothing else to think about. Tell Father Morelli, so that he would not occasionally occupy him in the usual parish functions and thus unintentionally distract him from his particular Mission. It could be that he might need to have his own residence, since quite exceptional cases could confront him etc. In view of all this, you and Father Morelli, with Bandini himself, see to the drafting of brief special rules for the Missionaries assigned to the Mission at the Port. At any rate, Bandini will always have with him at least one Brother, whom I hope to send him soon.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Zaboglio to Scalabrini, New York, March 20, 1891, in Francesconi, *Storia*, II:172. “Priests Among the Italians. The Great Work the Piacenza Missionaries are Doing in New York,” *The Catholic News*, April 12, 1891, 1, reported that Zaboglio “has just obtained permission to care for Italian Immigrants on their arrival in New York in the same manner as the interests of immigrants of other nationalities are looked after.” See editorial, “The Missionaries of Christopher Columbus,” *New York Freeman’s Journal and Catholic Register*, April 18, 1891, 4; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:320 (#440).

⁶⁰ Scalabrini to Zaboglio, Piacenza, May 18, 1891, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, I:322. See Di Giovanni, “Michael Augustine Corrigan,” 354-75, for a well-documented brief account

Establishment of the St. Raphael's Italian Benevolent Society

Bandini was clearly appointed to the New York port mission because he was available and spoke English. Accompanied by the Sisters of St. Anne, he left Piacenza on March 18, 1891, and, as previously noted, boarded *La Champagne* on March 21, 1891, headed for New York. The sea voyage, he informed Scalabrini, had been fair. It had been almost always rough and twice tempestuous. The group arrived in New York on the morning of March 29, Easter Sunday, and was met at the landing depot by Fr. Zaboglio. The first week was a busy one. On Monday, he was introduced to Archbishop Corrigan, who gave him and Zaboglio a letter of recommendation for Col. John B. Weber, the superintendent of immigration at the port of New York. On Tuesday, the two priests went to the Barge Office, where Colonel Weber gave Bandini permission to enter the federal immigrant station to assist the Italian immigrants. On Wednesday, Bandini worked at his new office from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. On that day, 1,600 Italian immigrants landed, most of them from Sicily. Bandini helped many of them and soon discovered the tricks and abuses heaped on them by the immigration agents, especially those who awaited the immigrants outside the federal immigrant station. On Thursday, he learned that "some Italians," most likely representatives of the Italian Home, had asked Weber permission to open an office in the Barge Office. Bandini claimed that he thwarted the "plot," informing Weber that this was a rival project set up by the emigration agents.⁶¹ Having gained access to the Barge Office, Bandini set up office at 7 Broadway, where, according to the *Cristoforo Colombo*, those who needed his help could find him from 7 to 12 in the morning and from 2 to 5 in the afternoon. Otherwise, he was available at St. Joachim's Rectory, 128 White Street.⁶²

of the St. Raphael's Italian Benevolent Society. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, I:121 (#273), II:324 (#459).

⁶¹ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), Boston, April 6, 1891; Bandini to Revdo Signore (Rolleri), Boston, April 6, 1891, See Perotti, "La società italiana," 97-98 and *Scal. mig.*, I:116-17 (#267), II: 321 (#446).

⁶² "Per l'Emigrazione," *Cristoforo Colombo*, May 5, 1891, 1; ACMS, 005, box 6, First



Rev. Pietro Bandini; Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, Roma.

By early June 1891, Bandini had begun to place reports in New York's Italian newspapers giving information on immigrants detained at the Barge Office or youths, still looking for parents or relatives, who had been released to him and were given temporary lodging. The missionaries' residence at 128 White Street, along with

Annual Report, 11-12, 26; Historical records survey, New York (City), *Inventory of the Church Archives in New York City. Roman Catholic Church, Archdiocese of New York*, vol. 2 (New York City: Prepared by the New York City WPA Historical Records Survey, Division of Community Service Projects, 1941), 79-80, notes that the residence at 7 Broadway had been rented and used by the Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary from May 1, 1884, to December 4, 1885, when it moved to more permanent quarters at 7 State St.; AANY, C-27, Callaghan to Corrigan, New York, March 31, 1891. See *OCD*, 1892 (Sadlier), 123.

the German Leo House, the Irish Mission of the Holy Rosary, and the hospital Cristoforo Colombo, provided lodging until the society opened its own home in 1892.⁶³

After a brief visit to Boston to substitute for one of the missionaries and raise funds for his new mission, Bandini turned his attention to the establishment of the New York branch of the association.⁶⁴ His first task was to set up a committee, something he was able to accomplish by the end of June. The committee met for the first time at the archbishop's residence on June 29. The following constitution was adopted:

Art. I. St. Raphael's Italian Benevolent Society of the United States having its headquarters at New York, is a purely charitable organization. The scope of the society therefore is:

a) To render assistance to Italian immigrants upon their arrival in America, and prevent their falling into the hands of dishonest people.

b) To obtain for them work or employment.

c) To provide for their spiritual wants upon their arrival, and continue so doing wherever they may make their home.

d) To provide, as soon as possible, a house for the use of poor immigrants, and particularly boys and girls, until they find employment or are consigned to their parents.

⁶³ See "Giovinetti italiani abbandonati al Barge Office," *L'Eco d'Italia*, June 5 and 7, 1891, 1; "Si Cercano i Parenti," "Ricerca di Persona" and "St. Raffael's Home. Ricerca di Parenti," *Cristoforo Colombo*, June 9, 1891, April 6 and December 11, 1892, 1; "Chi Conosce Serafina Spada?" *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, June 12, 1891, 1; ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report, 11-12, 26.

⁶⁴ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Rev. P. Superiore (Zaboglio), Boston, April 4 and 10, 1891. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:321 (#445, 448).

Art. II. To attain this result the members shall assist by their prayers and offerings.

Art. III. The members shall be divided into two classes: active members, and co-operative.

The active members shall pay annually to the funds of the Society, three dollars; the co-operative, twenty-five cents. The payment of twenty-five dollars secures a perpetual active membership.

Art. IV. The Society shall be governed by a committee of direction residing in New York, composed of not less than seven persons, chosen from among the active members.

The missionary in charge of the Mission of New York, and a priest of the same congregation of missionaries for Italian immigrants shall always form part of this committee, which shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, a Secretary, not less than four Consultors, and a General Corresponding Secretary.

Art. V. In every city where there are active members of St. Raphael's Italian Benevolent Society, there shall be formed local committees, and the Presidents and Secretaries of the same shall be in direct communication with the New York Committee, by whom they shall be considered as consultors.

Art. VI. St. Raphael's Italian Benevolent Society is in direct relation with the like Society founded in Italy under the title Italian Society of Protection for Italian Immigrants.

The Society was founded in June, 1891, and in the following month was officially recognized by the American Government.

His Grace, Archbishop Corrigan, President;
 General Edoardo Ferrero, Vice-President; Monsignor
 S. DeConcilio, Treasurer; Rev. P. Bandini, General
 Secretary, and Director of the New York Mission.
 Consultors, P. Bocigalupo, G. Cavagnaro, A. Cuneo,
 P. Pia, Avv. A. Fransioli, and Doct. E. Villari.⁶⁵

The statutes, published in Piacenza's Catholic by-weekly *L'Amico del Popolo* on August 1, defined the society as "a purely charitable" organization, dependent on the missionaries and its members for its functioning and very existence. The society's statutes or constitution confronted Bandini, the "General Secretary, and Director of the New York Mission," with considerable challenges. First and foremost, the society was to assist arriving Italians and prevent them from falling into the hands of the padroni and bankers who held significant control over immigrant Italian labor, a task that had eluded other similar societies. It was to do so by finding employment for them, by providing them with spiritual support, and by providing poor immigrants, especially boys and girls, with temporary room and board. This would require the establishment and staffing of a labor bureau and an immigrant home. Secondly, funding would come from society members, who would make a small annual donation of three dollars for active members and twenty-five cents for co-operative members. Finally the society was to encourage the formation of committees in other American cities and maintain a relationship with the Italian society, of which it was a branch.⁶⁶

The society was officially incorporated in July, 1891.⁶⁷ On July 10,

⁶⁵ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, June 30, 1891; ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report, 4-5. See Perotti, "La società italiana," 100-01, *Scal. mig.*, II:333-34 (#476).

⁶⁶ Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:334 (#480), 336 (#491). See Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 78.

⁶⁷ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, June 30, 1891, where Bandini writes that the society will be incorporated on July 6. However, on Wednesday, July 22, the society's lawyer Augustus C. Fransioli wrote to Bandini that "Owing to the absence of the judges of the Supreme Court I was unable to obtain its approval until last Monday

Corrigan issued a circular letter, written by the Rev. Gherardo Ferrante in Italian, to be read on Sunday, July 12, in the churches of the city attended by Italians, announcing the formation and aim of the society:

Reverend Sir:

The continued and ever growing Italian immigration to North America has been demanding for a long time serious measures on the part of those who, rather than exploitation, have at heart the spiritual and material well-being of the poor immigrants. Unfortunately, painful events had to be lamented because of the cunningness of some individuals who have taken advantage of the gullibility and often of the need of the poor immigrants.

These conditions, contrary to sentiments of honesty and the demands of the times, had to cease. On the initiative of the Fathers of the Missions for the Italian immigrants, these days the Society of St. Raphael's for the Italians has been legally established with a solemn act. In spirit and purpose it is similar to the one already long existing in our city for the Irish and the German immigrants.

An organization to which are entrusted the well-being and the future of the Italian community deserves our support and protection both because as Pastor of this Archdiocese we must take care of everyone without distinction and because we have been honored to take on the effective Presidency of this Society. Therefore, while we bring to your attention this organization, we feel duty bound to ask you for your

[July 20], and have just perfected the incorporation of the St. Raphael Italian Benevolent Society." See ACMS, 005, box 1, Fransioli to Bandini, New York, July 22, 1891; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:333-34 (#476), 336 (#486).

cooperation and to ask you to announce it to your flock next Sunday and to see to it that we have been honored to take on the effective Presidency of this through your authoritative word. The Italians entrusted to your care understand its importance and contribute to the support of such a highly charitable work.

In order that you may act according to the Statutes of the said Society, we inform you that the members are divided in two groups: *active members* and *coadjutor members*. The first pay three dollars a year or twenty-five dollars one time only; the others, pay twenty-five cents per year. In this manner even the poor can contribute to the support of the Society.

We shall send you a copy of the Statutes so that you may thoroughly know them, as well as a few leaflets to be distributed among the Italians in order to spread as widely as possible this information. Membership may be accepted by you or by Reverend Bandini at the office of the Society, Broadway No. 7.⁶⁸

Appropriate documentation for signing as a supporting member followed Corrigan's letter.⁶⁹ Bishop Scalabrini, who received a copy of the circular letter, gratefully acknowledged it and had it

⁶⁸ Circular letter of Archbishop Corrigan, New York, July 10, 1891, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 275-76. Giovanni Preziosi, "Congregation of St. Charles Borromeo," in *The Catholic Church in the United States of America*, I:191, notes that "This society was constituted in 1891, and Archbishop Corrigan announced its foundation to the different pastors, with a circular written by Rev. Gherardo Ferrante, D.D." See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:334 (#479).

⁶⁹ See ACMS, 005, box 8, Sottoscrizione a Favore della Società Italiana San Raffaele per la Protezione degli Immigranti Italiani and Certificato di Ammissione. See AGS, RC 02, Zaboglio to Bandini, New Orleans, December 17, 1891 (transcript); Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:353 (#535).

published in *L'Amico del Popolo* on July 20.⁷⁰ Though busy with the establishment of the Society of St. Raphael, Bandini found time to ask Fr. Rollerli to purchase and send him books so that he could build a small library for the use of the missionaries. The books dealt with preaching, the Christian mysteries, sermons for various feasts, the sacraments, and the Sacred Heart.⁷¹

In early October, Corrigan invited Bandini to discuss ways of raising funds for the society. A meeting of its committee was scheduled for Monday, October 19, most likely to pursue the matter.⁷² Soon after, form letters, signed by Corrigan as president of the society and by Bandini, were sent to pastors and others asking them to support the society.⁷³ Bandini also used the occasion of the celebration of the feast of St. Raphael on Sunday, October 25, to ask his fellow Scalabrinians to speak to their parishioners about the charitable work of the society. On that Sunday, he assisted at all the masses at St Joachim's Church, where the day's collection was to be given to the society, though it

⁷⁰ Scalabrini to Corrigan, Piacenza, August 10, 1891 and Corrigan to Scalabrini, New York, August 31, 1891, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 276-82; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:335 (#484), 348 (#516).

⁷¹ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Rollerli, New York, September 4, 1891, Rollerli to Bandini, Piacenza, September 21, 1891. See *ibid.*, RC 03, Bandini to Rollerli, New York, February 13, March 31, and May 27, 1894; ACMS, 005, box 1, Rollerli to Bandini, Piacenza, September 21, 1891.

⁷² *Ibid.*, Corrigan to Rev. dear Sir (Bandini), New York, October 3, 1891, form letter, Bandini to Pregmo Signore, New York, October 14, 1891, telegram, Wigger to Bandini, South Orange, NJ, October 24, 1891, where he says that he cannot attend the committee meeting.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, form letters, Corrigan to Revd and dear Sir, New York, (copy), Corrigan to Reverendo Signore, New York, n.d., and Bandini to Dear Lady, New York, October 20, 1891. For financial contributions, see *ibid.*, Paroli to Bandini, Providence, R.I., July 22 and December 15, 1891, Capello to Bandini, Montreal, July 29, 1891, Jakimowicz to Bandini, Omaha, Nebraska, August 8, 1891, Sachetti to Bandini, Trenton, N.J., November 27, 1891, Zaboglio to Bandini, New Orleans, December 17, 1891 and January 2, 1892. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:353 (#535).

is not clear whether this happened.⁷⁴ But finding sufficient funds for the society, on top of managing it, would prove both challenging and exhausting for Bandini and lead to his eventual decision to leave it.

SOTTOSCRIZIONE

A FAVORE

Della Società Italiana San Raffaele

PER LA PROTEZIONE

DEGLI IMMIGRANTI ITALIANI.

Questa sottoscrizione è aperta per cura della Società S. Raffaele dietro al caldo appello fatto da S. E. Reverendissima Mgr. Corrigan, Presidente attivo della medesima Società a tutti gli Italiani che hanno a cuore il *Patronato degli Immigranti* e vogliono che cessino "*I fatti pur troppo dolorosi*" che "*ebbero a lamentarsi a causa della scaltrezza di taluni che fecero buon mercato della credulità e talvolta della necessità dei poveri immigranti*"—(lettera di Mgr. Arcivescovo, 10 Luglio 1891).

Questa scheda riempita che sia si rimetta all'Ufficio della Società, 7 Broadway, dal quale verranno mandate in risposta le pagelle d'associazione.

NOME E COGNOME	\$	C

Subscription for membership in the St. Raphael Society; Archives of the Center for Migration Studies, New York.

⁷⁴ ACMS, 005, box 1, form letters, Bandini to Revdo e Caro Confratello and Bandini to Stimatissimo Signor, New York, October 20, 1891; AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, October 26, 1891. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:348 (#521).

Chapter IV

Social Worker in New York, 1892-1895

“To render assistance to Italian immigrants upon their arrival in America”¹

With the society’s committee and constitution in place, Bandini began to implement its major constitutional provisions: 1. assist arriving Italians at the immigrant station and prevent them from falling into the hands of the padroni and bankers, 2. set up a labor bureau to help immigrants find employment, 3. provide poor immigrants, especially boys and girls, with temporary room and board by establishing an immigrant home, and 4. maintain a relationship with the Italian society, of which the one in New York was a branch. To his credit, Bandini, with the help of the committee and the society’s members, was able to implement those four major provisions. But they were constantly undermined and eventually undone by personnel and financial problems that, despite many efforts, were never successfully resolved.



Ellis Island; Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, Roma.

¹ A version of this chapter first appeared in Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 121-47.

U. S. Supt. of Immigration,

BARGE OFFICE, NEW YORK.

Ellis Island
Boat

<i>From Battery</i>	<i>From Ellis Island</i>
<i>6. 45</i>	<i>7.</i>
<i>7. 30</i>	<i>9. 45</i>
<i>10. 15</i>	<i>11. 45</i>
<i>12. 15</i>	<i>1. 45</i>
<i>2. 15</i>	<i>3. 45</i>
<i>4. 15</i>	<i>5. 15</i>

Ellis Island boat; Archives of the Center for Migration Studies, New York.

In January 1892, Ellis Island opened up as the federal immigrant depot and Bandini began to commute there. A note in the society records, dated February 1892, lists the times of the ferry's

departure from the Battery to Ellis Island and vice versa.² At the Island, Bandini, assisted by the society's two agents, Francesco Isola and Giacomo Borsella, helped the immigrants in a variety of ways. The agents, readily recognized by the legend in gold letters, "St. Raphael's Italian Society," on a pointed cap, acted as interpreters when the immigrants faced the questioning of the immigration officials. They helped the immigrants exchange their money, buy tickets, find their baggage, and get the right train or boat. They informed the immigrants' friends or relatives by telegram of their arrival, so they could be met at the station. They accompanied women and children going to New York and its suburbs to their residence. The missionary visited the immigrant hospital, providing spiritual comfort to the sick and Christian burial for those who had died. The society also helped those immigrants who, for a variety of reasons, were detained at the Island. Their cases were carefully examined and brought to the attention of the authorities, in many instances securing the immigrants' liberty.³ According to the First Annual Report, the society made available to the local press a weekly bulletin giving information on the number of arrivals, the number sent back to Italy, the number of those held on suspicion, and a list of the sick and dead.⁴ The *Cristoforo Colombo* published weekly reports, prepared by Francesco Isola, from March 6 to September 11, 1892. These reports gave the number of arrivals, the number of those sent back, the sick at various hospitals, those who had

² ACMS, 005, box 1, notes, Ellis Island ferry boat, February 1892, undated notes listing the departure times of the "Ellis Island Boat." On the history of Ellis Island, see Willard A. Heaps, *The Story of Ellis Island* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1967); Thomas M. Pitkin, *Keepers of the Gate. A History of Ellis Island* (New York: New York University Press, 1975); David M. Brownstone, Irene M. Franck, and Douglass L. Brownstone, *Island of Hope, Island of Tears* (1979; repr., New York: Penguin Books, 1986).

³ ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report, 7, 19, box 1, Bandini to Dear General (Ferrero), New York, December 3, 1891. See A. M. Cornelio, *L'Emigrazione Italiana e l'Abate Villeneuve* (Firenze: Ufficio della Rassegna Nazionale, 1892); Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, I:120-21 (#272).

⁴ ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report, 7-8.

died at sea, and those who were released in the care and custody of the society.⁵ Fr. Bandini also received letters from individuals in various parts of the country and abroad requesting his help for incoming relatives or friends.⁶

In early 1892, Bandini went to Boston to form a branch of the St. Raphael Society. Fr. Amos V. Astorri, assistant at Sacred Heart Church in the North End founded by the Scalabrinians in 1890, was appointed representative of the society. But, despite the activities of the Italian Protestant minister Gaetano Conte, no branch of the society was established there until after direct service between Boston and the Mediterranean was inaugurated by the Dominion Line in November 1901. Moreover, there is no evidence in the society records that any other committee or branch of the society was established in the United States.⁷

⁵ See the newspaper for March 6, 13, 20, April 3, 19, May 1, 8, 22, June 5, 19, July 3, 10, 17, 26, 31, August 14, 21, and September 11, 1892.

⁶ See Scalabrini to Bandini, Piacenza, May 30, 1891, in *Scritti*, 1:326; ACMS, 005, box 1, Fornelli to Bandini, McAlester, Indian Territory, May 27, 1891, Berlingiero to Bandini, New Orleans, June 22, 1891, Zaboglio to Bandini, Washington, Indiana, June 25 and New Orleans, December 26, 1891, Riccadonna to Bandini, New York, June 26, 1891, Famarista to Bandini, New York, June 29, 1891, Adiablio to Bandini, Sault St. Marie, Mich., July 2, 1891, Nasca to Bandini, Scranton, Pa., July 3, 1891, Ferrante to Bandini, New York, July 8, 1891, Villari to Bandini, New York, July 12, 1891, D'Angela to Bandini, New York, July 16 and August 2, 1891, Murray to Bandini, Rhinecliff, N.Y., July 26, 1891, Polidori to Bandini, New York, August 3, 1891, Mafera to Bandini, New York, August 3, 1891, Bandini to Revda Madre Superiora, New York, February 23, 1892; AGS, RC 02, Volpe Landi to Bandini, Piacenza, August 26, 1891 and November 17, 1892, Bandini to Revd e caro Signore (Rolleri), New York, May 8, 1891 and April 22, 1892, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, May 25, 1892, Govoni to Revmo Padre (Bandini), Piacenza, November 23, 1892; Bandini to Reverendmo Monsignore (Mangot), New York, June 14, 1893, RC 03, Bandini to Revdo e caro Padre (Rolleri), New York, January 7, 1895; AANY, C-29, Bandini to Your Grace (Corrigan), New York, March 7, 1892 and G-1, New York, August 12, 1893. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:332 (#473), 340 (#503), 358 (#555), 371 (#612-13).

⁷ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, February 3, 1892, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, June 2, 1891; *Venticinque anni di Missione fra gl'Immigrati Italiani di Boston, Mass., 1888-1913* (Milano: Tipografia Santa Lega

Conte was a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which carried on an active ministry among Boston's Italian immigrants. He published a small paper called *L'Amico del Popolo*, in which he took on Boston's padroni or labor bosses.⁸ In 1894 he established a Society for the Protection of Italian Immigrants (Società di Protezione degli Emigrati Italiani), for which he sought the aid of the Italian government.⁹ The society opened an office at 211 North Street and provided assistance with employment, banking, legal matters and education, especially training in English and good citizenship. Composed of Americans and Italians, it lacked the cohesion and funds to be successful. After Conte resigned from the board of directors, it closed down. In the next few

Eucaristica, 1913), 209-11. For the history of the St. Raphael Society in Boston, see Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 201-27. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:330 (#465), 343 (#507), 348 (#519), 351 (#527), 354-55 (#543).

⁸ Edgar J. Helms, *Pioneering in Modern City Missions* (Boston: Morgan Memorial Printing Department, 1927), 35-37. See Francis D. De Bilio, "Protestant Mission Work Among Italians in Boston" (Ph.D diss., Boston University, 1949), 79-84; Salv. Mastrogiovanni, *Le Prime Società di Patronato per gli Emigranti negli Stati Uniti ed in Italia* (Venezia: Tip. Dell'Istituto Industriale, 1906), 12-15; Angelo Olivieri, "Protestantism and Italian immigration in Boston in late 19th century: The Mission of G. Conte," in *The Religious Experience of Italian Americans*, ed. Silvano M. Tomasi (New York: The American Italian Historical Association, 1975), 73-103.

⁹ Anna M. Martellone, *Una Little Italy nell'Atene d'America. La comunità italiana di Boston dal 1880 al 1920* (Napoli: Guida Editori, 1973), 359-360. See ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 109, fasc. 2188, Conte to Fava, Boston, July 26, 1894 and June 15, 1895 (includes circular), Ro. Console Generale (Branchi) to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava) New York, September 6, 1894 and June 20, 1895, flyer, Association for Protecting Italian Workmen, Ro. Amb. (Fava) to Signor Console Generale (Branchi), Washington, June 19, 1895, newspaper clipping, "Preying on Poor Italians," *The Boston Herald*, January 24, 1894 (includes Italian translation), busta 113, fasc. 2207, rough draft, Ro. Am. (Fava) to Oldrini, Washington, February 7, 1895, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), New York, February 11, 1895; "All on Deck," *Boston Post*, July 18, 1894, 5, "Gesta Nefande di Bosses italiani a Boston. Una Società Protettrice," *Cristoforo Colombo*, July 20, 1894, 1; "La Società di Protezione per gli Operai Italiani a Boston," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, July 22, 1894, 2.

years, Conte focused his energies on his missionary work.¹⁰

“To obtain for them work or employment”

Effective protection of the immigrants against the abuses of the padroni, bankers and runners, required that Bandini establish a free labor bureau as part of his society, where the newly arrived immigrants could be put in contact with jobs. Establishing a labor bureau had been one of Bandini's major concerns after his arrival in New York. The society's constitution had included obtaining work or employment for the immigrants as one of its aims.¹¹ By early May 1891, Bandini was looking into the possibility of having a representative of the St. Raphael Society, at that time still unformed, admitted at the Castle Garden Free Bureau of Labor maintained by New York City's German and Irish societies. As previously noted, the Italian Home had also applied for representation at the labor bureau, further complicating Bandini's task. His request for admission to the labor bureau was delayed, since the bureau, located in temporary quarters at Castle Garden, was waiting to move to permanent quarters at the Barge Office. Permission was granted to the Free Bureau of Labor for such a move in August 1891.¹²

¹⁰ Martellone, *Una Little Italy*, 358-361; ACMS, 005, box 15, newspaper clipping, “Una Protesta. Le società italiane di Boston Mass contro il ministro protestante Gaetano Conte,” n.p. On Conte, see Gaetano Conte, *Dieci Anni in America: Impressioni e Ricordi. Conferenze riguardanti l'emigrazione italiana nell'America del Nord* (Palermo: Tipografia G. Spinnato, 1903), 155-61, Gertrude Conte, *A Modern Apostle. A biographical record of The Life & Work of the late Rev. Gaetano Conte* (New York: The New York Public Library, Manuscript Department, 1961), 89-111. See Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 205-06.

¹¹ ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report, 4.

¹² AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, May 7, 1891; ACMS, 005, box 1, Ferrante to Bandini, New York, May 20, 1891, Schickel to Bandini, New York, July 2, 1891, incomplete rough draft, Bandini to Honorable Sir, New York, August 6, 1891; “The Free Labor Bureau,” *NYT*, August 21, 1891, 2. See Perotti, “La società italiana,” 99, *Scal. mig.*, II:324 (#458).

On January 15, 1892, Bandini informed Scalabrini that the "Labor Bureau, which has been definitively assigned to us, will soon open in the old Barge Office." Once the labor bureau had been moved to the Barge Office, the St. Raphael Society was granted representation, though it had to share the office of the German and Irish societies. Unhappy with that arrangement, Bandini sought his own office, independent of the Germans and the Irish. Finally, on May 30, 1892, the St. Raphael Society opened its own labor bureau at the Barge Office, with Gen. Edoardo Ferrero as President.¹³ The rules of the Italian labor bureau, with the exception of the first one, were similar to those of the German and Irish Labor Bureau:

First - This office is open to all Italian emigrants, without any distinction or discrimination.

Second - It will procure all kinds of manual labor and household service.

Third - The applicant will be charged nothing at all for labor procured or advice given.

Fourth - The office will not enter upon any contract, or upon the rating of the amount of wages. It will merely assist the emigrant by giving him the necessary information or advice, and by protecting him so that any lawful contract he may have engaged in may be kept and the wages agreed upon paid to him.

Fifth - Whoever seeks for labor must furnish

¹³ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, January 15, 1892, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, May 18, 1892; AANY, C-29, Bandini to Eccellenza Illma Rema (Corrigan), New York, April 19 and 22, 1892, Callaghan to Most Rev. Archbishop (Corrigan), New York, May 27, 1892. P. Bandini, "Ufficio di Lavoro della Società Italiana S. Raffaele," *Cristoforo Colombo*, May 29, 1892, 1, announced the opening of the labor bureau, said that it will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and listed its preliminary rules; "Il 'Labor Bureau' della Società di San Raffaele," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, May 29, 1892, 1. See AGS, BA 02, Villeneuve to Scalabrini, New York, October 11, 1891; Perotti, "La società italiana," 114, *Scal. mig.*, II:354 (#542), 360 (#566).

proper references to the Bureau's authorities. Agents for others are not excepted from this rule.

Sixth - All those who seek for laborers must state clearly and distinctly the nature and kind of labor required, and also the amount of wages to be paid.

Seventh - In all cases whoever is looking for laborers must provide for their transportation to the place of the labor. If the money is sent to the Bureau, they will see that the laborers, with their baggage, are sent to their destination in the safest and speediest possible way.¹⁴

The labor bureau imposed on Bandini the task of finding work for newly arrived immigrants and checking out various colonization or labor projects that might distribute them beyond the eastern seaboard and outside the congested urban centers. The society records include several letters received and sent by Bandini involving jobs for immigrants.¹⁵ *The New York Times* reported on September 25, 1892, that the St. Raphael Society had procured employment for seventy six men during the past year.¹⁶

Bandini received offers to send Italians to establish colonies

¹⁴ "Italian Emigrant Bureau," *New York Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register*, September 24, 1892, 5; ACMS, 005, box 15, Circular, "The Labor Bureau at Castle Garden," n.d., box 6, First Annual Report, 10, 20-22. See AGS, RC 02, Opera Pia Italiana di San Raffaele, n.d.

¹⁵ See ACMS, 005, box 1, Ferrero to Bandini, New York, June 26, 1891, Schickel to Bandini, New York, July 2, 1891, Errico to Bandini, New York, July 3, 1891, Luzzini to Bandini, New York, January 4, 1892, Bandini, letters of recommendation for Alfredo Brusadelli and Pietro Lombardini, New York, March 4 and 26, 1892, Gori to Bandini, Milan, April 4, 1892; AGS, RC 02, postal cards, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, May 27 and June 4, 1892, Bandini to Revdmo Mgr Canonico (Mangot), New York, September 21, 1892; Scalabrini to Bandini, Piacenza, May 30, 1891, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 1:326. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:367 (#594).

¹⁶ "Blessed by the Archbishop," *NYT*, September 25, 1892, 9.

in Alabama, Wyoming, and the “Boundary Line of the United States and Canada.” A letter from the Jesuit missionary Paolo M. Ponziglione to Bandini, dated August 5, 1891, indicates that the latter had shown some interest in an Italian colony to be established in the new state of Wyoming. Ponziglione suggested that Bandini correspond with Mr. Eugenio Amoretti, the founder of the town of Lander, Fremont County, Wyoming, who, with his influence, could easily obtain the land needed for the establishment and success of the colony. There is no evidence in the society records that Bandini corresponded with Amoretti. In a letter to Scalabrini dated November 27, 1891, Bandini wrote that, after having “avidly studied” some plans for colonies that had been proposed to him, he had to abandon them because they “did not present that solid guarantee that we must demand in order to assure our Italians.”¹⁷ In early 1894, he visited various states in the West and South. He may have stopped in Arkansas, where wealthy New York banker Austin Corbin was interested in using Italian labor on his plantation at Sunnyside on the Mississippi River. He told Scalabrini that the trip had been “very useful for the practical knowledge it gave me regarding the problem of colonization,” and promised to explain this to him in person during his forthcoming visit to Italy.¹⁸

Vincenzo Lamantia, who founded the Italian Immigration Protective Labor Agency in New Orleans in 1891, also corresponded with Bandini in the hope of working out with him an arrangement whereby the St. Raphael Society would provide his agency with

¹⁷ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, July 31 and November 27, 1891; ACMS, 005, box 1, Ponziglione to Bandini, St. Stephen’s Mission, Wyoming, August 5, 1891. See Perotti, “La società italiana,” 102-03, *Scal. mig.*, II:336 (#489), 351-52 (#528).

¹⁸ AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Scalabrini), New York, February 10, 1894. On Sunnyside, see, Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., “Sunnyside: The Evolution of an Arkansas Plantation, 1840-1945,” *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* L (Spring 1991): 5-29. For a reprint of the Gatewook article, see Jeannie M., Whayne, ed., *Shadows over Sunnyside: An Arkansas Plantation in Transition, 1830-1945* (Fayetteville, Arkansas: The University of Arkansas Press, 1993), 3-24. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:390 (#689).

as many as 5,000 workers for the sugar plantations of Louisiana. Lamantia, supported by the Scalabrinian Giacomo Gambera, who believed that the New Orleans agency and the New York society had much in common, urged collaboration between them. Lamantia suggested to Bandini on September 29, 1891, that:

Another branch of the San Raffaele Society ought to be organized and permanently established at Chicago, the central point of many Italians leaving this State after the sugar season is over in search of work, many of whom are annually deceived by the said *scrocconi* [sharks] and sent off to the far west entrusted and consigned to sub-contractors, and often times left in the woods. Societies alike yours could be easily sustained by simply charging \$1.00 or two to every Italian placed at work, and I know, they would be willing to pay \$5.00 were they sure to be located at work, to get their wages and to have nothing more to do with Italian bosses, and speculators of human beings.

The three such Institutions ought to look to make contracts with several Rail Companies, or coal mines or public works for Italian laborers and supply themselves with them to furnish the demand.

I hope your Society would take my views under consideration and have among us a thoroughly [sic] understanding.¹⁹

¹⁹ ACMS, 005, box 1, Lamantia to Bandini, New Orleans, September 29, 1891, Gambera to Molto R.do Padre (Bandini), New Orleans, August 25, 1891. For additional correspondence, see *ibid.*, Lamantia to Bandini, New Orleans, August 25 (includes forms), September 10, October 3, telegrams, October 1 and 5, 1891, and July 8, 1892. See, "Agenzia d'Immigrazione a New Orleans," *L'Eco d'Italia*, July 17, 1891, 2; A.V. Margavio and Jerome J. Salomone, *Bread and Respect: The Italians of Louisiana* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2002), 70; Gunther Peck, "Reinventing Free Labor: Immigrant Padrones and Contract Laborers in North America, 1885-1925," in

The entire project fell through, however, when Lamantia refused to sign a legal contract, requested by Bandini, giving guarantees to the immigrants. Bandini's demanding requirements did not sit well with those interested in Italian colonists and workers. They found the Italian padroni or labor bosses much more accommodating.²⁰

Form No. 41.

NIGHT MESSAGE.

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

This Company TRANSMITS and DELIVERS messages only on conditions limiting its liability, which have been accepted by the sender of the following message. Errors can be guarded against only by repeating a message back to the sending station for comparison and the Company will not hold itself liable for errors or delays in transmission or delivery of Unrepeated Night Messages, sent at reduced rates, beyond a sum equal to the amount paid for transmission; nor in any case when the claim is not presented in writing within thirty days after the message is filed with the Company for transmission. This is an UNREPEATED NIGHT MESSAGE, and is delivered by request of the sender, under the conditions named above.

THOS. T. ECKERT, General Manager.

NUMBER 546	SENT BY M	RECD BY mb	22pd
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157a

NORVIN GREEN, President.

CHECK
NM

RECEIVED at the WESTERN UNION BUILDING, 195 Broadway, N. Y. Oct 1 1891

Dated New Orleans La 2

To P. Bandini

7 Broadway New York

Can you ship 300 italians 30 and 40
at time. Places already secured for them

Please answer immediately

Vincent Lamantia

Lamantia telegram; Archives of the Center for Migration Studies, New York.

In early 1894, New York's *The World* accused some bankers on Mulberry Street, in the Italian district, of exploiting Italian workers hired to plow the snow. On February 20, the newspaper, exposing the link between politicians, city departments and the padroni, announced that the New York state legislature had decided to investigate the matter.

American Dreaming, Global Realities: Rethinking U.S. Immigration History, ed. Donna R. Gabaccia and Vicki L. Ruiz (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 263-83; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:348 (#518). On Gambera, see ACMS, 005, box 2, Giacomo Gambera, Autobiografia, ediz. 2 - riveduta e accresciuta dall'autore, n.d. and *A Migrant Missionary Story: The Autobiography of Giacomo Gambera*, ed. Mary E. Brown, trans. Serafina M. Clarke and Thomas F. Carlesimo (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1994).

²⁰ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, November 27, 1891. See Perotti, "La società italiana," 102-03, 111-12, *Scal. mig.*, II:351-52 (#528).

The article cited Fr. Bandini's view of the padroni's exploitation of Italian workers:

Rev. Father Bandini, Secretary of the Italian Benevolent Society, in conversation with an "Evening World" reporter, said this morning that it was now war to the knife. With Vincenzo Palumbo, Carlo Barsotti and other members of the Society, he had taken off his coat and never meant to put it on again until the padrone was crushed.

It was stated yesterday in "The Evening World" that warrants were out for the arrest of several of the padrones. This, however, is not all. Father Bandini is conducting an investigation daily, and as fast as any particularly outrageous case is reported, the affidavit of the victim is at once made out. There is already a stack of affidavits on hand that would amaze the padrones could they see them. Prosecutions will follow in every case.²¹

Despite such strong language and publicity, there is no significant evidence that Bandini's society was successful in linking newly arrived immigrants with job opportunities or reform the padrone system. In an extensive report to Ambassador Fava on April 15, 1894, Alessandro Oldrini, appointed agent in charge of the soon to be established Bureau of Information and Protection for Italian Emigration at Ellis Island or Italian Bureau, noted that in the most recent decade, three societies were formed to assist incoming Italian immigrants in New York. The first was the "Società di Emigrazione Italiana," founded around 1886 and liquidated after 18 months despite a subsidy of \$1000 from the Italian government. The second was the

²¹ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 109, fasc. 2188, newspaper clippings, "Un' Intervista Coi Banchieri Italiani Accusati dal "World," *Il Progresso Italo Americano*, February 17, 1894, "Now to Investigate," *The World*, February 20, 1894.

“Istituto Italiano or Italian Home,” founded in 1888 and the first to receive government approval to establish an Italian agency at the port of arrival. It still protected the Italian immigrants but was unable to establish an Italian labor bureau. The third was the “Società clericale San Raffaele,” established in 1891 with a priest at the immigrant station. Its labor bureau has had negative results and was “open nominally.”²² In another report to Fava on February 6, 1895, Oldrini quoted the superintendent of the German and Irish labor bureau as telling him that the labor bureau of the St. Raphael Society “has never had any value.” The same held true of that society’s failed effort to establish a labor bureau in the Italian quarter of Spring Street on the basis of a twenty-five cents admission fee.²³ An article in *The New York Times*, on July 7, 1895, described the Barge Office Labor Bureau as “a dingy room filled with long settees, from which a glimpse can be had of the water and the boat from the island, bringing the latest immigrant arrivals.” The article noted that most immigrant seekers of work at the bureau were young women, and that a recent month’s report on job applications showed that 166 were Irish, 34 German, 11 English, 2 Scandinavian, 1 Pole, and 2 Hungarian. No reference was made in the article to Italians or an Italian labor bureau.²⁴

Several studies of philanthropic placement agencies, such as Bandini’s labor bureau, have concluded that they had very limited ability to link immigrants to jobs. In his study of Italians in New York, George Pozzeta concluded that “Although much good was accomplished by the [St. Raphael] Society, it utterly failed to achieve its avowed objective of destroying the padroni. The primary thrust of the organization remained a religious one, and the Church never possessed sufficient community power to threaten seriously such a strong force as the labor boss.”²⁵

²² ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 113, fasc. 2206, Oldrini to Fava, Washington, April 15, 1894.

²³ Ibid fasc. 2207, Oldrini to Fava, New York, February 6, 1895 (copy)

²⁴ “Work for Immigrants,” *NYT*, July 7, 1895, 16.

²⁵ Pozzetta, “The Italians of New York City,” 280-81.

Edwin Fenton, in his study of Italians and American labor, agreed, noting that “Although it helped to improve conditions on the docks, the Saint Raphael Society was unable to reform the padrone system. Despite support from the Italian government, its funds were incommensurate to the work before it.” He added that “many anti-clerical Italians were unwilling to accept aid from a Roman Catholic agency except as a last resort” and that “the Society directed its energies to its primary task, the saving of souls in an Italian-American community where the majority were not churchgoers. The additional burden of fighting the padroni was too great.”²⁶

Actually, the very limited achievements of Bandini’s labor bureau reflected the failure of the Castle Garden Labor Bureau to become a central clearing house for immigrant labor, as well as the inherent limitations of benevolent societies, especially those with a strong ethnic and religious orientation. Writing about philanthropic placement agencies, William M. Leiserson has pointed out that:

The total amount of placing of immigrants done by all these organizations, however, is negligible. Their employment work is usually incidental to other functions of the organizations which occupy their main attention. The immigrant aid societies maintained by the various nationalities are content if they get the immigrants safely into the hands of relatives or friends, and their employment bureaus are designed primarily to help those whom they have to shelter. The other organizations [those helping every nationality] are mainly concerned with protecting the immigrant against fraud and exploitation, or with educational work, and while they are often helpful to individuals

²⁶ Edwin Fenton, *Immigrants and Unions, A Case Study: Italians and American Labor, 1870-1920* (New York: Arno Press, 1975), 112-13. Fenton seems to be referring to the society after 1901, when it began to receive funds from the Italian government. But his point applies to Bandini’s labor bureau.

seeking employment, they are not equipped to handle the industrial problem of placement.²⁷

Charlotte Erickson has added that “Many immigrants avoided calling where charity was involved; and employers, if willing to take its applicants, expected to get labor below the going rates.”²⁸

“To provide a house for the use of poor immigrants, and particularly boys and girls”

As previously mentioned, the society’s constitution required that, as soon as possible, a home be established where poor immigrants, especially boys and girls, could be given temporary shelter while waiting for relatives, friends, or securing employment. By July 1891, Bandini had already approached the Salesian sisters, requesting their help in staffing such a home.²⁹ At first, Bandini thought of locating the home on available property in Jersey City, N. J. But after the opening of the immigrant station at Ellis Island, he decided to open it in New York. He insisted all along that the home should include a church or chapel that would serve as a parish. Indeed his desire for a home with a chapel forced him to seek more adequate quarters than those at 7 Broadway.³⁰ His aim was to guarantee a more permanent source of income for the society, so that it could better meet its financial obligations:

²⁷ William M. Leiserson, *Adjusting Immigrant and Industry* (1924; repr., Montclair, New Jersey: Patterson Smith, 1971), 39-40.

²⁸ Charlotte Erickson, *American Industry and the European Immigrant, 1860-1885* (1957; repr., New York: Russell & Russell, 1967), 98. See Robert D. Parmet, *Labor and Immigration in Industrial America* (1981; repr., Malabar, FL: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1987), 125-44.

²⁹ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverdma (Scalabrini), New York, July 21, 1891. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:335-36 (#485), that refers to Cabrinian sisters.

³⁰ ACMS, 005, box 1, Mathews to De Concilio, Jersey City, N.J., October 29, 1891, De Concilio to Bandini, Jersey City, N.J., October 30, 1891; AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverdma (Scalabrini), New York, July 21, 1891 and January 15, 1892. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 335-36 (#485), 354 (#542).

When I proved that it was impossible to continue the work of the St. Raphael without any income, I went to the Archbishop along with Msgr. De Concilio, General Ed. Ferrero, and attorney Fransioli. I pointed out to them that for the protection of Irish immigrant girls, it was believed necessary to have an annual collection not only in all the rich American churches of New York but also in those of all the cities of the States. Moreover, the director was given an annual stipend of \$1000 and his assistants were given \$800, besides which they were allowed to have a parish, so that its revenues might increase the remuneration of the priests attached to that mission. And I, alone without stipend or remuneration of any sort, or collections, etc. saw the impossibility of carrying on the work. I therefore proposed that a home be purchased that would serve both as a residence and a chapel (the entire first floor). Everything was approved in the presence of my colleagues, but when I said that in order to buy the house we needed at least \$5000 so as to draw up the contract--hic opus, hic labor. Finally the Archbishop gave me a \$5000 note, with these conditions: that even though the bank might wait a long time to recall it I would pay the interest and gradually pay off the note and in the meantime the Archbishop would own the house. With these conditions I purchased the current house for \$19,000. For two years the bank has made no demand on the Archbishop, and each semester I have paid \$75 in interest, save for the last one, since I am caught by surprise and I have had too many poor people who take all my money.³¹

³¹ AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Scalabrini, New York, March 5, 1894. See AANY, C-29,

Bandini was understandably frustrated by the failure of the Italian parishes and his own congregation to support the work of the St. Raphael Society. He expressed his feelings to Zaboglio in early 1893, pointing out that the “Polish house is assisted in a special manner by the Polish churches, about 50 in all of America, and receives from 35 to 40,000 dollars each year. I proposed that each of our missions in America contribute at least from 5 to 10 dollars a month to help the St. Raphael’ Home. I have yet to receive a reply to this suggestion from anywhere.”³² Later that year, Bandini lodged a similar complaint with Scalabrini: “The Polish home is splendidly supported by the Polish churches of the United States which have fined themselves in order to aid it. Then we know with what generosity the Irish and German homes are supported by the clergy, churches and contributions of the faithful both in America and Europe. Our St. Raphael does not have any of these aids.” He again suggested that the houses of the congregation in America send the society a small monthly subsidy. Apparently, the suggestion was never implemented.³³

In his first annual report, Bandini was able to announce: “We now have for the reception of the more needy, - aged women, and children, - a home which we expect to be ready soon, and solemnly dedicated to the good work.”³⁴ On July 26, 1892, Archbishop Corrigan had purchased a building at 113 Waverly Place, in Greenwich Village, for \$19,000. The property was “Subject to mortgage aggregating

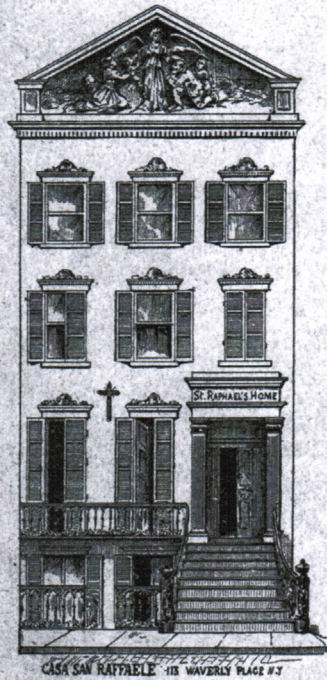
Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Corrigan), New York, June 20 and August 17, 1892, G-77, Bandini to Revd dear Father, New York, August 11, 1892, McLaughlin to Rev. & Dear Sir (Corrigan), New York, August 22, 1892; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:391 (#691).

³² AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, February 11, 1893, Bandini to Revdo e caro Padre (Rolleri), New York, December 7, 1891. Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:352-53 (#533), 375-76 (#626).

³³ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Scalabrini, New York, October 1, 1893. See *ibid.*, Bandini to Zaboglio, June 11, 1892 (copy); Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:362 (#572), 384 (#667).

³⁴ ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report, 12. See *OCD*, 1893 (Sadlier), 126.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
— OF —
ST. RAPHAEL'S
Italian Benevolent Society.
(JULY 1st, 1891, TO JUNE 30th, 1892.)



REV. FR. P. BANDINI,
113 Waverly Place,
N. Y. CITY.

Fifteen Thousand Dollars and interest.”³⁵ Both home and chapel were solemnly blessed by the archbishop on Saturday, September 24, 1892. Some 200 people attended the ceremony, including Count Girolamo Naselli, the Italian vice consul. *The New York Times* reported:

The chapel and home of the St. Raphael Italian Benevolent Society at 113 Waverley Place [sic] were solemnly blessed yesterday morning by Archbishop Corrigan. The Rev. Gerard Ferrante, D.D., of St. Patrick’s Cathedral delivered a sermon in Italian, after which the Archbishop made a brief address, in which he congratulated the society on the good work accomplished the past year among the Italian immigrants and urged the members to renewed efforts for the future. Mass was then celebrated by the Rev. Dominico Vicentini, pastor of St. Joachim’s Church, in Roosevelt Street. The music was furnished by Prof. Brizzi.

The chapel, dedicated to Our Lady of Pompei, was located on the ground floor and could hold some 200 people. The society was located in the building’s upper stories.³⁶

³⁵ Block and Lot of Abstract Books, Vol. 65, Block 550-559 (Section 2, Block 553, p. 27), City Register, 31 Chamber Street, New York City, which refers to Liber 13, p. 309.

³⁶ “Blessed by the Archbishop,” *NYT*, September 25, 1892, 9; “Blessing Chapel and House,” *The Catholic News*, September 25, 1892, 5; “L’Istituzione di San Raffaele,” *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, September 25, 1892, 1; Costantino Sassi, *Parrocchia della Madonna di Pompei in New York. Notizie Storiche dei Primi Cinquant’ Anni dalla Sua Fondazione: 1892-1942* (Marino: Tipografia “Santa Lucia,” 1946), who says on p. 25 that Bandini opened the chapel for worship the first Sunday of May 1892. For other histories of the Church of Our Lady of Pompei, whose beginnings are bound up with those of the St. Raphael Society, see Michael A. Cosenza, “Our Lady of Pompei in Greenwich Village. History of the Parish, 1892-1967 and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini’s Story,” in *75th Anniversary: Our Lady of Pompei in Greenwich Village, May 7th, 1967* (New York: Church of Our Lady of Pompei, 1967); Francesconi, *Storia*, II:122-25, IV:149-53, V:167-69 and VI:272; Patrizia Salvetti, “Una parrocchia italiana di New

“St. Raphael’s is in direct relation with the Italian Society of Protection”

One of Bandini’s tasks as director of the New York branch was to keep in close contact with the Association of Assistance in Italy, especially the central committee at Piacenza. Bandini’s correspondence with Scalabrini, Marchese Giovanni Battista Volpe Landi, president of the Italian association, its representative at the port of Genoa, and others covered a range of topics, many of them mentioned in various parts of this study. Bandini constantly pleaded for personnel to help him in his work. Volpe Landi often requested detailed information on immigration to the United States and on the concrete achievements of the St. Raphael Society in New York. He wanted the information so that he could make it available to prospective immigrants via the local committees established, or being established, in various parts of Italy. He also wanted to publicize the achievements of the New York branch so as to spread its influence and that of the entire association.³⁷

York e i suoi fedeli: Nostra Signora di Pompei (1892-1933),” *Studi Emigrazione* XXI (Marzo 1984): 46-65; Mary E. Brown, *From Italian Villages to Greenwich Village: Our Lady of Pompei, 1892-1992* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1992). See Mary E. Brown, “Italian Immigrant Catholic Clergy and an Exception to the Rule: The Reverend Antonio Demo, Our Lady of Pompei, Greenwich Village, 1899-1933,” *Church History* 62 (March 1993): 41-59. See AANY, C-29, Bandini to Most Revd Archbishop (Corrigan), August 17, 1892, where he states: “On learning that Your Grace cannot be present on Sept 8th. for the opening of St. Raphael’s House and Chapel, and being Your Grace the Active President, I think it well to postpone it. If you approve of this please appoint, if possible, any other week day in Sept. after the eight.”

³⁷ See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, I:113 (#260), II:331 (#471), 335 (#481), 367 (#597), 390 (#687), 407 (#775), 349 (#524) where Volpe Landi informed Bandini on November 11, 1891, that he hoped to open information offices in Naples and Palermo; AGS, RC 02, Volpe Landi to Mio Revmo Padre (Zaboglio), Piacenza, June 18, 1891, Volpe Landi to Bandini, Piacenza, September 28, 1892, RC 03, Bandini to Revdo e caro padre (Zaboglio), New York, February 7, 1894. On Volpe Landi, see *Dictionary of American Immigration History*, ed. Francesco Cordasco (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1990), s.v. “Volpe Landi, John Baptist, Marquis” by Lydio F. Tomasi.

Barely a month after arriving in New York, Bandini began what would become a constant litany of requests for more help from Scalabrini and the Italian association. At the same time, he told the bishop that he had sent Volpe Landi a list of suitable hotels for immigrants. The latter, in his first letter to Bandini in his new position on May 3, 1891, reminded him that he had asked him before his departure from Italy to become correspondent with the association in Piacenza, sending him monthly reports with useful information for immigrants.³⁸ Busy with his work at the Barge Office and the establishment of the St. Raphael's Italian Benevolent Society, Bandini kept up his correspondence with Volpe Landi and sent him some information as well as useful advice for immigrants to be printed and distributed in Italy.³⁹ The advice sent by Bandini dealt with general information on American immigration laws, warned immigrants about swindlers, and informed them of the existence and services of the New York branch of the association. Bandini's information and advertisements were also published in *L'Amico del Popolo*.⁴⁰ He also requested indulgences for members of the St. Raphael Society and holy cards bearing the image of St. Raphael.⁴¹

³⁸ Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:323-24 (#456-57).

³⁹ See AGS, RC 02, Volpe Landi to Bandini, Piacenza, May 3, June 23 and 26, August 8, September 21 and December 14, 1891, February 22 and October 8, 1892. See also Scalabrini to Bandini, Piacenza, June 10, 1891, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, I:329; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:331 (#466), 332 (#472), 333 (#474), 337 (#493), 347-48 (#515), 353 (#534), 355 (#545), 369 (#603).

⁴⁰ ACMS, 005, box 8, *Avvertimenti per gli Italiani che vogliono emigrare negli Stati Uniti d'America* (Piacenza: Tip. Marchesotti e C., 1891) and Tessera di Raccomandazione; Mario Francesconi, *Giovanni Battista Scalabrini. Vescovo di Piacenza e degli Emigrati* (Roma: Città Nuova Editrice, 1985), 1141-42; Perotti, "La società italiana," 103-05 and *Scal. mig.*, II:325 (#460-61), 352 (#529).

⁴¹ AGS, RC 04, rough draft, Scalabrini to Eminenza Revma (Simeoni), Piacenza, July 4, 1891 (includes a note that lists the spiritual advantages enjoyed by supporters of the St. Raphael Society), RC 02, Bandini to Mgr Segretario (Mangot), New York, July 14 and August 11, 1892, RC 03, Bandini to Scalabrini, August (?), 1891; ACMS, 005, box 1, Mangot to Rev. Padre Carmo (Bandini), Piacenza, September 9, 1891 and June 17, 1892,



Giovanni Battista Volpe Landi; Volpe Landi Family.

Bandini's letter to Volpe Landi dated March 23, 1892, possibly the only extant letter by him to Volpe Landi, was included almost entirely in a circular letter sent by Volpe Landi to the bishops of northern Italy. In the circular letter, Volpe Landi bemoaned the lack of support for his association. He then cited the letter, where Bandini encouraged awareness of the association, especially by the pastors of Lombardy, Piedmont, Liguria, and Emilia. In it, Bandini wrote that they should speak about it from the pulpits and instruct the parishioners to heed the

and Ex audientia Ssmi habita die 6 Decembris 1891. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:338-39 (#497), 343 (#508), 352 (#531), 362 (#575), 363 (#579), 365 (#585).

information made available to them and seek the advice and assistance of the St. Raphael Society in New York. He went on to describe the abuses to which arriving immigrants were subjected in New York, abuses that could have been avoided had they gotten the advice of his society. He pointed to the effective work of the German St. Raphael Society and concluded the letter by asking Volpe Landi to “come up with the most appropriate means that you believe can procure us the aid and favor that we greatly need.” Hence the need for support of the association and its branches in Genoa and New York.⁴²

On April 15, 1892, Volpe Landi asked Bandini to send the report he had requested in his April 2 letter to him. In that letter, he specified that he needed information on the number of immigrants who landed in New York, their ports of departure, the provinces from which they came, and the number, places of employment, types of jobs and pay of the immigrants placed by the labor bureau. In response to this and several other similar requests, Bandini put together the first, and last, annual report.⁴³ Titled the First Annual Report of St. Raphael’s Italian Benevolent Society, it was dated July 30, 1892. It was 27 pages long and included information under the following headings: origin, the constitution, press comments, how the society attains its end, employment, spiritual welfare, home for the immigrants, some of the evils of Italian immigration, advice for those who intend to emigrate to North America, how to secure the protection of the society on your arrival, the advantages of the Free Italian Labor Bureau, return of the immigrant to Italy, a warning to immigrants who remain in New York and the suburbs, and the future of the Italian immigrant. At the end of

⁴² AGS, RC 02, Volpe Landi to Eccellenza Reverendissima (circular to North Italian bishops), Piacenza, April 8, 1892. For the text of Volpe Landi’s circular, see Francesconi, *Giovanni Battista Scalabrini*, 1142-43; Perotti, “La società italiana,” 106-09 and *Scal. mig.*, II:356-58 (#549, 552-54).

⁴³ AGS, RC 02, Volpe Landi to Molto Revd.o Signore (Bandini), Piacenza, April 2 and 15, June 15 and July 25, 1892. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:356-57 (#551), 357-58 (#554), 362 (#574), 363-64 (#580).

the report, Bandini appended the following:

TABLE OF STATISTICS

Showing the number of Italian immigrants, who landed in New York from July 1st, 1891, to June 30th, 1892, and the number assisted by St. Raphael's Society.

Arrivals.....	58,617
Sent back by the Bureau of Immigration.....	496
Assisted by St. Raphael's Society.....	20,000
Provided with temporary home, free of charge by the Society	
Men.....	73
Women.....	34
Children.....	218
Deaths during the voyage.....	5
Deaths in the Immigrant Hospital.....	9
Marriages.....	7
Baptisms.....	2

N.B. Many Italian immigrants land at New Orleans and Philadelphia; others, at Boston and Canada.⁴⁴

The report described several cases in which the society had provided assistance. One involved a poor old woman, Maddalena Bondi, who had come to America from the Tyrol with her two sons. They were allowed to land, but she was detained. The sons went to work in the coal fields of Pennsylvania and left their mother behind. The society arranged for her to be brought to the hospital Cristoforo Colombo, where she died. Another involved the case of a man who sent money to his wife in Italy so she could join him and his children in America. After she arrived, she found out that she did not have the

⁴⁴ ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report. Pietro Bandini, "Relazione della Società Italiana di San Raffaele in New York," *Studi Emigrazione* V (Febbraio-Giugno 1968): 303-23, reprints the report in Italian without the table of statistics. Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, appendix 2, has the English version of the First Annual Report. See ACMS, 005, box 1, Isola, Rapporto riepilogato dal 1o. Gennaio al 26 Febbraio 1892, March 4, 1892; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, I: 130-31 (#295), II: 363 (#578), 364 (#583), 369-70 (#606).

correct address or enough money to continue the trip. She went to a hotel, where a few days later a man, claiming that she was his wife, took her away. When her real husband appeared, he was unable to learn where his wife had gone.⁴⁵

A comment made by Bandini in a letter to Zaboglio in early 1893 seems to cast doubt on the report's contents. In it, Bandini admitted that "With regard to what you say about the Report of the St. Raphael Society, you are perfectly right. But you must know that the Report was written very quickly, without any idea that it would be given to the press, without having time to re-read it, and after having given full power to cut, add, modify." Bandini added that "the Marchese Volpe Landi wanted it quickly, so as to be able to read it to the Committee. When I was told that it would be published, I left everything in the hands of the Marchese Volpe Landi and thought no more about it . . ." Bandini's claim that he had no idea that the report "would be given to the press" was at best disingenuous, since he must have known that Volpe Landi would use it to publicize the work of the New York branch of the association, which he did. Moreover, his statement that he had no "time to re-read it" and that he had given Volpe Landi "full power to cut, add, modify" was a bit of a stretch, since it assumed that the marchese was better informed than he was on the activities and accomplishments of the New York branch of the association. In the same letter, Bandini complained that he had "written, rewritten that since the Italian association could not pay and assist all those engaged in this work, the least they could do was send the emigrants directly to us so that we could either send them steamship tickets or at least provide railway tickets, but absolutely nothing has been done." He complained that the immigrants "arrive daily by the hundreds from the Tyrol, Lombardy, Piedmont and Genoa. Among those hundreds of persons one looks in vain for our society's identification card." Interestingly, a year later Bandini told Zaboglio, who at the time was

⁴⁵ ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report, 8-9, 13.

the association's representative in Genoa, that many immigrants kept the identification cards in their pockets and didn't show them until after they had left the hall and gone to local hotels.⁴⁶

Bandini's report was given wide publicity in Italy. *L'Amico del Popolo* published a long article taken from the *Cittadino* of Genoa which made reference to the report. Volpe Landi even sent Bandini 1000 printed copies of the report, which Bandini failed to acknowledge and pay for. Its statistics were repeated in an American consular report.⁴⁷ Volpe Landi suggested that the St. Raphael Society should come up with an annual report, but one that had more detailed statistical information, including information on those employed by the labor bureau. Actually, Volpe Landi was being too optimistic. Bandini, probably unable to provide the requested statistical information and discouraged by the lack of support and the failure of the Italian society to develop a viable network of committees and agencies at the key Italian ports, especially Naples and Palermo, had stopped corresponding with Volpe Landi by early 1893.⁴⁸ In a letter to Scalabrini in early 1894, Bandini referred to a report he hoped to have ready soon. The society records give no evidence that such a

⁴⁶ AGS RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, February 11, 1893 and RC 03, April 30, 1894. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:375-76 (#626).

⁴⁷ Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:367 (#597), 377 (#633), 392 (#700); AGS, RC 02, Volpe Landi to Bandini, Piacenza, September 28, 1892, RC 03, Volpe Landi to Zaboglio, Piacenza, June 29, 1894. See U. S., Congress, House, *Consular Reports* (Vol. 45), Miscellaneous Documents, Vol. 32, No. 205, 53d Cong., 2d sess., 1894, serial set 3260, 467, which prints an article by Henry Greenough Huntington titled "Italian Emigration to the United States."

⁴⁸ AGS, RC 02, Volpe Landi to Bandini, Piacenza, October 5, November 24, December 15, 1892 and February 27, 1893, where Volpe Landi complains about Bandini's "persistent silence" on whether he has received the shipment of a box containing 1000 copies of the First Annual Report, sent on October 17, 1892, as well as his failure to reply to letters dated December 27, 1892, January 7 and February 13, 1893. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:368-69 (#601), 371-72 (#614), 374 (#620), 376 (#630).

report, or any other annual report, was written.⁴⁹ However, they hold information on the society's activities after June 30, 1892, the end date of the First Annual Report. This includes the society's income and expenses from August 1892 to August 1893 showing a small surplus, a list for 1892-1893 of immigrants aided to their destination, and a register for 1895 that gives the names of immigrants, the persons to whom they were released, and their addresses.⁵⁰

The available correspondence also describes Bandini's relationship with government officials. The society's records hold little information on Bandini's relationship with Italian government officials.⁵¹ A greater amount of information, however, is available in the historical archives of the Italian foreign ministry, as will be noted.

The society's records hold some information on Bandini's relationship with American government officials. In letters to Scalabrini on November 27-28, 1891, Bandini referred to his meetings with Judson N. Cross and the "secretary" of the U.S. secretary of the treasury, most likely Cross's former business associate, Gen. A. B. Nettleton, assistant secretary of the treasury. Cross, a Minneapolis lawyer, was a member of a commission that included John B. Weber, commissioner of immigration at the port of New York, as chairman, Dr. Walter H. Kempster of Wisconsin, Joseph Powderly of Pennsylvania, and Herman J. Schulteis of Washington, D.C. It was appointed by Secretary of the Treasury Charles Foster in June 1891, to investigate in Europe and report the facts respecting the importation of alien

⁴⁹ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, February 10, 1894. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:390 (#689).

⁵⁰ ACMS, 005, box 9, Casa S. Raffaele. Conto Corrente Da Agosto 1892 ad id 1893, Indice di Emigranti mandati a destinazione New York dalla Società San Raffaele (1892-1893), Registro 1895.

⁵¹ See AGS, RC 04, Visconti Venosta to Ottimo Signore (Volpe Landi), Rome, March 14, 1892 (copy), RC 02, Volpe Landi to Molto Rev.do Padre (Bandini), Piacenza, March 18, June 15 and July 25, 1892. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:355-56 (#547-48), 362 (#574) 363-64 (#580).

contract laborers into the United States, and to gather information on other classes of aliens whose landing in the United States was prohibited by law. The commissioners visited Europe and were back by fall. Cross, who had gone to Italy, wanted to see Bandini about immigration matters and, probably, gather more information for the report to be submitted to the secretary of the treasury. Bandini took advantage of these meetings to reinforce his position at the Barge Office, especially in regard to the labor bureau, and to make available for inclusion in that report some of his own and Scalabrini's writings. According to Bandini, the "secretary" sounded him out on his availability as a member of a special commission the secretary of the treasury intended to send to Italy some time in the future to study and do something about the abuses perpetrated on the immigrants by the steamship companies and the agents of immigration.⁵²

On January 15, 1892, Bandini informed Scalabrini that earlier that month he had gone to Washington to see the secretary of the treasury, that excerpts from his own and the bishop's writings had been included in the report to be presented by the immigration commission, that representation at the labor bureau, soon to open at the old Barge

⁵² AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, November 27 and 28, 1891, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, February 11, 1893; "To Look Into Immigration" and "Capt. Judson N. Cross," *NYT*, May 24 and 25, 1891, 1; U.S. Congress, House, *Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, Transmitting A Report of the Commissioners of Immigration Upon the Causes Which Incite Immigration to the United States*, ex. doc. 235, part I, 52d Cong., 1st sess., 1891-1892, serial set 2957, 1-4. See ACMS, 005, box 1, Cross to Bandini, Minneapolis, Minn., October 28, 1892, where Cross informed Bandini that he "was in N. Y. a few weeks since and called at your old rooms to see you but found you removed. I did not have time to hunt you up. I told Genl Nettleton that if the Department had occasion to send again to Italy that you would be a valuable man to send, but they will not probably send any more commissions to Europe now; he has your name in case they should."; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 89, fasc. 1485, rough draft, Fava (?) to Sr. Ministro (Starabba Di Rudini), Washington, May 25, 1891, newspaper clipping, "At the National Capitol. To Investigate Immigration," *The Tribune*, May 24, 1891; Perotti, "La società italiana," 111-13 and *Scal. mig.*, I:123 (#279), II:351-52 (#528, 530).

JUDSON N. CROSS.

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CROSS, CARLETON & CROSS,

LAWYERS,

OFFICES, 632-635 BOSTON BLOCK,

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Rev. Fr. P. Bandini
113 Waverly Place
New York

Oct. 28th, 1892.

Dear Sir. Yours 21st rec'd. I was in N.Y. a few weeks since and called at your old rooms to see you but found you removed. I did not have time to hunt you up. I told Genl Nettleton that if Mr. DeFontaine had occasion to send again to Italy that you would be a valuable man to send, but they will not probably seek any more commissions to Europe now; he has your name in case they should. I hope you are succeeding well. Very truly yours Judson N. Cross

Judson N. Cross letter; Archives of the Center for Migration Studies, New York.

Office, had been definitively assigned to the St. Raphael Society, that he had asked for and received from the secretary a rest room for the priests at Ellis Island, and that the secretary had advised him to open the house for the St. Raphael Society in New York and not in New Jersey.⁵³ The secretary of the treasury also granted the free use of heat, light, and water at the society's Barge Office quarters.⁵⁴

In his correspondence, Bandini also claimed that he had participated in various federal and state investigations into immigration

⁵³ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, January 15, 1892. See "The Overflow of Europe," *NYT*, February 8, 1892, 3; U.S. Congress, House, Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, 1-331. Cross's report, on pp. 181-245, dealt with his visit to Italy on pp. 219-34. On pp. 231-34 he referred to the New York St. Raphael Society and its Italian counterpart. He cited excerpts from Bandini's advice to immigrants and from Scalabrini's pamphlets, *Italian Emigration to America: Observations* (1887) and *The Parliamentary Bill on Italian Emigration: Observations and Proposals* (1888). See Perotti, "La società italiana," 114 and *Scal. mig.*, I:123 (#279), II:354 (#542). For Scalabrini's pamphlets, see Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 1-59.

⁵⁴ ACMS, 005, box 1, Hendricks to Bandini, New York, October 5, 1892.

in 1893 and 1894.⁵⁵ On December 7, 1894, Bandini testified before the Tenement House Committee appointed by the New York state legislature in 1894 “to examine into the tenement-house question in the city of New York and to report to the next Legislature.” The committee and Bandini’s testimony will be detailed in this study’s final chapter.⁵⁶ His experience working with Italian immigrants in New York was apparently valued by public officials trying to understand and get a handle on the problems created by the massive immigration that confronted the nation as the nineteenth century was coming to a close. One major problem was urban congestion and its many attendant evils, a topic that will be explored in this study’s final chapter.

Personnel and Financial Problems

In October 1891, Bandini complained to Scalabrini’s secretary, Camillo Mangot, that personnel and financial limitations kept the society from doing as well as it could. A month later, he complained to Scalabrini himself that lack of personal assistance kept him so busy that he had no time to go around seeking funds. The work at Ellis Island as well as planning for the labor bureau and the society’s home were more than enough to keep him busy. On top of that, keeping up correspondence with the association in Piacenza and with those who contacted the society for help, as well as the obvious need for some fundraising, easily explains Bandini’s constant plea for personnel and financial help. Scalabrini, besieged for help from

⁵⁵ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, June 16, 1893, RC 03, Bandini to Roller, New York, June 27, 1894. See Perotti, “La società italiana,” 114-15 and *Scal. mig.*, II:381 (#652), 392 (#699); “Mr. Hill in Farce Comedy” and “Its Investigation Continued,” *NYT*, May 17 and 18, 1893, 8; “Investigazione Senatoriale sull’emigrazione” and “Provvedimenti per l’Emigrazione,” *L’Eco D’Italia*, June 3 and 7, 1893, 1. AANY, G-1, Bandini to Corrigan, September 6, 1893, where he complained about not being notified regarding a Catholic congress, in which a paper on Italian emigration was going to be read.

⁵⁶ *Report of the Tenement House Committee as Authorized by Chapter 479 of the Laws of 1894*. Albany: James B. Lyon, State Printer, 1895 (<http://books.google.com>).

many quarters, promised to send assistance.⁵⁷ At the end of 1891, he sent Fr. Carlo Bertorelli to work with Bandini at the port mission. Bertorelli, however, never liked the assignment and soon asked for a change.⁵⁸ Other attempts, such as Bandini's effort to get Frs. Ludovico Martinelli, Luigi Paroli, Paolo Novati and others to work at the St. Raphael, also failed.⁵⁹

The society's constitution provided that active members contribute annually to the society three dollars and co-operative members, twenty-five cents. Twenty-five dollars would secure a perpetual active membership. That this income was hardly sufficient for the needs of the society can be gathered from Bandini's constant complaints that he lacked the necessary staffing and funds to carry on his work adequately. Given the salaries of the agents at Ellis Island and the significant financial burdens imposed on him by the home and labor bureau, Bandini attempted various expedients to raise funds for the society: he celebrated Mass and preached at various churches, sought Mass intentions, sent out appeals to potential contributors,

⁵⁷ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Monsignore Segretario (Mangot), New York, October 15, 1891, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverdma (Scalabrini), New York, November 27, 1891. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:348 (#520), 351-52 (#528).

⁵⁸ Scalabrini to Bandini, Piacenza, October 26, 1891, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 1:345; APF, NS, SC America Centrale, vol. 57 (Agosto-Dicembre 1891), Scalabrini to Eminenza R.ma (Simeoni), Piacenza, November 28, 1891 (578-580); AGS, RC 02, Bertorelli to Rev.mo Sig. Superiore (Rolleri), New York, January and February 4, 1892, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, February 3, 1892, Bandini to Rolleri, New York, April 10, 1893, Bandini to Caro e Revdo Padre (Zaboglio), New York, n.d. (includes incomplete undated letter). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:349 (#522), 354-55 (#540, 543-44).

⁵⁹ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Reverendmo Monignore Segretario (Mangot), New York, August 11, 1892; Scalabrini to Zaboglio, Piacenza, September 11 and October 8, 1891, March 4 and August 5, 1892, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 1:342-44, 380-81, 402-04; Zaboglio to Scalabrini, Jennings, La., March 7, 1892 and October 4, 1895, in Francesconi, *Storia*, II:192, 215; AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Rolleri, New York, February 16, 1893; Scalabrini to Vicentini, December 14, 1894, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 2:49-50. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:365 (#585), 376 (#627).

looked into the possibility of buying steamship and railroad tickets at cheaper rates and selling them to the immigrants at reasonable prices, and requested the help of the various Scalabrinian missions. Their failure to help became one of Bandini's most persistent and bitterest complaints.⁶⁰ A concert on behalf of the St. Raphael Society held at the Lenox Lyceum, at Madison and 59th, on the evening of November 19, 1892, and attended by such dignitaries as Archbishops Corrigan and Francesco Satolli, as well as Luigi Palma di Cesnola, the first director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, netted about \$300.⁶¹

On January 17 and 18, 1893, Fr. Domenico Vicentini, the provincial, called the first meeting of all the house superiors in the United States, where it was decided to establish a group of "flying missionaries," to be sent to preach missions for Italians in cities where there were no Scalabrinian churches. Several weeks later, Bandini suggested that his home at the port be used for that purpose, hoping that it would benefit financially from a subsidy.⁶²

On several occasions, Bandini sought the help of Archbishop

⁶⁰ ACMS, 005, box 6, First Annual Report, 4-5; AGS, RC 02, Volpe Landi to Bandini, Piacenza, August 10, 1891, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, February 11 and September 14, 1893, Bandini to Scalabrini, New York, October 6, 1893; ASV, DAUS, Sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/1 Emigrazione Italiana (1893), Corrigan to Sbarette, New York, June 29, 1893 (54-55), Bandini to Reverendmo Signore (Sbarette), New York, July 20, 1893 (57). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:338 (496), 375-76 (#626), 382 (#655-56), 383-84 (#664), 385 (#670).

⁶¹ "Un Concerto per la 'San Raffaele'," "IL Concerto a Beneficio della Società di S. Raffaele" and "Per La San Raffaele," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, November 9, 15 and 16, 1892, 2; "Concert in aid of an Italian Home," *The Catholic News*, November 20, 1892, 5; "Il Concerto pel St. Raphael's Home," *Cristoforo Colombo*, November 22, 1892, 1; AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, October 21, 1892 and February 11, 1893. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:375-76 (#626).

⁶² Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, I:132-33 (#300); AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, February 11, Bandini to Caro e Revdo p. Provinciale (Vicentini), New York, April 10, and Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Scalabrini), New York, April 13, 1893. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:375-76 (#626), 379 (#639); Scalabrini to Satolli, September 14, 1893, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 2:18-19.

Satolli, named first permanent apostolic delegate to the United States on January 14, 1893. Soon after being named apostolic delegate, Satolli invited Bandini to Washington to inquire about the condition of the Italians in New York and the United States. He also requested similar information from New York's Archbishop Corrigan.⁶³ Eager to get the apostolic delegate's support, Bandini sent him information on the St. Raphael Society and its home. In a letter to him on October 1, 1893, Bandini included a copy of a circular he had sent to Italy the previous month warning potential immigrants of the hard economic conditions in the United States at that time.⁶⁴ The circular was published in the *Lettere Domenicali*, organ of the Society of St. Michael in Palermo, Sicily.⁶⁵ Bandini took advantage of this relationship to bring various parish controversies to Satolli's attention, in effect bypassing the local bishops. It was not the first time that he had gone over the head of his local ecclesiastical superior. One such controversy involved Manhattan's

⁶³ ASV, DAUS, Sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/1 Emigrazione Italiana (1893), Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Satolli), New York, April 14, 1893 (7-9), De Concilio to Ecc. Rev.ma (Satolli), Jersey City, N.J., April 25, 1893 (14-21), rough draft, Satolli to Corrigan, April 28, 1893 (22), Corrigan to Satolli, New York, May 1 (23) and 11 (25-32), 1893; AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Revdo e caro p. Provinciale (Vicentini), New York, March 27, 1893, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Scalabrini), New York, April 13, 1893, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Satolli), New York, April 14, 1893; ACMS, 005, box 1, Satolli to Corrigan, Washington, D.C., April 28, 1893. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, I:133-34 (#303-04), II:379 (#639-40, 643), 380 (#648); Stephen M. DiGiovanni, "The Apostolic Delegate in the United States and Immigration, 1892-1896," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 12 (Spring 1994): 47-68.

⁶⁴ ASV, DAUS, Sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/1 Emigrazione Italiana (1893), Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Satolli), New York, April 14 (7-9), June 16 (56), October 1 (42) (includes Bandini circular, n.d.) (46), 1893; See AGS, RC 02, Satolli to Reverendo Signore (Bandini), Washington, D.C., October 6, 1893, BA 02, Satolli to Scalabrini, Washington, D.C., November 16, 1893; "Una Lettera di Monsignor Satolli al Rev. Padre Bandini," *Cristoforo Colombo*, October 24, 1893, 1; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:381 (#651), 384-85 (#668, 671).

⁶⁵ Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:386 (673). See Francesca Riccobono, "L'Eco di Scalabrini in Sicilia e l'Azione a Favore degli Emigranti," in *Scalabrini Tra Vecchio e Nuovo Mondo*, ed. Gianfausto Rosoli (Roma: Centro Studi Emigrazione, 1989), 322.

Italian Church of the Most Precious Blood on Baxter Street. Another involved the Italian Church of St. Michael the Archangel in Paterson, New Jersey.⁶⁶

More important financially, Bandini hoped that the home's chapel, which maintained a schedule of religious services similar to that of other churches, would provide the society with a stable and sufficient source of income. However, Bandini charged that Corrigan did not want the St. Raphael chapel to have the rights of a parish, a sore subject for local pastors fearful that their parishioners would be stolen. The archbishop wanted parochial rights to be exercised by a large, well-furnished church which opened not too far from the St. Raphael Home soon after its opening. "After two months," Bandini complained to Scalabrini, "that Church was closed, since the people did not go to it."⁶⁷

The income from the chapel proved sufficient to meet current expenses, such as house maintenance and food. But expenses relating to the society such as the salaries of the employees, keeping up with payments on the \$15,000 mortgage as well as the \$5,000 note, and meeting the never-ending needs of immigrants, made Bandini's

⁶⁶ ASV, DAUS, 1. Sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/1 Emigrazione Italiana (1893), rough draft, Satolli to Ledóchowski, May 5, 1893 (includes copy of Bandini letter to Ledóchowski) (49-51), Ledóchowski to Satolli, Rome, May 30, 1893 (52-53), Portesi et al. to Bandini, Paterson, N.J., August 8, 1893 (62-63), Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Satolli), Swinburne Island, August 17, 1893 (64-65), rough draft, Satolli to Vesc. di Newark (Wigger), August 29, 1893 (66), Wigger to Satolli, Newark, September 1, 1893 (68). See APF, NS, vol. 332 (1905), rubr. 153, ff. 5-6, Bandini to Eminenza (Ledóchowski), New York, May 5, 1893.

⁶⁷ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Scalabrini), New York, February 10, 1894; Di Giovanni, "Michael Augustine Corrigan," 359-61; Thomas J. Shelley, *Greenwich Village Catholics: St. Joseph's Church and the Evolution of an Urban Faith Community, 1829-2002* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 133-34, 138-39 and "Catholic Greenwich Village: Ethnic Geography and Religious Identity in New York City, 1880-1930," *The Catholic Historical Review* LXXXIX (January 2003): 60-84. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:390 (#689)

position very difficult. The monthly income and expenses of the home from August 1892 to August 1893 amounted to \$1,008.03 in income and \$977.83 in expenses, leaving a surplus of just \$30.20. The money came mostly from religious services rendered by Bandini, small gifts, and collections. Obviously, Bandini was going deeper and deeper in debt, with no clear way out given the lack of support from his religious congregation and the archdiocese.⁶⁸ Scalabrini, deeply disturbed by his missionaries' financial troubles, asked Corrigan on September 9, 1893, to inquire into Bandini's financial situation:

To speak in confidence, most esteemed Archbishop, I am rather worried about Father Bandini. He says that he is entirely dependent on Your Excellency, as secretary of the St. Raphael's Society and therefore it is not known what his exact financial condition is. You would do me a great favor if you would call him in and compel him to clarify his financial status through those arrangements you deem opportune. I am very happy that he should depend directly on Your Excellency, as all the others should, but I would not want this to be a pretext for Bandini to avoid dependence from both of us, turning to us both only when he would no longer find a solution to his mismanagement.⁶⁹

Corrigan asked Bandini for an exact account of his finances. On October 5, 1893, the archbishop sent Scalabrini an account of the finances of the St. Raphael Home "for the last six months," covering the period from September 1, 1892, to February 28, 1893. Income

⁶⁸ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, February 11 and Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Scalabrini), New York, April 13, 1893; ACMS, 005, box 9, Casa S. Raffaele. Conto Corrente Da Agosto 1892 ad id 1893. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:375-76 (#626), 379 (#639).

⁶⁹ Scalabrini to Corrigan, Piacenza, September 9, 1893, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 284-85. See Scalabrini to Vicentini, Piacenza, September 9, 1893 in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 2:17-18.

totaled \$2,133. Of this, \$1,105.94 came from the chapel, \$379.25 from the concert, \$147.90 from gifts, and \$499.91 from other sources. Expenses totaled \$2,120.14. These included \$190.75 for taxes, \$385 for the interest, \$497.96 for furniture, \$500.46 for food, \$506.97 for telegrams, and \$39 were stolen. The balance was a mere \$12.86. Corrigan concluded:

From this report, it is evident that Fr. Bandini's income is insufficient to live on and to pay the debts which amount to over twenty thousand dollars. There is also a IOU note for twenty thousand lire [\$4000] on which I personally paid six hundred and twenty five lire interest [\$125] in July and this is not included in the above financial report. The annual interest amounts to one thousand two hundred and fifty lire [\$250].

In response, Scalabrini pleaded with Corrigan to delay for a while longer any strict measures against Bandini. He promised to find a way to help him and suggested that expenses could be limited and personnel changed to keep the church open.⁷⁰

Bandini's position was made even more difficult by the financial problems faced by his Scalabrinian congregation at the Church of the Most Precious Blood on Baxter Street at this time. In a letter to Scalabrini on May 6, 1893, in which he referred to the sale of that church, Bandini admitted that "This business gives a big jolt to the St. Raphael, so far as finances are concerned. Whether we like it or not, the entire Congregation loses much, at least in New York. And thus, having been placed in a doubtful position with the Curia and one of diffidence among the people, it will be even more difficult to find

⁷⁰ Corrigan to Scalabrini, New York, September 29 and October 5, 1893, Scalabrini to Corrigan, Piacenza, October 22, 1893, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 285-88; AANY, E-11, Statement of St. Raphael's Home from September 1st 1892 to the 28th of February 1893. See Scalabrini to Vicentini, (end of 1893?), in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 2:29.

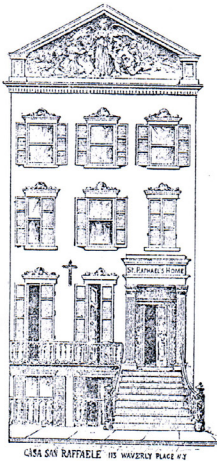
the material means needed to go on. Patience!”⁷¹

On October 1, 1893, Bandini, at the persistent advice of Archbishop Corrigan, pleaded with Scalabrini that he request subsidies for the St. Raphael's Home from the Scalabrinian churches in the United States. He noted the support given by the Polish, Irish, and Germans to their immigrant aid societies. He pointed out that the home was supported by the income from the small chapel and the services he rendered to American churches. In a follow-up letter on October 6, he urged that the Italian association should do a better job of sending emigrants directly to the New York St. Raphael. Not only would the emigrants get advice and savings, but the St. Raphael would be rewarded by the railroads and the navigation companies. “I have written many times about this,” he told the bishop, “but I have not succeeded in making myself understood.” He concluded this letter by asking the bishop to release him from his position, something that would be for him “a great gift.” The following February, Bandini again appealed to Scalabrini. “I have already written to Y.E. that just as all the Homes of Protection of the other nations were assisted by the clergy and churches of their nationality, so it was necessary to do for the St. Raphael's Home. But I have never received an answer, either directly or indirectly.” He suggested that, if nothing else can be done, at least two annual collections at Christmas and Easter be taken up in the churches of the congregation for the St. Raphael's Home. There is no evidence in the available records that the bishop responded to Bandini's seemingly reasonable appeals and suggestions.⁷²

That both Bandini and the congregation were in deep financial trouble and had lost the trust of archdiocesan officials can be gathered from

⁷¹ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, May 6, 1893. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:380 (#647). On the Church of the Most Precious Blood for 1893-1894, see Francesconi, *Storia*, II: 267-98; Di Giovanni, “Michael Augustine Corrigan,” 310-38.

⁷² AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Scalabrini, New York, October 1 and 6, 1893 and February 10, 1894. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:384 (#667), 385 (#670), 390 (#689).



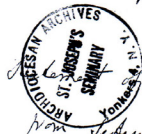
Società Italiana di San Raffaele.

Established 1891.—ST. RAPHAEL'S ITALIAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.—Incorporated 1891.

HIS GRACE ARCHBISHOP CORRIGAN, PRESIDENT.
GENERAL ED. FERRERO, V.-PRESIDENT.
RIGHT REV. MGR. J. DE CONCILIO, TREASURER.
REV. FR. P. BANDINI, GEN. SECRETARY.

115 WAVERLY PLACE,

New York, 1893



AANY
E-11

St. Raphael's Home
from September 11th 1892 to the 28th of
February 1893

Expenses

Rates	190 75
Interest on mortgage	385 00
Furniture	497 96
Daily expenses	500 46
To carpenter	506 97
Heater	39 00
\$	2120 14
Cash	12 86

Income

From the Chapel	1105 94
Concert	379 25
Donating	147 90
Other money	199 91
	2133 00

Statement of St. Raphael's home; Archives of the Archdiocese of New York.

these comments made by Corrigan to Scalabrini on November 22, 1893:

The other Missionaries, from what I have heard, are doing well. However, they lack financial expertise. For example, both the Church of St. Joachim and the St. Raphael's Home were about to be sold at auction because the mortgage interest had not been paid on time. This should never happen, especially

after the misfortune of the sale of the other Church, the second similar disgrace that has happened in more than a hundred years. Imagine, three imminent sales in one month, and all three without justification. I did not tell this to Father Bandini for prudence, but I had to pay two thousand dollars out of my pocket in order to avoid the disgrace that was threatened.

Corrigan concluded by asserting: "Let the Missionaries act in temporal matters as our priests do and under the direction of the Diocese and all will proceed well."⁷³

The financial problems faced by the congregation seriously strained the relationship between Corrigan and Scalabrini. Early the following year, the archbishop felt compelled to explain to Scalabrini that "Had I not paid ten thousand lire [\$2000] out of my pocket, the third property of the Missionaries [i.e., the St. Raphael Home] would have also been sold. Legal steps had already been initiated." He added: "If Your Excellency thinks that it would be better to remove the Missionaries and send them where there are less financial difficulties, perhaps this would be the best solution. Meanwhile, I have entrusted the Church of the Most Precious Blood to other Priests who are more expert with finances." Referring to the congregation's two other missions in New York, Corrigan wrote that "The difficulties of the Church of St. Joachim are almost beyond remedy. For the St. Raphael's Home, I see no other solution than to give it some American, at least for its administration."⁷⁴ In March, Bandini explained to Scalabrini the \$2000 payment by Corrigan: "Before. . . going to Florida, the Archbishop received a note that he had to pay something on the \$5000 note the bank had paid me in his name. It was then that the archb.

⁷³ Corrigan to Scalabrini, New York, November 22, 1893, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 288-89. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:386 (#676).

⁷⁴ Scalabrini to Corrigan, Piacenza, February 5, 1894, Corrigan to Scalabrini, St. Leon, Florida, February 22, 1894, in Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 289-92.

paid the \$2000, while at any moment he should have been ready to pay \$5000.” This appears to contradict Bandini’s description of the conditions for the loan, which included that he “would pay the interest and gradually pay off the note.”⁷⁵

Bandini concluded that, lacking other means of support, the only way he could put the St. Raphael Society on a solid financial base was by increasing the income of the chapel, which was well attended by the immigrants. This meant either enlarging the chapel or getting a bigger church. As early as February 11, 1893, Bandini had informed Zaboglio that he had his eye on an available Protestant church. But, given the financial condition of the congregation, especially the Church of the Most Precious Blood, he thought it best to wait for a more opportune moment.⁷⁶

While the Church of the Most Precious Blood was being sold, Bandini openly criticized the “Irish” clergy and the injustice done to the Italian colony by the archbishop, angering the local priests. He also infuriated his fellow Scalabrinians by employing clerics of questionable character, by not managing his house according to the rule of the congregation, and by accumulating substantial debts, a problem he also had at St. Francis Xavier Mission in Montana.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Scalabrini, New York, March 5 and December 5, 1894, where Bandini says that the archbishop asked him whether he would continue to pay interest on the \$5,000 note and that Corrigan wanted to retire the note and put a mortgage on the house. See AANY, G-74, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Corrigan), New York, January 20, 1894; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:391 (#691), 400 (#736).

⁷⁶ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, February 11, 1893. See *ibid.*, RC 03, Bandini to Scalabrini, New York, April 11, 1894; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:375-76 (#626), 391 (#692).

⁷⁷ Di Giovanni, “Michael Augustine Corrigan,” 366-67. See ASV, DAUS, Sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Satolli), New York, January 30, 1894 (includes Il Comitato to Satolli, New York, January 24, 1894) (73-75); AANY, G-5, Lynch to Corrigan, New York, January 23 and February 3, 1894; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:389-90 (#684, 686).

That anger and his public attacks on the padroni were probably behind a letter from New York addressed to the Roman Vicariate on July 21, 1894. Perhaps not coincidentally, the letter was sent at a time when Bandini was planning to visit Italy. Three weeks later, Pietro Checchi, secretary in the vicariate, sent an unsigned summary of the letter to Agostino Ciasca, general secretary of Propaganda Fide. The summary listed seven charges against Bandini, some reminiscent of previous allegations:

1. He impregnated a girl in a town of the diocese of Imola, and then endowed her to marry her off, 2. He had shameful intimacies with a boy, who was in the Institute of Piacenza (Colombo) and now, finding himself in New York, says so in public and one can imagine what theater it is for the liberals, 3. He scandalizes the people with his dishonesty, so that the Archbishop of this city has him followed, and it is known from a reliable source that he is tired, 4. Many times (in fact it is his habit) he calls the girls in his room, he embraces them indecently and....the rest goes without saying. In conclusion the agreeable swallows keep the secret like Pulcinella, 5. He established a Club that became a brothel, and it is understood, presided by Bandini, 6. With the pretext of shelter to the people who emigrate, he receives only the girls, he then visits them in the dark and by mutual consent, but he was seen, 7. He lies through his teeth when he asserts the progress of the St. Raphael, since he gives no assistance, does not provide work, but he splashes about in first-class hotels and becomes deeply indebted.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ APF, NS, vol. 30 (1894), rubr. 5, ff. 659, 661, Checchi to Ciasca, Rome, August 14, 1894 (includes summary of letter to Eminenza Illma e Rma, New York, July 21, 1894). The original signed letter in the vicariate could not be found.

It seems highly unusual that such a letter was sent from New York to the Roman Vicariate, which had no jurisdiction over the American Church. Moreover, it's not clear why the secretary in the vicariate sent an unsigned summary of the letter to the general secretary of Propaganda Fide, which did have jurisdiction, and not the original signed letter itself. Had the name of the accuser been made available, it might have been possible to establish the motivation for and the reliability of such sweeping and apparently unsubstantiated charges.

The Italian Bureau

Referring to the "war against the so-called Padroni," very likely a reference to *The World's* accusations against some Italian bankers mentioned above, *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* ran a story in March 1894 on the "tyranny of the 'padroni'," in which it listed three private labor bureaus established to deal with the alleged abuses by the padroni. The first was the labor bureau of the St. Raphael Society "to which Father Bandini consecrates himself completely... Its work is now rather narrow and limited but in time they hope to expand it and spread its efficacy and benefit." The second was the Italian Independent Labor Union, an appendix of the Central Labor Union, recently established by Vincenzo Palumbo. The third was the labor bureau planned but not yet established by the Italian Home to complement its work of protection at Ellis Island.⁷⁹ None of these proved effective in confronting the "tyranny of the 'padroni'."

The inability of the Italian community in New York and elsewhere to provide real protection for the immigrants against the abuses of the padroni and their continuing stranglehold on immigrant

⁷⁹ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 62, fasc. 803, newspaper clipping, "Di Giorno in Giorno. Per la Protezione degli Operai Italiani Contro la Tirannide dei 'Padroni'," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, March 3, [1894], busta 113, fasc. 2211, Oldrini to Fava, New York, August 21, 1894; Laura Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione dell'Emigrazione Italiana di Ellis Island* (Roma: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1993), 123.

labor pressured the Italian government into taking direct action in this matter. Italian Ambassador Francesco S. Fava wrote to Secretary of State Walter Q. Gresham on April 19, 1894, that “the only way to protect the Italian Immigrants against the rapacity of the ‘padroni’ would be to establish in the ports of arrival, bureaus of labor, or other similar offices, duly authorized and recognized by the Federal Government.” He added that the “object and duties of said offices would be to direct the immigrants towards the district of colonization, or to the agricultural and industrial districts of the country where labor is requested. This,” he argued, “would prevent their agglomeration on the large ports on arrival, where they fall inevitably in the hands of the ‘padroni’.”⁸⁰

J. G. Carlisle, the secretary of the treasury, opposed the idea of government-controlled labor bureaus, viewing them as incompatible with the American principle of self-government. Instead, in a letter to Baron Fava, dated June 13, 1894, he authorized the opening of an office for immigrants at Ellis Island on the part of the Italian government:

Sir: I have directed Mr. Stump, superintendent of immigration, to cause a room on the main floor of the immigration station of Ellis Island, at the port of New York, to be designated as a place for the display of such circulars, advertisements, and printed matter, forwarded by State boards of immigration, transportation lines, corporations, and individuals, offering inducements to immigrants for settlement and employment, as may be approved by the Commissioner of Immigration at said port. In this room you can have stationed one or two persons who can interview and advise with Italian immigrants, who have been allowed to land, and give them such

⁸⁰ U.S., Congress, Senate, *Letter From the Secretary of the Treasury*, Ex. Doc. 114, 53d Cong., 2d sess, 1893-1894, serial set 3163. See “The Padrone System Still Exists,” *NYT*, June 21, 1894, 9; Saverio Fava, “Le Colonie Agricole Italiane nell’America del Nord,” *Nuova Antologia* CXIII, Serie IV, Ottobre 1, 1904, 463-64.

instructions as will promote their welfare. This apartment will be open to all nationalities.

Upon the arrival of a steamship, sailing from an Italian port, the officials at Ellis Island will be directed to cause all Italians, destined for the port of New York, to pass through this room before they are permitted to hold communication with any person not connected with the immigration service. It is, however, understood that persons selected by you shall give information to the United States officials of any violation of the immigration or contract-labor laws which may come under their notice.⁸¹

The understanding between Fava and Carlisle was that the Italian government bureau at the New York immigrant station would be “only an experiment” for the avowed purpose of suppressing “the pernicious padrone system, which the Italian Government is very anxious to break up.”⁸²

The Bureau of Information and Protection for Italian Emigration at Ellis Island, also known as the Italian Immigration Bureau or simply the Italian Bureau, opened at Ellis Island on July 23, 1894, with Alessandro Oldrini in charge. Its services were in great demand and during some years, more than half the Italians who landed in New York used its facilities. However, its reach was limited to the docks and it could not provide jobs or prosecute the padroni. Oldrini was replaced by Egisto Rossi, who ran the bureau with intelligence and dedication until it was abolished as of January 1, 1900.⁸³

⁸¹ U.S., Congress, Senate, *Letter From the Secretary of the Treasury*.

⁸² U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress, December 5, 1899* (1901; repr., New York: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1968), 414.

⁸³ Fenton, *Immigrants and Unions*, 110-11. For Italian government documentation on the establishment, activities, and closure of the Italian Bureau at Ellis Island, see Camera

To complement the limited work of the Italian Bureau, Ambassador Fava tried to get permission to open a labor bureau supported by the Italian government. In 1895, he expressed to officials of the United States Treasury Department “a desire to obtain accommodations in the Barge Office at the port of New York for the use of the Italian Emigrant, Labor, and Agricultural Bureau,” which he proposed to establish. The aim of this bureau was “to stamp out as much as possible the Padrone System among the Italians.” Wealthy New York banker Austin Corbin had offered a monthly contribution of \$100 to support the bureau, which had received cautious approval from the Italian foreign ministry. Fava’s request, however, was not granted on the grounds “that there are no unoccupied rooms sufficient for the purpose indicated that

dei Deputati, *Libro Verde*, n. XXXIV, *Documenti Diplomatici: Provvedimenti concordati col Governo degli Stati Uniti dell’America del Nord a favore dell’emigrazione italiana* (Roma: Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati, 1894); ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 111, fasc. 2195-2198, busta 113, fasc. 2204, 2206-2208. For Baron Fava’s role, see Fava, “Le Colonie Agricole Italiane,” 462-68; Vincenzo Grossi, *Questioni di Geografia Coloniale. I.º - Gli Italiani negli Stati Uniti* (Palermo: Remo Sandron - Editore, 1895); Luigi Bodio, “Della Protezione degli Emigranti Italiani in America,” *Nuova Antologia*, Dicembre 15, 1895, 628-44 and “The Protection of Italian Emigrants in America,” *Chautauquan* XXIII (April 1896): 42-46. For U.S. government documentation, see U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States...December 3, 1894, December 5, 1898 and 1899*, 367-69, 406-09 and 411-40; U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports of the Industrial Commission on Immigration*, vol. XV (1901; repr., New York: Arno Press, Inc., 1970), 43, 64, 86-89, 135, 154-60. For detailed studies, see Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 77-83, 93-95, 146-48, 159-68, 182-86 (prints a brief summary of the *Libro Verde*, n. XXXIV on pp. 201-08) and Carol Bradley, “Ellis Island: The Italian Government and the Office for Information and Protection of Italian Emigrants,” in *Italian Americans in Transition*, ed. Joseph V. Scelsa, Salvatore J. LaGumina, and Lydio Tomasi (Staten Island, New York: The American Italian Historical Association, 1990), 263-71. For newspaper accounts, see “To Protect Italian Immigrants,” *NYT*, July 17, 1894, 9; “Alessandro Oldrini a Ellis Island” and “Di Giorno in Giorno o Il Patronato e l’Italian Home,” *Il Progresso Italo-Americano*, July 18 and 24, 1894, 1; “L’Ufficio d’Immigrazione a Ellis Island” and “Prodezze di Bosses,” *Cristoforo Colombo*, August 2 and October 26, 1894, 1; “L’Emigrazione Italiana agli Stati Uniti” and “Il Capo-Lavoro Diplomatico del Barone Fava,” *L’Eco d’Italia*, November 7 and 11, 1894, 1.

can be assigned.” The ambassador was “advised that Italian immigrants seeking employment are not deprived of the privileges of the Free Labor Bureau conducted under the supervision of the Irish and German Immigration Societies.” The American government was not interested in having a foreign government involved in finding work for immigrants on American soil.⁸⁴

The provision in Carlisle’s letter that “Upon the arrival of a steamship, sailing from an Italian port, the officials at Ellis Island will be directed to cause all Italians, destined for the port of New York, to pass through this room [Italian Bureau] before they are permitted to hold communication with any person not connected with the immigration service” was seen by Bandini as a threat to his society. This can be seen in the scathing report by Oldrini on the St. Raphael Society submitted to Fava on February 6, 1895, and then forwarded to Rome. Oldrini noted in his report, which limited itself to the six months since the opening of the Italian Bureau on July 23, 1894, that initially he thought it necessary to utilize the two employees of the St. Raphael Society and the Italian Home already present at Ellis Island. The employee of the Italian Home proved cooperative while the employee of the St. Raphael Society eventually left and around October got another job, since for several months he had not received his stipend. He showed up on Sunday, when his work allowed, and returned to Ellis Island at the start of 1895 but with a different attitude.

⁸⁴ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 109, fasc. 2190, Comstock memo, October 25, 1895, Acting Secretary to Fava, Washington, D.C., November 14, 1895, rough draft, Fava to Olney, Washington, D.C., November 16, 1895, Olney to Fava, Washington, D.C., December 3, 1895, Wike to Secretary of State (Olney), Washington, D.C., December 3, 1895 (copy), Fortunati (?) to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, January 7, 1896, Bonin to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, March 21, 1896, busta 111, fasc. 2197, Vamoli to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, October 11, 1895, rough draft, Ro. Amb. (Fava) to Signor Minis. (Blanc), Washington, March 8, 1896, Bonin to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, March 26, 1896, rough draft, Ro. Am. (Fava) to Signor Minis (Gaetani di Sermoneta), Washington, April 12, 1896. See Fava, “Le Colonie Agricole Italiane,” 264-66; Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 123-26, 139.

He no longer showed up at the office of the Italian Bureau as he had done before, surely following instructions given him. Oldrini then mentioned Fr. Bandini's attitude. When the Italian Bureau was established, Bandini lodged a protest with the superintendent of immigration in Washington. After his unsuccessful protest, which argued that "the Italian Bureau damaged the right of the St. Raphael 'to allow Italian immigrants to go directly out of Ellis Island,' [a right] now conferred only to the Italian Bureau," Bandini went to Washington. Secretary of State Walter Q. Gresham presented him to J. G. Carlisle, the secretary of the treasury, and Herman Stump, superintendent of immigration, to no avail. Oldrini concluded his report with the harsh judgment that "The Cath. St. Raphael Mission occupies itself above all with propaganda and religious functions; and it has appealed to the public in the name of immigration for the assistance it gives in its home." Private societies like those mentioned in the report, he argued, lack the official character that allows direct communication with the Italian and American governments and therefore are limited to providing charity. Nonetheless, Oldrini noted, Bandini decided to go to Italy to plead his case there.⁸⁵

Bandini had intended to go to Italy in early 1894. "It was my intention," he wrote Scalabrini in February, "at the invitation of various distinguished persons and the need one feels to speak personally and take urgent dispositions concerning the poor emigrants to come to Italy this winter." However, an unexpected trip that he had to make to the states of the Southwest took a long time, delaying his trip to Europe. In July he wrote Rolleri that "By the end of the month I must be in Paris, and I can do no less than go to Rome and Palermo for important

⁸⁵ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 113, fasc. 2207, Oldrini to Fava, New York, February 6, 1895 (copy). For related correspondence on Oldrini's report that refers to Bandini, see *ibid.*, rough draft, Ro A. (Fava) to Signor Ministro (Blanc), Washington, March 5, 1895, Oldrini to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), New York, March 6, 1895, rough draft, Ro A. (Fava) to Oldrini, Washington, March 7, 1895, rough draft, Ro A (Fava) to Branchi, Washington, March 7, 1895, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), New York, March 9, 1895.

matters regarding the study of immigration. Do you want that I should come to Italy without stopping in Piacenza? Ah! So, God willing, we'll see each other in August."⁸⁶ It's most likely that the stop in Palermo involved the Society of St. Michael (*San Michele Società di Patronato per gli Italiani del Sud emigranti per l'America*), established there in 1893 to assist southern Italian immigrants. Cardinal Michelangelo Celesia of Palermo was its honorary president and the Marchese di Spedalotto was its effective president. Its aim was to extend the work begun by the St. Raphael Society in New York. The initiative was entrusted to comm. Lorenzo Merlino, whose son Vincenzo worked on board of steamships and in New York as representative of the Society of St. Michael. Its work on behalf of immigrants never amounted to much and it eventually began to exploit them.⁸⁷ Prior to his departure, Bandini informed Archbishop Corrigan of his regret at not having received a letter he had requested from him for his visit to Rome. "Nevertheless I hope that Your Excellency will not deny me your

⁸⁶ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, February 10, 1894, RC 03, Bandini to Roller, New York, July 8, 1894. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:390 (#689), 392 (#701).

⁸⁷ Riccobono, "L'Eco di Scalabrini in Sicilia," 321-23. See ACMS, 005, box 1, Di Spedalotto to Bandini, Palermo, July 29, 1893; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 111, fasc. 2195, Oldrini to Fava, New York, June 3, 1895, rough draft, Ro. Am. (Fava) to Signor Ministro (Blanc), Washington, June 4, 1895, fasc. 2196, Ro. Prefetto di Palermo to Ro. Ministero dell'Interno, n.d. (copy), fasc. 2198, rough draft, Ro. Amb. (Fava) to Signor Console Generale (Branchi), Washington, August 12, 1895, rough draft, Fava to Oldrini, Washington, August 12, 1895, rough draft, Regio Ambasc. (Fava) to Oldrini, Washington, August 18, 1895, busta 112, fasc. 2200, Mauro to Fava, Palermo, April 4, 1897, Visconti Venosta to Signor Incaricato d'affari (Vinci), Rome, August 28, 1897 (includes copy of Galletti letter), Merlino to Fava, New York, March 5, 1900 (includes attachment), rough draft, Ro. Amb. (Fava) to Signor Console Generale (Branchi), Washington, March 7, 1900, Branchi to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), New York, March 9, 1900, Candelora to Fava, New York, March 9 and 22, 1900, rough draft, Ro. Am. (Fava) to Signor Console Generale (Branchi), Washington, March 10, 1900; AGS, RC 03, Merlino to Zaboglio, New York, April 18, 1896, Merlino to Scalabrini, New York, [April 1896]; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 381 (#654), 382-83 (#657-59, 662), 385 (#672), 386 (#677), 412 (#804), 413 (#808).

blessing.” “I must inform you,” he added, “that I find it necessary to quickly distance Cav. Merlino from the service of the St. Raphael. He is engaged with many grave matters involving shameful actions.” Finally, he noted that Fr. Vincenzo Sciolla will fill in for him during his absence.⁸⁸

The available letters sent by Bandini during the almost four months he was in Italy allow tracing his itinerary during this period. In early August he was in Forlì, where Antonio Decimo was his only surviving sibling. While there, he also had the opportunity of visiting with his nephew Tito, his brother Vincenzo’s son, at the time almost 21 years old.⁸⁹ By late August, he was in Rome, staying at San Silvestro in Capite. On August 31 he wrote to Fr. Zaboglio, at the time assigned to the port of Genoa, “I cannot say precisely when I will be in Genoa, since I must first go to Naples and Palermo and stop again for a short time in Rome - and then Milan and Genoa, from where I intend to embark a steamship of the German Lloyd.”⁹⁰ In a letter to Satolli on April 9, 1896, Cav. Vincenzo Merlino mentioned a trip to Palermo by Bandini and a meeting with Cardinal Celesia.⁹¹

In Rome, Bandini met both church and governments officials. Satolli, the apostolic delegate, presented and recommended Bandini on his visit to Italy to Ciasca, the Propaganda Fide general secretary to whom the anonymous copy of the letter with seven allegations against Bandini had been sent. He wrote that “for many years he is here in America to great spiritual and even material benefit of the immigrants and the Italian immigrants. He comes to Italy for grave affairs

⁸⁸ AANY, G-74, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Corrigan), New York, July 21, 1894.

⁸⁹ AGS, DH 02, telegram, Bandini to unknown, Forlì, Italy, August 8, 1894.

⁹⁰ AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Rever e caro p. (Zaboglio), Rome, August 27, 31 and September 1, 1894. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:394 (#713-14), 395 (#717).

⁹¹ ASV, DAUS, Sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Merlino to Satolli, New York, April 9 (177-182) and 13, 1896. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:412 (#802-03), 413 (#808).

regarding his mission also in regard to the government on behalf of the same Italians.” Corrigan’s note of October 9, 1891, marked, “very confidential,” was attached, stating that “Fr Bandini, from Piacenza, was expelled from the Society of Jesus *propter sextum*. - So far he does well here in the city.”⁹² On August 27, 1894, Laurenti, writing for Ciasca, told Satolli that Bandini had presented himself with his letter of recommendation. He referred to the Corrigan note of October 9, 1891 and the more recent letter sent to the vicariate on July 21, 1894. He added “So far they are simply charges not provided with proofs and they could even be calumnies, but that is enough to keep an eye on him and investigate as regards his actions so as to ascertain the facts of his life.” No evidence has surfaced that indicates that these allegations were investigated and therefore found to have any merit.⁹³ Two years later, Corrigan told Cardinal Mieczysław H. Ledóchowski, prefect of Propaganda Fide, that “Father Bandini, about whom there were serious charges in matters of morality, but not proven, is now, as a secular priest, in the Diocese of Little Rock, where he does quite well.”⁹⁴ That, apparently, concluded the discussion of this unpleasant topic. The available material gives no information on whether Bandini’s meeting with church officials in Rome benefitted the immigrants.

Bandini also met with Prime Minister Alberto Blanc and proposed to him leaving the care of able-bodied immigrants to the recently established Italian Bureau at Ellis Island. He suggested that the St. Raphael Society transform itself into an institution especially intended to aid the sick or disabled: the old, women, children. It’s

⁹² APF, NS, vol. 30 (1894), rubr. 5, ff. 662-64, Satolli to Ciasca, August 22, 1894 (attached note).

⁹³ *Ibid.*, ff. 665, Laurenti for Ciasca to Satolli, Rome, August 27, 1894; ASV, DAUS, IX. New York. v. s. 34 Rev. Pietro Bandini, italiano di New York, e suo caso. (1894-1895), Laurenti for Ciasca to Satolli, Rome, August 27, 1894 (05). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:394 (#712).

⁹⁴ APF, NS, vol. 332 (1905), rubr. 153, ff. 99-100, Corrigan to Ledóchowski, New York, August 14, 1896.

likely that Bandini used this opportunity to request a monthly subsidy of \$100 from the Italian government to help with his expenses. He had made such a request earlier that year to the royal consul general in New York, who forwarded it to the prime minister. Both Oldrini and Fava saw little merit in Bandini's proposal, since there was a hospital at Ellis Island in which sick immigrants had a right to be admitted and the St. Raphael lacked the means to take care of such a population. In fact, the St. Raphael was in such dire financial straits, that Oldrini informed Ambassador Fava that to cut costs, in late 1894 Bandini dismissed the society's agent. Prime Minister Blanc later told Fava that the request for a subsidy seemed inopportune, given the new Italian Bureau at Ellis Island, which had the same objectives and greater privileges than the St. Raphael, and the harsh Oldrini report.⁹⁵ That report noted that Bandini met several times with Herman Stump, superintendent of immigration, in Rome as part of an Immigration Investigating Commission appointed in June by Secretary of the Treasury Carlisle to recommend needed changes in federal immigration rules and regulations, including the laws prohibiting the importation of alien laborers under contract. The commission was also to investigate whether the padrone system still existed in the United States, and if so, what could be done to break it up. According to Oldrini, Stump's description of those meetings led him to conclude that Bandini had gone to Rome "expressly to always air the same question."⁹⁶

⁹⁵ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 111, fasc. 2195, Blanc to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, March 29, 1895, Branchi to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, April 9, 1895, rough draft, Regio Amb. (Fava) to Oldrini, Washington, April 13 and 22, 1895, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), New York, April 17, 22 and June 3, 1895, rough draft, Fava to Signor Ministro (Blanc), Washington, April 29 and June 4, 1895, busta 113, fasc. 2206, Oldrini to Fava, New York, November 1, 1894

⁹⁶ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 113, fasc. 2207, Oldrini to Fava, New York, February 6, 1895 (copy); Immigration Service, *Report of the Immigration Investigating Commission to the Honorable the Secretary of the Treasury* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1895), 3-7, 26-29, 122-26. See "To Investigate the Padrone System" and "Immigration Commission at Work," *NYT*, June 14 and 23, 1894, 9.

Bandini's proposal that the St. Raphael Society share responsibilities for Italian immigrants with the Italian Bureau at Ellis Island and his request for a government subsidy, seen as inopportune by Prime Minister Blanc, came seven years too soon. With the closure of the Italian Bureau at the immigrant station on January 1, 1900, the Italian government became more willing to collaborate with and financially support private agencies like the St. Raphael Society, being reorganized by Fr. Giacomo Gambera. Moreover, the Italian emigration law of 1901 set up a fund for such agencies.⁹⁷ On September 5, 1905, the presidents of the three New York immigrant aid societies subsidized by the Italian government and supported by New York's Consul General Annibale Raybaudi-Massiglia, made and entered into a memorandum of agreement meant to assure complete and orderly cooperation between them, while allowing each society to pursue its traditional form of assistance. The Italian Benevolent Institute provided assistance to all needy Italians in the city, regardless of date of arrival. The Society of St. Raffaele assisted immigrants at Ellis Island, provided free shelter especially for orphan girls, and aided the needy in the city's Italian colony. The Society for Italian Immigrants assisted immigrants at Ellis Island, received and distributed money sent by relatives to arriving immigrants, reported to the Italian government, managed an information bureau, an escort service, a labor bureau, and other useful services. The presidents decided to meet every so often in agreement with the consul to discuss improved ways of assisting the immigrants and to let the consul inspect the expenses of each society. They also agreed that a legal office, separate from the societies but collaborating with them, be set up. Rev. Gherardo Ferrante signed the memorandum of agreement on behalf of the Society of St. Raffaele.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 56-57, 107-08, 157-80. See L. Bodio, "Dell'emigrazione italiana e dell'applicazione della legge 31 gennaio 1901," *Boll. Emig.* 8 (1902): 3-21.

⁹⁸ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 144, fasc. 3167, Massiglia to Signor Commissario Generale, New York, September 7, 1905 (two attachments); "Relazione sui servizi dell'emigrazione per il periodo aprile 1905 - aprile 1906," *Boll. Emig.* 7 (1906): 80-84, 87-

As noted above, some eleven years earlier Bandini had unsuccessfully requested a government subsidy and suggested a similar division of labor to Prime Minister Alberto Blanc.

On October 14, Bandini wrote Zaboglio that “I finally leave Rome, where, thanks be to God, it has been possible to conclude something on behalf of our poor immigrants. Therefore I will not delay coming to Genoa to embark.” He did not say what was concluded, but the Abbè Alphonse Villeneuve was told by the Marchese Volpe Landi that Bandini had been successful in obtaining from the Italian government protection and aid for the New York St. Raphael Society. That, as already noted, was not the case. He also informed Zaboglio that “From Palermo they sent me a small barrel of Mass wine to bring to New York.” Finally, he told him that he will leave for Milan, “where you can send me letters in care of Prof. Francesco Grassi 2 Via Bossi.”⁹⁹ Bandini stopped at Imola on the way to Milan, most likely staying with his classmate from Bertinoro, Dr. Giovanni Gambetti. From there he wrote Fr. Rollerli that “The matters that I have had on my hands have prevented me from coming to Piacenza before now. I leave now for Milan and believe that if nothing new comes up I could be in Piacenza Saturday,” November 3. “I hope,” he added, “that in Piacenza I will have the comfort of making a few days of spiritual exercises and then leave from Genoa on Nov. 12 on the Kaiser W. as I have arranged.” He also asked Rollerli to have sent to Piacenza “with the greatest haste and biggest discount possible” the books and items on a list attached to the letter and available at a store in Turin. The books and items included, among other things, a practical manual for a new pastor by Frassinetti, a book on canon law by Salzano, and a gold-plated brass communion plate.¹⁰⁰

88. See Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 189-90.

⁹⁹ AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Zaboglio, Rome, October 14, 1894, BA 02, Villeneuve to Zaboglio, Florence, October 23, 1894. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:398 (#726, 729).

¹⁰⁰ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Rollerli, Imola, Italy, October 29 and RC 03, Milan, October 31, 1894.

Bandini remained in Piacenza for a week. Before leaving for Genoa, he requested Zaboglio's help for his brother Antonio and his nephew Tonino. It was the only time in the available correspondence that he mentioned a member of his family:

I am going to surprise you. My brother Antonio together with his nephew Tonino Brun and Mr. G. Vitali must go to South America for some of his affairs. I warmly recommend him to you since his nephew is young, and even though he is exempt from the draft, he does not know if he will be able to make him leave without a passport. But he, without letting everyone know, needs to go through without a passport. I beg you strongly to do what you can and give my brother all the information he needs, for which I thank you in advance. I will leave Monday night or Tuesday morning so as to sail on Thursday.¹⁰¹

Bandini left Genoa on the Kaiser Wilhelm II on Thursday, November 15, and arrived in New York on Tuesday, November 27. Back from Italy, he informed Scalabrini that the voyage, which lasted twelve days, had gone well enough. He brought the bishop up to date on members of the religious community and his meeting with the archbishop. The latter was interested in knowing whether Bandini planned to continue paying the interest on the \$5,000 note and that he would prefer to put a mortgage on the Waverly house.¹⁰²

After his return, Bandini continued to ignore the Italian

¹⁰¹ AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Zaboglio, Piacenza, November 10, 1894. Tonino Brun was Antonio's nephew through his wife, nee Carolina Brun. The days refer to November 12, 13, and 15.

¹⁰² ALE, HR, Immigration & Travel, New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957, "Mr. P. Bandini" (accessed 10/17/2013); AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Zaboglio, On Board the Kaiser, November 17, 1894, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, December 5, 1894. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:400 (#733 and 736).

Bureau.¹⁰³ He sent Archbishop Corrigan a memorandum “explaining the reasons, and the plan I think the best for the purchase of a new and a larger place.” He cautioned Corrigan that the decision on this matter “will be either the life or the death of the Mission as it would be impossible to go on in the way we do now.” Bandini offered two reasons for the purchase of a larger place. First, “The necessity of means for the support of the Mission.” Second, “The number of Italians we are taking care of for whom the present chapel is altogether too small and inconvenient.” His plan was to buy a place 85 x 100 feet. It included a church, 60 x 100 feet, a basement and two houses. The basement and the house in the rear could be used for school purposes. The cost would be \$50,000. \$5,000 would be paid at once and the balance could be mortgaged. Bandini added that “the owner of the said Church is willing to buy at once my house and he offers \$20,000 for it. Its original cost was of \$19,000, but I paid only the interest of it. Another party offered me \$22,000.” He concluded that in a larger church, closer to the Italian community, he should be able to collect at least twice as much as the \$4,000 he had collected at the chapel in 1894, “which would be more than sufficient to meet the expenses on supporting the Mission, on paying the interest and after a year or so we could begin to pay some of the capital very easily.”¹⁰⁴

The archbishop and his consultants approved Bandini’s proposal on condition that the property be rented for one year, with the option of purchasing it after that. Bandini signed the rental agreement on March 6, 1895. He informed Scalabrini of the decision, noting that the abandoned Protestant church at 214 Sullivan Street, known as the Bethel Methodist Colored Church, would actually cost \$52,000. The new church, he added, would be the largest church of the congregation in America. The two-story structure had space on the first floor for

¹⁰³ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 113, fasc. 2207, Oldrini to Fava, New York, February 6, 1895 (copy).

¹⁰⁴ AANY, G-8, Bandini to Your Grace (Corrigan), New York, January 31, 1895 (includes memorandum).

the children's masses, catechism classes, meetings, etc. The second or upper story would serve as the church. The new church, called the Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary and dedicated to Our Lady of Pompei, was blessed by the archbishop on April 28, 1895.¹⁰⁵ Bandini also kept the apostolic delegate, Satolli, informed on his decision to move to a larger facility and invited him to the blessing of the new church, asking him to give the opening sermon. Archbishop Satolli, unable to be at the morning dedication Mass, attended vespers at the church and delivered an address in Italian.¹⁰⁶ Less than two months later, Bandini informed Scalabrini that the new church was doing well so far as attendance was concerned, but "very slowly financially (we are in summer and the times are bad)."¹⁰⁷

The New York Times reported:

Three important changes in churches in this city are announced. The Church of St. Benedict the Moor, at Bleecker and Downing Streets, which was the first African Catholic church established in this city, is to be abandoned, and at the same time the First African Methodist Episcopal Church, in Sullivan Street, near West Third Street, is to be converted into a Catholic church for Italians.

¹⁰⁵ Di Giovanni, "Michael Augustine Corrigan," 362-66; Francesconi, *Storia*, II:122-24; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 111, fasc. 2195, newspaper clipping, "Nuova Chiesa Italiana in Sullivan St.," n.p. ; ACMS, 037, box 1, Bandini to Demo, Tontitown, Ark., October 8, 1902.

¹⁰⁶ ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, New York v. s., 34 Rev. Pietro Bandini, Bandini to Eccellenza Revma (Satolli), New York, January 3 (03) and 7 (04), 1894, March 7 (11), 27 (15), 28 (17) and 29 (18), 1895, Satolli to Bandini, March 9 (12) and 28 (16), 1895; "Mgr. Satolli to Italians," *NYT*, April 29, 1895, 2; "Our Lady of the Rosary," *New York Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register*, May 4, 1895, 2; "Mgr. Satolli Visits New York. He Officiates at Old St. Patrick's and at a Church for Italians," *The Catholic News*, May 5, 1895, 7. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:387 (#681), 389 (#683), 404 (#756-57), 405 (762-65).

¹⁰⁷ Francesconi, *Storia*, II:124.

The Church of St. Benedict the Moor is to be vacated because there are not enough colored Catholics in that section of the city to support it, and the Methodist Church in Sullivan Street is to be turned over to Catholics for a similar reason...

The Sullivan Street church, which has been leased to the St. Raphael Italian Benevolent Society, will be in charge of the Rev. Father Pietro, who has the privilege of buying the property within five years. Two buildings adjoining the church have been leased. One will be used as a rectory, the other as headquarters for the Benevolent Society. The future of the colored Methodists in the neighborhood has not been determined. Father Pietro will make an effort to convert many of them to the Catholic faith.¹⁰⁸

The 1896 *Official Catholic Directory* listed as residing at the *St. Raphael's House for Italian Emigrants*, 218 Sullivan St., Bandini, Vincent Sciolla, John Gastoldi, and Caietano Orlando. Also, "Connected with St. Raphael's House are: 1) *Daily School* - Pupils, 40; 2) *Industrial School for Girls*, 214 Sullivan st. Pupils, 140." These probably refer to the "Two buildings adjoining the church" mentioned in the *Times* article.¹⁰⁹

To help with his expenses, Bandini requested assistance from Archbishop Satolli, who contacted various priests and benefactors in the New York archdiocese. The Rev. C. G. O'Keefe, of Sacred Heart Church in Highland Falls, New York, promised to give \$200 a year for five years, enough to pay the interest on a mortgage of \$5,000.¹¹⁰ Miss Annie Leary, a wealthy Catholic benefactor from whom Bandini

¹⁰⁸ "Leaving One Church to Take Another," *NYT*, March 11, 1895, 8.

¹⁰⁹ *OCD*, 1896 (Sadlier), 155.

¹¹⁰ ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, New York v. s., 34 Rev. Pietro Bandini, O'Keefe to Eccellenza Revma (Satolli), Highland Falls, N.Y., January 3 (07) and 19 (09-10), 1895.

was hoping to receive a donation, showed an interest in establishing the Auxiliary Ladies of St. Raphael, composed of wealthy matrons, who would make a small monthly contribution and train Italian girls in domestic skills. Overall, the response to this appeal was limited. At the same time, income from the new church was not as great as expected. Bandini informed Satolli on October 19, 1895, that income at the church during the summer had been very poor and that he had not collected enough to even pay the rent. His debt now amounted to more than one thousand dollars. The church, he added, was well attended and does good things, “but the people for the most part are too poor and those who have money are too stingy.”¹¹¹

The home at 113 Waverly Place was not sold until April 7, 1896, for \$17,000 and “free from incumbrances.” Archbishop Corrigan sustained a loss of \$3,000 on the sale, since he owed \$15,000 on the mortgage and the balance on the \$5,000 note. Meanwhile, Bandini had to pay the interest on the old home and rent on the new church, which he was unable to do. On November 29, 1895, he wrote to the archbishop:

I never thought it would take so long to dispose of the house in Waverly place. I am not able to pay both interests of the new and of the old place at present; but, on my word I promise, that I will give back to your grace little by little whatever you will be pleased to lend me on the Waverly house, hoping that this will be the last time I am called to pay the interest on the old house.¹¹²

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Eccellenza Revma (Satolli), New York, March 16 (13) and Satolli to Bandini, March 18 (14), 1895, Sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Bandini to Eccellenza Revma (Satolli), New York, October 19, 1895 (141). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:404-05 (#759-60), 408 (#778).

¹¹² Block and Lot of Abstract Books, 553, 19 - (Lot 36, Block 553, Section 2), City Register, 31 Chamber Street, New York City, which refers to Liber 44, page 343, where it says that Corrigan sold the property at 113 Waverly Place on April 7, 1896, for \$17,000 “free from incumbrances.”; AANY, G-8, Bandini to Mt. Rev. Archbishop (Corrigan), New York, November 29, 1895.

The archbishop, fed up with financial mismanagement by the Italian priests, did not give Bandini the requested loan on the Waverly house. On January 17, 1896, the archdiocese informed Bandini of legal consequences if he failed to pay the interest on the house's loan for the previous December. The archdiocese's letter was also critical of churches "in charge of Italian Priests... which have been the first to bring discredit, in the financial sense, on this Diocese." In his reply from Sunny Side, Arkansas, on January 22, 1896, where he had "been called on a hurry to visit a new colony in Arkansas for the purpose of settling some difficulties." Bandini pointed out that in the summer he "had a chance of renting the house for \$1400 a year, with a lease of four years on." But the archbishop did not give his approval. Since he "had no other chances," he left the matter in the hands of brokers. He also mentioned "that in a month or so I would be back to New York." Angered by the harsh and threatening tone of the archdiocesan letter, Bandini added the following reflections, with an unusual mixture of negative feelings about the past tempered by optimism for the future:

Considering everything, I do not think, I do deserve the harsh words you address to me and to all the Italian clergy in your letter. I think that in five years I have been in New York I did not spare myself. I worked very hard without any inducement. I had to overcome serious and numberless difficulties, and looking back on the spring of 91, when I started to work for the protection of the poorest class of people coming to this country, I see that a great deal of good has been accomplished. Of course it may not be so if you look only in the financial sense. But even in this rapport I did manage in the best way. If I did not succeed, I don't believe, I am guilty before God. My work is not simply a Parish one, but a Mission among the poorest class of people; and such a Mission cannot exist unless numbered among the charitable

institutions of the Diocese, and as such she must have some help. I really believe that the worst time of it is passed, and the future looks brighter as some good people begin to take some interest in it. But I do not like to be any longer a discredit to the Diocese, as you insinuate, neither will I be able to run this Mission under the same circumstances as for the past time. I think it would be good plan to try someone else, and I will be always ready to help the Mission in some other way, and for the rest, my health is failing down and my head is continually aching so much that I need, at least for a while, a rest of mind.

I find very painful that after having worked very hard for 5 years with all my strength, to be considered a burden and a discredit to the Diocese.¹¹³

The letter was clearly Bandini's swan song to the St. Raphael Society, the Scalabrinian congregation, and the New York archdiocese. Moreover, given limited income and increased financial responsibilities, his problems and debts mounted and so it was best for him to move on and let someone else deal with them.¹¹⁴ That someone else would turn out to be Fr. Zaboglio, the person Bandini suggested to Scalabrini, since he had briefly worked at the port of Genoa. This, despite the fact that Zaboglio had a very unfavorable opinion of him and referred to him in his correspondence with Scalabrini as a "swindler." Especially harsh and probably partly inaccurate was Zaboglio's comment

¹¹³ AANY, G-11, Connolly to Bandini, New York, January 17 and 30, 1896, Bandini to Rev dear Sir (Connolly), Sunny Side, Ark., January 22, 1896. See AGS, RC 02, Beccherini to Eccellenza (Scalabrini), Detroit, November 3, 1901; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 455 (#968); Di Giovanni, "Michael Augustine Corrigan," 367, who writes that "Bandini's response to all accusations and threats of legal action, was his announcement that he had been assigned to an Italian agricultural colony in Arkansas by Satolli..."

¹¹⁴ AANY, G-12, O'Connor to Corrigan, New York, April 24, 1896. See *ibid.*, G-15, Farley to My dear Archbishop (Corrigan), New York, April 25, 1896.

to Scalabrini on September 4, 1896: "The Bandini incident has set an ugly precedent. He has violated his vows, according to the declaration of Y. E he has been suspended *ipso facto*, he has received no punishment, and has found a bishop who has received him in his diocese."¹¹⁵ Interestingly, in June 1891, Scalabrini had suggested to Zaboglio that he "seriously examine yourself to find out whether you have the defect of expressing unfavorable opinions about the Confreres." He then cautioned him that if he finds out that he has such a defect, "as it seems to me that you do have to some extent, [it would be] a beautiful resolution to correct it."¹¹⁶

Seven years after he had left New York, in a short account on the origin of Tontitown he sent to Scalabrini at the latter's request, Bandini gave the following reason for abandoning the St. Raphael Society:

The St. Raphael, of which I was a part in New York, could do without me. In the 5 years that I worked with it, assisted by the will of good people, much was obtained for the protection and care of our immigrants and for the disappearance of an enormous amount of abuses. However the landing system wonderfully perfected by the new laws of the United States and the new Italian Office established by the native government reduced a great deal the activity of the society and the reason for my work . . . I could then turn to another no less ample horizon and at the same time give a hand to a work that fully

¹¹⁵ For Zaboglio's views on Bandini, see Zaboglio to Scalabrini, New Haven, Conn., October 4 and 9, 1895, January 12 and 23, February 25, March 13, Easter Vigil, April 12, May 7 and September 4, 1896, in Francesconi, *Storia*, II:215-17, 220-27, 230-31.

¹¹⁶ Scalabrini to Zaboglio, Piacenza, June 17, 1891, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 1:330-31.

satisfies me and that I had longed for a long time.¹¹⁷



Bartolomeo Rolleri; Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, Roma

¹¹⁷ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, "Breve cenno sulla Colonia di Tontitown, Ark. e sua origine," Tontitown, Ark., November 10, 1902, 2-3.

Chapter V

Colonizer in Arkansas: Sunnyside in the Delta, 1896-1898

“Dagoes Coming”

It's obvious in the available record that during his seven years in Montana, Bandini had become enamored of America's wide open spaces. In a letter to Stephan from the R.M.S. “Adriatic,” after he was recalled from the Rocky Mountain Mission in 1889, he noted “I hoped I will not be detained long time in Europe and I shall be able to come back soon to my dear Indians.” He expressed a similar sentiment to Drexel, “I trust on the prayers of my good friends, that no obstacle will be put for my coming back to the Indians.” That was not to be. But his opportunity to return to the United States came when Bishop Giovanni Battista Scalabrini of Piacenza, Italy, accepted Bandini in his new religious congregation. When the bishop asked him to go to New York to start a branch of the emigrant aid society that he had established in Italy, the former Jesuit expressed to Scalabrini the idea of founding a colony. He, nonetheless, accepted the New York assignment with great reluctance, arriving there in March 1891, and promised to work at it for at least one year, to get it started. Bandini more than kept his promise, laboring in New York for five years. By the end of those five years, mentally and physically exhausted, he was ready to move on to the promised land of Arkansas. Five years after Bandini's arrival in New York, Austin Corbin, a wealthy financier, real estate developer, and railroad executive, gave him the opportunity of achieving his dream of founding a colony. What he didn't know was that this new journey, his last one, would involve initial failure but ultimately rewarding and acknowledged success. Bandini's five years in New York have been chronicled in the previous two chapters. This chapter will describe his two years at the Sunnyside Plantation in southeastern Arkansas.¹

¹ MUSCUA, BCIM, series 1-1, roll #19, frames 221-23, Bandini to Stephan, R.M.S. “Adriatic,” April 17, 1889; ASBS, H10B 03, Bandini to Drexel, R.M.S. “Adriatic,” April 17, 1889; AGS, RC 03, Bandini to Scalabrini, New York, April 11, 1894; Gregori, *La Vita e l'Opera*, 389. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:391 (#692). On Austin Corbin, see “Mr. Corbin's Career,” *NYT*, June 5, 1896, 1, 8; *The National Cyclopaedia of American*

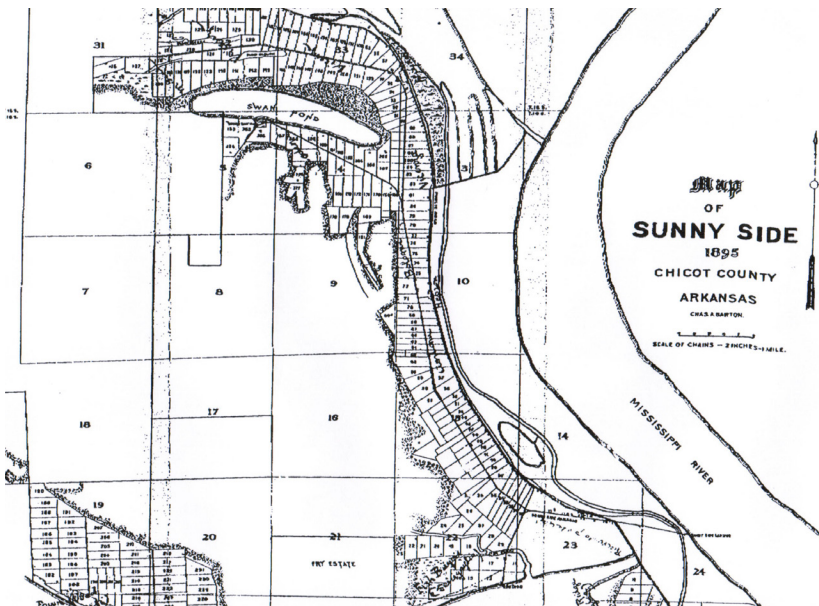
"No other Italian colony in the United States was started under better auspices than this, and no other colony had so bad an end," claimed a 1901 report of the Industrial Commission on Immigration in what was very probably the first published account on the Italian colony of Sunnyside.² The story of that colony has been ably told and documented several times, especially in the accounts of the 1911 U.S. Immigration Commission, Edmondo Mayor des Planches, Ernesto Milani, Laura Pilotti, Elizabeth O. Borgognoni, and Paul V. Canonici.³ The background for that story was the mass migration of Italians to the United States from 1880 to 1924. The Italian government became increasingly more active in addressing the issues raised by such mass migration, both in the United States and elsewhere. A key concern was the heavy concentration of Italians in the major American urban centers of the Northeast and Upper Midwest, with all the attendant

Biography, XXXI, s.v. "Corbin, Austin,"; *American National Biography*, 1999 ed., s.v. "Corbin, Austin," by John H. Hepp IV.

² U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:505. See G. Saint-Martin, "Gli Italiani nel distretto consolare di Nuova Orleans (Stati Uniti: Luisiana, Texas, Florida, Mississippi)," *Boll. Emig.* 1 (1903): 6-7.

³ See U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 21: *Immigrants in Industries: Part 24, Recent Immigrants in Agriculture* (1911; repr., New York: Arno Press, Inc., 1970), 319-37; Edmondo Mayor des Planches, *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti per l'Emigrazione Italiana* (Torino: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1913), 135-45; Ernesto R. Milani, "Marchigiani and Veneti on Sunny Side Plantation," in *Italian Immigrants in Rural and Small Town America*, ed. Rudolph J. Vecoli (Staten Island, New York: The American Italian Historical Association, 1987), 18-30, "Peonage at Sunnyside and the Reaction of the Italian Government," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* L (Spring 1991): 30-39, "Italians in Arkansas" (Paper presented at the Fifty-Third Annual Meeting of the Arkansas Historical Association, Helena, Arkansas, April 28-30, 1994), and "Sermide: Dalle Sponde del Po a quelle del Mississippi" (Magnacavallo: Centro Polivalente S. Pertini, 8 Settembre 2007); Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 140-46, 148-51; Elizabeth O. Borgognoni, comp. and ed., *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995. A People of Faith, of Hope, and of Love* (Lake Village, Arkansas: Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church, 1995); Paul V. Canonici, *The Delta Italians* (Madison, MS: Caló Creative Designs, Inc., 2003), 1-20. See Wayne, *Shadows over Sunnyside*, 39-48, for a reprint of the Milani article on peonage.

problems. One alternative was to encourage colonization in non-urban agricultural areas. Sunnyside, also referred to as Sunny Side, provided an opportunity for testing the potential of colonization. Italian government officials and their diplomatic representatives in the United States became deeply involved in the planning, execution, and eventual dissolution of that experiment. As a result, the historical archives of the Italian foreign ministry hold the most detailed information available on that Italian colony.⁴ Some of that historical documentation has been carefully used in the accounts by Milani and Pilotti. The aim of this chapter will be to revisit that documentation, viewing the story primarily, though not exclusively, as it emerged in Fr. Bandini's letters and reports, which obviously emphasized his perception of events and the role he and others played in them.



Division by plat, area, and province of origin: Plat No. 3, 32 & 33, Hyner, Vicenza; 4 & 31, Swan Pond, Modena; 10, Hebron, Ancona & Bologna; 23, Cottonwood Ridge, Senigallia; 22, Fish Bayou, Senigallia; Ernesto Millani.

⁴ See Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 133-36.

The fertile alluvial land that became Sunnyside Plantation is located in Chicot County, southeastern Arkansas, sandwiched between Lake Chicot and the Mississippi River in the Delta. It was created in the 1830's as a single cotton plantation using slave labor. It went through different owners until Austin Corbin took control of it in October 1886. The Sunnyside Company was incorporated on April 9, 1887, under Connecticut laws, with Corbin as president. The plantation included some 10,000 acres in need of restoration. In 1888 bonds amounting to \$300,000 were sold to pay off its debt and for improvements. A small railroad was built to bring the cotton to market. The old houses were repaired.⁵ However, many of the black tenants left, refusing to work for a "foreign" company using local managers, creating a serious labor shortage. A sharecropping experiment with the state using convict labor apparently lasted for two years, 1894 and 1895. It was during this period that Corbin began to consider using imported Italian labor.⁶ Corbin's decision to import Italian labor was not unusual at that time. Replacing black with European labor was openly pursued in the post-Civil War South. In his study of agriculture in the Arkansas Delta, Donald Holley pointed out:

The uncertainties surrounding black labor generated a serious effort to increase immigration into Arkansas. In 1868, the Arkansas General Assembly created a Commission of Immigration and State Lands, charging it with the responsibility of advertising Arkansas and promoting immigration. The purpose of such efforts was not merely to promote the economic development of the state, but also to find a way to counter the sellers' labor market by, if possible, replacing black labor altogether.

⁵ Gatewood, Jr., "Sunnyside," 5-23; Milani, "Marchigiani and Veneti," 20-21. See ASDMAE, LSRD, Busta 110, Fasc. 2194, Indenture, February 28, 1891.

⁶ Gatewood, Jr., "Sunnyside," 22-23. See Jeannie M. Wayne, "Labor Relations and the Evolving Plantation: The Case of Sunnyside," in Wayne, *Shadows Over Sunnyside*, 25-36.

The state was able to attract German, Chinese, and other immigrants.⁷ According to an 1893 report by the Italian consul in New Orleans, Riccardo Motta, there were about 40 Italians in Arkansas' capital Little Rock and one hundred at most in the rest of the state.⁸ In January 1905, a little over nine years after the first group of Italian immigrants had arrived at Sunnyside, Alfred Holt Stone, a Greenville, Mississippi, planter, concluded that "Measured by whatever standard may be applied the Italian has demonstrated his superiority over the negro as an agriculturalist." He made reference "to the ability of the Italian to produce more cotton on a given acreage than the negro, and to gather a greater percentage of it without outside assistance."⁹

To solve the manpower problem at Sunnyside, Corbin turned, in late summer 1894, to Alessandro Oldrini, the agent in charge of the recently opened Bureau of Information and Protection for Italian Emigration at Ellis Island, also known as the Italian Bureau. He also

⁷ Donald Holley, "The Plantation Heritage: Agriculture in the Arkansas Delta," in *The Arkansas Delta: Land of Paradox*, ed. Jeannie Whayne and Willard B. Gatewood (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1993), 249. See Fon L. Gordon, "From Slavery to Uncertain Freedom: Blacks in the Delta" and Byrd Gibbens, "Strangers in the Arkansas Delta: Ethnic Groups and Nationalities," in *ibid.*, 98-127, 150-83; Felton D. Freeman, "Immigration to Arkansas," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* VII (Autumn 1948): 210-20.

⁸ Riccardo Motta, "Nuova Orleans," in *Emig. e Col.*, ed. R. Ministero degli Affari Esteri (Roma: Tipografia Nazionale di G. Bertero, 1893), 465. See Milani, "Marchigiani and Veneti," 19-20; La Gumina et al., *The Italian American Experience: An Encyclopedia*, s.v. "South, The," by Gary R. Mormino.

⁹ Alfred H. Stone, "The Italian Cotton Grower: The Negro's Problem," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 4 (January 1905): 44 and "Italian Cotton-Growers in Arkansas," *The American Monthly Review of Reviews* XXXV (February 1907): 209-13; Robert L. Brandfon, "The End of Immigration to the Cotton Fields," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* L (March 1964): 591-611. See Emily F. Meade, "Italian Immigration Into the South," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* IV (July 1905): 217-23; Moquin with Van Doren, *A Documentary History*, 59-63, 122-25; "Gli Italiani nel Distretto Consolare di New Orleans (Stati Uniti d'America). Rapporto del dott. Luigi Villari," *Boll. Emig.* 20 (1907): 10-12; U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:325-29.

gave him a written “statement covering substantially the condition of the Sunny Side property, as well as my views as to the proper disposition of it, either by rent or sale.” He attached a map of lands belonging to the Sunny Side Company. Oldrini, who mentioned the settlement of 150 Italian families, referred the matter to his relative Baron Saverio Fava, the Italian ambassador at Washington. Oldrini wanted to know the extent to which the Italian government could cooperate in this matter, adding: “This is a move that could serve as an ‘object lesson’ to all of our migratory population, with a clear, documented, indisputable demonstration of the benefits that it could derive from agriculture in the United States, more than from manual or hired labor now too occasional to allow the emigrant to assure a secure and modest future for the family.”¹⁰ In his reply to Oldrini, the ambassador wrote that he would inform the Italian government of Corbin’s proposal and raised the question of the cost of transporting such a large number of immigrants to the colony, a number that Oldrini later revised from 150 to 250 families. At first it seemed that Corbin was disposed to cover the cost of the immigrants’ transportation from Italy to Sunnyside. But it later became clear that he was willing to provide rail transportation from New Orleans, the port of arrival, to Sunnyside, their final destination.¹¹ Fava informed Italian Foreign Minister Alberto Blanc, who cautioned the ambassador about involving the Italian Bureau in projects beyond providing advice, direction, and protection to the immigrants and causing misgivings on the part of local governments.

¹⁰ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Fava, New York, September 7, 1894, Corbin to My Dear Sir (Oldrini), New York, September 12, 1894 (map attached). See Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 140; Milani, “Marchigiani and Veneti,” 21-22; Borgognoni, *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995*, has a copy of the map on p. 11.

¹¹ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, rough draft, Ro. A. (Fava) to Signor Agente (Oldrini), Washington, September 8 and 13, 1894, Oldrini to Fava, New York, September 12 (2 letters) and October 7, 1894, rough draft, Ro. A. (Fava) to Signor Ministro (Blanc), Washington, September 13 and 14, 1894, which states that “Mr. Corbin would pay not only the colonists’ transportation from New York to the South, but also that from Italy.” See Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 141.

While he approved of the Italian Bureau's handling of Corbin's proposal, he insisted that the subsequent negotiations must take the form of a private arrangement between the owner of Sunnyside and the Italian colonists and not involve any funding on the part of the royal government.¹²



Alessandro Oldrini; *Il Carroccio* XI (Giugno 1920): p 557.

¹² ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, rough draft, Fava to R.Min. (Blanc), Washington, September 8, 13 and 14, 1894, Blanc to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, October 2, 1894. See Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 141-42.

Corbin had invited Oldrini and Fava to go and inspect Sunnyside. The ambassador, who did not believe that it was appropriate for him to go there, sent his son and Don Emmanuele Ruspoli, mayor of Rome, to visit Sunnyside in November 1894. Ruspoli gave a favorable report and agreed to enter into a partnership with Corbin.¹³ However, after Corbin's unexpected death and the failure of the Sunnyside experiment, the Ruspoli family disengaged from the colony and became involved in the industrial cultivation of oranges in Cuba, primarily for export to the United States. In Miami they were referred to as "Ruspoli's oranges."¹⁴

Back in Italy, Ruspoli got busy with his recruiting effort. He assigned the overseer and administrator of his vast properties, Alessandro Pierini, as recruiting agent in the area around Senigallia in the province of Ancona in the Marche region. He was assisted by his sons Francesco and Umberto and other recruiters who preferred families with males, better suited for work in the cotton fields. Besides Ancona, recruits also came from the provinces of Vicenza and Rieti, areas of heavy emigration. The recruits signed their contracts and got ready to depart by train for Genoa and from there by ship to the United States.¹⁵ Recruits were not hard to find. In a Winter 1948 article in *The*

¹³ *Ibid.*, 142-43. See ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Fava, New York, October 7, 1894, rough draft, Fava to Ro. Ministero (Blanc), Washington, October 10 and November 26, 1894, January 4, 1895, Blanc to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, October 29, 1894, Ruspoli to Carmo Barone (Fava), New York, November 19, 1894 (copy), Oldrini to Fava, New York, December 7, 1894.

¹⁴ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Malva to Signor Incaricato d'affari (Vinci), Rome, February 25, 1899; Giuseppe Frediani, *Pionieri italiani nell'agricoltura Americana* (Milano: Pan Editrice, 1976), 76, 96.

¹⁵ Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 5-6; Milani, "Marchigiani and Veneti," 24. For a copy of the contract, see W. J. Lemke, comp. and ed., *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas* (Fayetteville, AR: Washington County Historical Society, 1963). See Amoreno Martellini, *Fra Sunny Side e la Nueva Marca. Materiali e modelli per una storia dell'emigrazione marchigiana fino alla grande guerra* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 1999), 230-36; Luigi Bertarini, *Ricordi d'Appennino. Montalto, paese mio. Storia, Tradizioni*

Farm Quarterly, published on the fiftieth anniversary of Tontitown's founding and in which surviving members of the original Tontitown settlers were cited, Virginia Follens quoted Aldo Maestri: "In the old country there was little freedom and much taxes. You chop down a tree on your own place to keep the family warm, but you must pay for the tree a tax to the state. All the time we hear of America where things are good. No, we didn't think the streets were paved with gold, we just thought of it as a good place to live where good things would happen to us." Tony Fiori's family from Recoaro, which had fallen on hard times, had decided to move to South America. Then it saw a pamphlet from the mayor of Rome about Corbin's Arkansas colony and his effort to recruit a hundred Italian families a year. The family wrote to Prince Ruspoli who quickly replied. Frank and Giuseppe or Joe went first, landing in New Orleans. They wrote back "that things are fine, lots of work, pretty good money." So other members of the family followed, leaving from Genoa and landing in New York, where Bandini helped them arrange railroad transportation to Arkansas.¹⁶

Word of the coming of the Italians hit the newspapers and the reaction, not always favorable, raised the question of the violation of the 1885 Foran Act, which prohibited the recruitment of unskilled immigrant labor by prepaid transportation and advance contracts. The law was later amended to authorize the deportation of alien contract laborers. In a front-page story headlined "Dagoes Coming," Northwest Arkansas' *The Springdale News* reported on January 18, 1895:

e Vita della Gente dei Nostri Monti dal Medioevo al Duemila (Modena: Edizioni Il Fiorino, 2002), 184-85; Walter Bellisi, *La Valigia di Cartone: Storie di emigranti di Montese e dintorni (Appennino modenese e bolognese)* (Formigine (MO): Golinelli Editore, 2004), 41-49, 55, 65-68.

¹⁶ Virginia Follens, "Ozark Vineyards," *The Farm Quarterly* 3 (Winter 1948): 25-26. For general accounts of Italian immigration as it relates to this study, see Emilio Franzina, *La grande emigrazione: l'esodo dei rurali dal Veneto durante il secolo XIX* (Venezia: Marsilio editori, 1976), *Storia dell'Emigrazione Veneta. Dall'Unità al Fascismo* (Verona: Cierre edizioni, 1991), and *Gli Italiani al Nuovo Mondo: L'emigrazione italiana in America 1492-1942* (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1995).

Commissioner Stump of the immigration bureau has received a letter from Mr. Austin Corbin, of New York, in which he says he sold to 250 Italian families a large plantation he owns in Chicot County, Ark., opposite Greenville, comprising 4,000 acres of cultivated land, which is sold on long credit at 6 percent interest. The colonies are expected to arrive during the winter. The Italian government will object to the families coming, except some assurance is given that it will not be in violation of the laws of the United States, and he asks for a ruling on the question. Commissioner Stump in reply states that the contract under which the colonies are to come to the United States are not such as are contemplated in the exclusive law, inasmuch as they are not under contract to perform labor for another.¹⁷

The question of whether the immigrants brought to Sunnyside would violate American alien contract labor laws greatly concerned Corbin and the Italian government, as the above article noted.¹⁸ New

¹⁷ Susan Young, “So Big, This Little Place”: *The Founding of Tontitown, Arkansas, 1898-1917* (Tontitown: The Tontitown Historical Museum, 2009), 7; Gatewood, Jr., “Sunnyside,” 24-25; Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 144-46. See “Coming to Arkansas,” *The Arkansas Gazette*, January 11, 1895, 6; “Plan for Italian Colonization,” *NYT*, January 11, 1895, 9. For views of Italian immigrants at this time, see Clive Webb, “The Lynching of Sicilian Immigrants in the American South, 1886-1910,” *American Nineteenth Century History* 3 (Spring 2002): 45-76; Peter Vellon, “‘Between White Men and Negroes’: The Perception of Southern Italian Immigrants through the Lens of Italian Lynchings,” in *Anti-Italianism: Essays on a Prejudice*, ed. William J. Connell and Fred Gardaphé (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 23-32.

¹⁸ Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 142. See ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Corbin to Oldrini, New York, December 18, 1894, Oldrini to Fava, New York, December 20 and 29, 1894, Blanc to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, December 22, 1894, Ruspoli to Caro Professore (Oldrini), Rome, December 25, 1894 (2 copies), Corbin to Stumpe [sic], New York, December 27 and 29, 1894 (copy), Stump to Corbin, Washington, January 2, 1895 (copy), Corbin to Fava, New York, January 3, 1895, busta 113, fasc. 2207, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), New York, January 31, 1895.

Orleans' *The Daily Picayune*, expanding on Stump's reply, clarified the legal status of the 562 people from Italy who had just landed on the steamship Chateau Yquem, at a cost of 112 liras or \$21.60:

The immigrants of yesterday were admissible because they were neither pauper laborers, although scores of them confessed they hadn't a sou in the world, having a quasi certificate to the possession of American land, nor were they coming under contract to perform labor for anyone, because they came to cultivate land, the right of property of which, in point of law (the quasi deeds being regarded as perfect), lies in them.¹⁹

Another question dealt with the 6% interest to be paid by the colonists on the loan given them, which the Italian government considered too high. A telegram from Ambassador Fava to the Italian foreign ministry in the diplomatic archives dated January 9, 1895, stated that "Corbin has agreed to reduce the interest from 6 to 5%."²⁰ The standard contract, published in a literal translation from the Italian in the *The Daily Picayune* on November 30, 1895, stipulated terms, including the interest to be paid, under eight articles. The first article defined the sale of 250 lots, 3,125 acres of the Sunnyside Company's lands, each consisting of twelve and a half acres of ground, "to Italian families with the object of agricultural colonization of Sunnyside Company's plantation." Articles two to four specified that the sale

On the Contract-Labor law of 1885, see U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 2: *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission* (1911; repr., New York: Arno Press, Inc., 1970), 375-77.

¹⁹ "Mr. Corbin's Contracts," *The Daily Picayune*, November 30, 1895, 1, 12.

²⁰ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Blanc to Fava, Rome, January 5, 1895, Corbin to Fava, New York, January 8, 1895, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), New York, January 8, 1895, rough draft, Fava to Regio Ministero (Blanc), Washington, January 9, 1895 (includes telegram), rough draft, Fava to Corbin, Washington, January 9, 1895. See Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 143.

included the house situated on each lot, that the price of ground and house was stipulated at \$2,000 in American money to be paid over twenty-one years at five per cent interest on the balance. Article five stated that the first payment, limited to five per cent interest or \$100, will be due after the first harvest in 1896. After that, both five per cent interest on the balance of the loan and principal would have to be paid, the latter rising from \$50 in 1897, to \$75 in 1898 and 1899, to \$100 after that until the debt was fully paid. Payments were due annually at harvest time. Article six allowed late payment for “some unforeseen cause, the result of the harvest fails to be sufficient to pay the annual rental.” The last two articles obligated the Sunnyside Company, if asked, to buy the cotton raised on the property at the current price, less cost of freight and expenses not to exceed \$1 per bale, and set up an arbitration process to settle disputes between the contracting parties.²¹

“A colony that would be a model and the spark for forming others”

After arriving in New York in 1891, Bandini “avidly studied” some plans for Italian colonies that had been proposed to him. But, he wrote Scalabrini, he had to abandon them because they “did not present that solid guarantee that we must demand in order to assure our Italians.” Some four years later, in December 1895, he mentioned to Scalabrini that the Sunnyside colonization project had begun some two years

²¹ “Mr. Corbin’s Contracts,” *The Daily Picayune*, November 30, 1895, 1, 12. Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, has a copy of the Marco Ceola contract in Italian; “Appendix 2: Documents,” in Whayne, *Shadows Over Sunnyside*, 111-13, reprints the Eugenio Sebastini contract in English; Borgognoni, *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995*, 10, has a copy of the Giambattista Bariola contract in Italian. See ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Fava, New York, January 16, 1895 (includes copy of original contract), rough draft, Ro. A. (Fava) to Agente di Ellis Island (Oldrini), Washington, January 17, 1895, rough draft, Regio Amb. (Fava) to Signor Ministro (Blanc), Washington, January 20, February 21 and November 14, 1895, Maissa to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, October 24, 1895.

earlier and that New York banker Austin Corbin had proposed it to him directly and had now asked him to visit there. A month later, Bandini, referring to Sunnyside, told Zaboglio that “I have worked for two years, to see to the formation of a colony, that would be a model and the spark for forming others.”²² The records of the St. Raphael Society and the historical archives of the Italian foreign ministry contain no evidence to support Bandini’s claim that he had “worked for two years” prior to 1895 on the Sunnyside project. In early 1894 Bandini told Scalabrini that he had visited various states in the West and South. He may have stopped in Arkansas, but no documentation has surfaced providing details of that visit. He informed the bishop that the trip had been “very useful for the practical knowledge it gave me regarding the problem of colonization,” and promised to explain this to him in person during his forthcoming visit to Italy. No details on Bandini’s meeting with Scalabrini during that visit have surfaced and he never clarified what “practical knowledge” it gave him regarding colonization.²³

While in Rome in 1894, Bandini may have met with the city’s Mayor Don Emanuele Ruspoli, who visited Sunnyside later that year and became involved in the colonization project. In January 1895 Ruspoli wrote Bishop Scalabrini of Piacenza to inform him that, on a recent visit to the United States, he had become interested in Italian immigrants who dedicate themselves to agriculture and avoid the most vile conditions in cities. He had agreed to collaborate with Austin Corbin on such a project. He included information about it and asked that his missionaries in America take care of the colonists when they land and choose a pastor for them. The colony, he told the bishop, will leave in the fall and he will accompany it. There is no indication that

²² AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), New York, November 27, 1891, DH 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Revma (Scalabrini), New York, December 10, 1895, Bandini to Rev e caro Padre (Zaboglio), Sunny Side, Arkansas, January 21, 1896. See Perotti, “La società italiana,” 102-03 and *Scal. mig.*, II:351-52 (#528).

²³ AGS, RC 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Scalabrini), New York, February 10, 1894. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:390 (#689).

Bandini had been offered the position as the new colony's spiritual leader.²⁴ Writing from Paris on November 1, 1895, Ruspoli informed Scalabrini that the colonists will leave from Genoa for New Orleans on November 8. He offered to provide free travel for a priest willing to go with them. There were, he noted, 100 families and some 400 individuals, from the Marche, Emilia, and none from the South.²⁵



Emanuele Ruspoli; Web: Blog di Heraldica, September 7, 2010.

<http://blogdeheraldica.blogspot.com/2010/09/el-bautismo-de-los-principes-de-francia.html>

²⁴ AGS, RC 03, Ruspoli to Monsignore Revmo (Scalabrini), Rome, January 31, 1895. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 402 (#745).

²⁵ AGS, DH 02, Ruspoli to Revndo Monsignore Revmo (Scalabrini), Paris, November 1, 1895.

After Bishop Edward Fitzgerald of Little Rock, Arkansas, saw in the newspaper that 700 Italians will settle in his diocese, he contacted the apostolic delegate, Francesco Satolli, requesting help on finding an Italian priest. The climate, he said, was good but Chicot Co., where Sunnyside was located, was subject to overflows from the Mississippi River and other storms. Fitzgerald also noted that at \$2000 the cost of 12.50 acres of land was too high, since similar land could be bought from \$50 to \$25 an acre, somewhat higher with improvements. On November 27, 1895, Satolli wrote to Scalabrini requesting a priest for the new Italian colony. A few days later, in a letter to Bishop Fitzgerald, Bandini, referring to the 500 Italians going to Arkansas, noted "we would know if there is any priest on that side of your diocese who could attend to them." For some reason, he described Alessandro Oldrini, at the head of the colony, as "an atheist and bitterly and systematically against the Church and priests." On December 2 Fitzgerald, acknowledging Satolli for contacting Scalabrini, said that he foresaw many difficulties from Oldrini, described to him by Bandini as an atheist hostile to the church. Two days later he sent the delegate an article from the previous day's Memphis, Tennessee, *Commercial Appeal* titled "High-Priced Arkansas Land." The article pointed out that after the colonists will have paid the original loan of \$2000 plus the interest, the cost per acre will have amounted to about \$260, for a total cost of \$3,246.25.²⁶

²⁶ ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 3 Vescovo Fitzgerald, S. E. Mons. Giovanni-Battista Scalabrini e Rev. Fr. Pietro Bandini, di New York, sulla colonia italiana. (1895), Fitzgerald to Rooker, Little Rock, Ark., November 21 (03-04) and December 4, 1895, (10; includes attachment), Satolli to Fitzgerald, November 27, 1895 (05), Satolli to Scalabrini, November 27, 1895 (06-07), Bandini to Rt. Rev. Bishop (Fitzgerald), New York, November 30, 1895 (12-13), Fitzgerald to Satolli, Little Rock, Ark., December 2, 1895 (08-09). See AGS, DH 02, Satolli to Scalabrini, Washington, D.C., November, 27, 1895. On Bishop Fitzgerald, see John M. Lucey, "The Catholic Church in Arkansas," *Publications of the Arkansas Historical Association* 2 (1908): 440-58; Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity in Arkansas* (Little Rock: The Guardian Press, 1925), 11-13; James M. Woods, *Mission and Memory: A History of the Catholic Church in Arkansas* (Little Rock: August House, Inc., 1993), 85-118.

In early December, Bandini informed Satolli, who had been created a cardinal by Pope Leo XIII on November 29, 1895, that Corbin wanted him to go to Sunnyside. "Mr. Corbin gives me this courtesy because for two years I have taken part in the study of this colonization and I suggested various contractual modifications which were accepted." He said that he could go after Christmas but wanted the cardinal's opinion. Moreover, he had told Corbin of Oldrini's religious views, but the former insisted on a priest for the colony. Bandini followed up by requesting an audience with the cardinal, which was granted. Apparently, he was seeking Satolli's support in his bid to get the Sunnyside appointment.²⁷ Writing to Scalabrini on apostolic delegation stationery from Washington on December 10, 1895, Bandini referred to Satolli's letter of November 27 requesting a priest for the new Italian colony in Arkansas as well as correspondence with Bishop Fitzgerald of Little Rock. The latter, Bandini pointed out, wrote unfavorably about those immigrants and said that the Sunnyside land was too expensive and given to flooding, predicting the ruin of many families. Referring to the plantation owner Corbin, he claimed that:

The project of this colonization was shaped about two years ago and it was proposed to me directly by the owner Corbin. I let him see that two or three conditions in the contract were unacceptable since they were too unfavorable to the immigrant. These conditions were changed. But knowing that almost all colonization efforts in the United States have failed, I did not have the courage to openly favor the project. Despite the fear of failure, 562 Italians have been brought to that place. The owner Corbin invites me to

²⁷ ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 3 Vescovo Fitzgerald, Bandini to Eminenza (Satolli), New York, December 5, 1895 (11), Bandini to Revmo Monsignore (Rooker), N.Y., December 6, 1895 (14). See William J. Lallou, *The Fifty Years of the Apostolic Delegation, Washington, D.C.: 1893-1943* (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1943), 19.

visit the place, at his expense, and promises to build churches, homes, school etc.

Bandini did not list the unfavorable conditions in the contract that were unacceptable or how they were changed. He concluded that Cardinal Satolli wanted him to visit the place as soon as possible, clearly implying his support for that appointment, and suggested that Zaboglio could take his place in New York.²⁸

The next day, in a letter marked “private,” Bandini informed Zaboglio that Satolli wanted him to go to Arkansas soon to aid and see the new Italian colony and that he had asked Scalabrini to send a priest to Sunnyside. “Then having reflected that both the owner and government officials are on friendly terms with me, I thought that it would be necessary that I myself go there.” He added that “If Mgr Scalabrini will send a priest, he could be temporarily assigned elsewhere, until it can be seen if the colony is a fact or a bust.” As soon as he got back in New York on December 11, Bandini claimed that he got a telegram with the message “Send at once priest must speak English he will be welcome.” He did not say who had sent the telegram but told Satolli that he saw this as “a call of God” and that he had written to Zaboglio about going to Arkansas.²⁹ The urgency in having a priest was due to the fact that many newly-arrived families at Sunnyside demanded a Catholic priest. Oldrini informed Ambassador Fava that Corbin had telegraphed him that Bandini had presented

²⁸ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Revma (Scalabrini), Washington, D.C., December 10, 1895. See AANY, G-15, Fitzgerald to Corrigan, Little Rock, Ark., September 5, 1896, which refers to Corrigan’s recent letter and states that he has decided to question Bandini, about whom he had not inquired when the latter first arrived in his diocese. See ADLR, PBF, Personal Visitation, Tontitown, Ark., February 9, 1914, where Fr. Peter Bandini, in reply to the question “Were you ever a novice or member of any order or congregation?” wrote “Yes but never professed.”

²⁹ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Rev e caro Padre (Zaboglio), Philadelphia, December 11, 1895 (private); ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 3 Vescovo Fitzgerald, Bandini to Eminenza (Satolli), N.Y., December 11, 1895 (16).

himself to him offering his services in the name of Cardinal Satolli. Corbin asked Bandini to write to Oldrini, which he did. Oldrini then telegraphed Bandini asking for a young priest who knew English well. This was the first time that Bandini was mentioned in the historical archives of the Italian foreign ministry as regards Sunnyside. That, the fact that Corbin asked Bandini to write to Oldrini, and the latter's request for a young priest who knew English well implied that the choice of priest for the colony was still not settled. Bandini at this point was 43 years old and probably not considered "young." In fact, Scalabrini had informed Satolli on December 16, 1895, that Sunnyside administrators, through Ruspoli, were in contact with Fr. Amos Vincenzo Astorri, a former Scalabrinian.³⁰

Two days before Christmas, Bandini told Zaboglio that he needed to go to Arkansas after the January 5, 1896, ceremony in Baltimore's Old Cathedral where Cardinal Satolli was to receive the red biretta, so as to be back in New York by the end of January or early February. Writing from Baltimore in early January, where he had gone to attend the Satolli ceremony, Bandini told Zaboglio that the cardinal had asked him when he planned to go to Sunnyside. He replied that he would go the week of January 13. Satolli informed him that Scalabrini had decided to recommend the ex-Scalabrinian Fr. Astorri, who had served as an assistant at Sacred Heart Church in the North End of Boston, as a representative of the Raphael Society there, and in other parishes, for the Arkansas position. Satolli asked Bandini if Astorri was a prudent man and able to deal with such a new colony. Given the latter's previous experience in several assignments, Bandini said that he was a good priest but could not vouch for his prudence or know how. The cardinal suggested that Zaboglio could modify Scalabrini's plan.³¹

³⁰ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Fava, Sunny Side, Arkansas, December 12, 1895, rough draft, R. Amb. (Fava) to Signor Min. (Blanc), Washington, December 28, 1895; ASV, sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 3 Vescovo Fitzgerald, Scalabrini to Eminenza Rma (Satolli), Piacenza, December 16, 1895 (18).

³¹ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Revdo e caro p (Zaboglio), New York, December 23, 1895 and

Zaboglio, citing letters he had recently received from Bandini, informed Satolli that he could not move to New York, as Bandini had requested. Moreover, he had no priest who could replace Bandini during his absence. But he said that he was willing to let him go for a while. At the same time, he opposed Astorri's reentry into any Scalabrinian mission because of problems he had in New Haven, Providence, and Boston. He also pointed out that Bandini had Fr. Felice Sandri, who had been suspended by Corrigan, preach for the Christmas novena at his church.³² On July 24, 1896, a 48 year old woman wrote a long rambling letter to Pope Leo XIII charging the Scalabrinians, especially Fr. Sandri, with immorality. Cardinal Ledóchowski, prefect of Propaganda Fide, referred the matter to Corrigan, who had suspended Sandri due to his conduct.³³

To strengthen his claim on the Sunnyside appointment, Bandini probably urged Corbin to contact Satolli, which he did on January 10, 1896. Corbin included a copy of a letter he had just sent to Ruspoli, with whom he had partnered on the Sunnyside investment. He told the cardinal that he had several interviews with Bandini, "whom I like very much," and wanted him to go to Sunnyside. The newly-arrived colonists, he noted, are all Catholics "and as I am exceedingly anxious to make a success of this new departure, desire to do everything I possibly can, in every direction, to make them comfortable and

Baltimore, January 5, 1896. See Lallou, *The Fifty Years of the Apostolic Delegation*, 19.

³² ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Zaboglio to Eminenza (Satolli), New Haven Ct., January 7, 1896 (149-151), Satolli to Zaboglio, January 15, 1896 (155), where he referred to Zaboglio's letters of January 7 and 11 and agreed that Astorri was a poor choice for Sunnyside. See AGS, DH 02, rough draft, Zaboglio to Satolli, New Haven, Connecticut, January 7, 1896, Satolli to Zaboglio, Washington, D.C., January 15, 1896. On Astorri, see Scalabrini to Astorri, April 6, June 18 and August 6, 1894, Scalabrini to Zaboglio, July 28, 1895, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 2:37-42, 85-86; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 409 (#782), 410 (#786).

³³ APF, NS, vol. 332 (1905), rubr. 153, ff. 92-97, Rapesta to Santissimo Papa L XIII, New York, July 24, 1896, ff. 98, Ledóchowski to Corrigan, Rome, July 31, 1896, ff. 99-100, Corrigan to Ledóchowski, New York, August 14, 1896.

happy.” Corbin added that he will leave for Sunnyside on Saturday, January 11, and asked Satolli to put in a good word for Bandini. The previous day he had contacted Ruspoli “I have cabled you to-day the following message: ‘Have arranged for Priest Sunny Side. Father Bandini entirely agreeable. Don’t send any other.’” Bandini, he told Ruspoli, “would be the best man we could possibly have to locate at Sunny Side...to engineer the new colony.” Oldrini, he concluded, will return to the plantation tomorrow, Friday January 10, and Bandini plans to leave on Tuesday, January 14.³⁴

Zaboglio, despite bad conditions at Bandini’s house and the fact that he had the suspended Fr. Sandri preach for the Christmas novena, kept insisting that he remain in New York to take care of his church and its growing debt. Bandini, he mentioned to Scalabrini, hides behind Satolli, although he has warned the latter about him. He felt that it would be best if Bandini left the congregation, but who would assume his debts? Zaboglio was not interested in taking on Bandini’s parish and believed that it would be difficult to find somebody else willing to do so, given its financial problems.³⁵ Despite Zaboglio’s reservations, Bandini let him know that Corbin had left for Sunnyside on Saturday, January 11, and that he already had a ticket and would leave on Tuesday, January 14, for his first documented visit to Sunnyside, arriving there on Saturday, January 18. On Wednesday, January 15, Bandini stopped in Washington on his way to Arkansas to plant his mission. He told Satolli that he would be there until the start of Lent, that he had found a replacement for the New York church, and that he would not renew his vows but remain in New York long enough to take care of parish matters.

³⁴ ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Corbin to Satolli, New York, January 10, 1896 (includes Corbin to Dear Prince (Ruspoli), January 9, 1896) (145-148).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Zaboglio to Eminenza (Satolli), New Haven, Conn., January 11, 1896 (152-153); Zaboglio to Scalabrini, New Haven, Conn., January 12 and March 13, 1896, in Francesconi, *Storia*, II: 220-23. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:409 (#783).

Satolli relayed this information to Zaboglio.³⁶

Bandini arrived at Greenville, Mississippi, on Friday morning, January 17. He telegraphed the local bishop and got the reply “all faculties granted.” He then took Corbin’s boat and arrived at his house at night. That same night, Corbin bought a church built long ago on his property by black Protestants. Saturday morning he bought another one, to keep Protestant churches from the Italians. Then Bandini visited a large number of Italian families. “They are all good families,” he told Cardinal Satolli in what was his first of many detailed reports on Sunnyside. “To satisfy them they had to apportion them by province. So that first there are some Roman families, then some from Senigallia, Ancona, Ravenna, Bologna, Modena, and finally Vicenza. The last families are numerous and the very best.” He also described to Satolli the houses and the health of the colonists:

The location is a magic of beauty. The houses are of wood sawn at the mill (from tree branches). They are large, comfortable and clean. They are painted in white and make a beautiful contrast with the woods around them and the vegetation in the fields. Inside they have tables and beds, so that they can be called objects of luxury for peasants who surely never had them in Italy. With the many with whom I have spoken, I have noticed that they are all satisfied...

The health of the colonists is good and none are seriously ill. No one recalls seeing any flooding and it seems very difficult since the Mississippi River

³⁶ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Zaboglio, New York, January 13, 1896, Satolli to Zaboglio, Washington, D.C., January 15, 1896. See ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Satolli to Zaboglio, January 15, 1896 (155); ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), Sunny Side, Ark., January 20, 1896; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 409 (#785), 410 (#786).

usually floods the lands of the opposite shore, where they protect themselves with dikes. In fact all the lands of Sunny Side were provided with very high dikes to avoid the flooding that goes to the opposite shore from flowing to Sunny Side.

On Sunday, he celebrated Mass and baptized two babies. He had to put off two weddings until he had registered with the county. He told Satolli that he hoped to see the bishop in Little Rock early the following week. He also sent him a letter signed by the colonists requesting a Catholic church and said that he planned to see him on his way back to New York.³⁷ He later informed the apostolic delegate that he was well received by Bishop Fitzgerald and that Sunnyside will be the biggest parish in the diocese, which has some 10,000 Catholics. He also noted that the health of the colonists was good and that the only concern was water, especially in the summer, unless it was boiled. "However," he added, "a remedy for this has begun with pumps for every three houses, and Mr. Corbin is ready for any vigorous means so as to assure good water besides rainwater." He informed the cardinal that he will leave for New York Sunday of the following week, where he planned to stay long enough to handle things there.³⁸

Bandini also wrote to Ambassador Fava about the "excellent impression that I have formed in visiting the colony of Sunnyside. If an Italian colony is possible in the United States" he added, "it is surely the one at Sunnyside and it cannot do less than be a great success in the near future." Much of the merit and praise, he said,

³⁷ ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Bandini to Eminenza Revma (Satolli), Sunny Side, Ark., January 20 and 21 (includes Immigrants to Illmi e Reverendissimi Superiori Ecclesiastici, Sunny Side, Ark., December 28, 1895), Satolli to Bandini, January 28, 1896 (156-62). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 410 (#787-88, 791).

³⁸ ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Bandini to Eminenza (Satolli), Sunny Side, Ark., February 7, 1896 (164). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:411 (#794).



Bishop Edward M. Fitzgerald of Little Rock, AR; Archives of the Diocese of Little Rock, AR.

was due to Oldrini's efforts and felt bad that he will leave the colony for some time. He did not mention his reservations about Oldrini's hostility toward the church. Fava thanked Bandini for his report and assured him that any further information will be appreciated.³⁹ Writing

³⁹ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Bandini to Eccellenza (Fava), Sunny Side,

from Sunnyside, he told Zaboglio that he was sorry that the latter had opposed him. Satolli, he explained, could not refuse to ask him to leave New York, given his interest in the colony. "On my own whim (even though I have worked for two years, to see to the formation of a colony, that would be a model and the spark for forming others) I would not have moved." He told him that "I have arrived in that place and I find the matter much more important than what I had thought. The truth is that it is not enough to be simply a priest, to be able to do something good in this colony. It is also true," he added, "that much good work and sacrifice will be needed in that wilderness. But this is necessary and it will assure the well-being of the colony, and I feel ready to submit to this. The result will be good for all. If not, I will have always spent my life well for the well being of many poor souls." He added that when his five-year commitment to the congregation will be completed, he will not renew it. Besides, he needed mental rest. Zaboglio, anxious about Bandini's parish, wanted to know when he will return to New York. Bandini responded that he planned to be back in New York by Wednesday, February 19, though he actually returned Saturday morning, February 15. One of his goals was to help find a replacement for a parish with a \$2000 debt.⁴⁰ In late February, Scalabrini confirmed Bandini's departure from the congregation:

Fr. Bandini has completed his five years and is now free. I never liked his way of operating. Let him go, but only after he has put in full order with the Archbishop the things relating to his administration. He has never been accountable to me or Vicentini, claiming that as Secretary of the Society of St. Raphael he was

Ark., January 20, 1896, rough draft, Fava to Bandini, Washington, January 26 and April 7, 1896; Papini to R. Ambasciata (Fava), New Orleans, April 13, 1896, rough draft, Ro. Ambascia. (Fava) to Signor Ministro (Blanc), Washington, April 17, 1896.

⁴⁰ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Rev e caro Padre (Zaboglio), Sunny Side, Arkansas, January 21 and February 10, 1896, Zaboglio to Molto Reverendo Padre (Bandini), New York, February 6, 1896, Strumia to Zaboglio, New York, February 16, 1896.

accountable only to the Archbishop. Let's then be done with him. I am of the opinion that we should not accept Bandini's church, so full of debts. Let the Archbishop assign it to a person he trusts, as he states in the letter I enclose for your information.⁴¹

Bandini's decision to leave the congregation and go to Arkansas left the problem of what to do with Our Lady of Pompei and the St. Raphael Society in the hands of Zaboglio and the archbishop. On March 6, 1896, Zaboglio informed Corrigan that "In a few days I will let Your Excellency know if we can or cannot accept it." The apostolic delegate suggested to Corrigan that his nephew Anacleto Ubaldo, a Franciscan, take over the parish. The latter thanked his uncle for his confidence in him but said in front of Bandini and the vicar general, Bishop John Farley, that he could not accept the offer due to a lack of priests.⁴² About two weeks before Palm Sunday, which that year fell on March 29, Bandini asked Satolli whether Zaboglio could be directed to temporarily take responsibility for the church. Concerned about the failure to find a replacement for Bandini, who was about to leave, Corrigan admitted to Satolli that it will be difficult to maintain that church, but that he will do his best so that the congregation, already established, did not suffer spiritually.⁴³

On March 19, 1896, Bandini informed Archbishop Corrigan directly of his decision to retire from his position. He noted that on March 11, 1896, "my obligation contracted with the Congregation of Mgr Scalabrini was over and consequently I retire." As a result, he

⁴¹ Scalabrini to Zaboglio, Piacenza, February 25, 1896, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 2:92. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 411 (#798).

⁴² AANY, G-12, Zaboglio to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Corrigan), New York, March 6, 1896; ACMS, 005, box 1, Satolli to Eccellenza Revma (Corrigan), Washington, D.C., March 17, 1896; ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Anacleto to Eminentissimo Principe (Satolli), New York, March 18, 1896 (165).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Eminenza (Satolli), New York, March 18, 1896 (167), Corrigan to Satolli, New York, March 19, 1896 (168). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 411 (#799).

could not expect to be employed in a mission of the congregation. He added that "Whatever I did on these five years I did it as a member of a Congregation, to the Congregation then belongs everything I have done." In an attempt to distance himself from his former mission's financial problems and put that burden on the congregation, he stated that "By my retiring the Church and the house I worked in simply remains in the hands of the Congregation. The Congregation may perhaps dispose of it the best way they can, that's none of my business. I am out, they must be in." Bishop Farley had no sympathy for Bandini's attempt to put the financial burden of his mission on the congregation. Instead, in a letter to Cardinal Satolli, he put the parish's financial problems squarely on Bandini's shoulders: "Fr. Bandini was utterly incompetent as an administrator. We had to pay several thousand dollars of his debts from time to time since he took charge. And he left this diocese against my express prohibition, leaving \$1200 of debt for us to pay."⁴⁴

Bandini left New York on Friday evening, March 20, leaving his church in the hands of several priests. He wrote Farley that he had to help the Italians at Sunnyside celebrate Easter, Sunday April 5, and, he told Satolli that the financial problems at Our Lady of Pompei were more apparent than real.⁴⁵ Zaboglio informed Satolli that Farley and Miss Annie Leary had offered their help if the congregation took over the church, which it reluctantly did. The fact that, as previously noted, the home at 113 Waverly Place was sold on April 7, 1896, probably also helped convince Zaboglio to assume responsibility for Our Lady of Pompei and the mission at the port.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ AANY, G-11, Bandini to Mt. Rev. Archbishop (Corrigan), New York, March 19, 1896; ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Farley to Satolli, New York, April 15, 1896 (201-204).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Eminenza Revma (Satolli), March 22, 1896 (170-73). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 412 (#800).

⁴⁶ ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Zaboglio to Eminentissimo Principe (Satolli), New York, March 21, 1896 (175-176), Farley to

Almost seven years after he had left New York, Bandini sent Bishop Scalabrini a 19 page “Brief account on the Colony of Tontitown, Ark. and its origin” in which he described his recollection of events in both Sunnyside and Tontitown. He dictated the account, published in full for the first time in this study in an English translation edited for style but not content, to one of his students to “serve as an example of what our children do so as not to forget the Italian [language].”⁴⁷ Bandini’s account had been solicited by Bishop Scalabrini in response to an urgent request on December 21, 1901, by Senator Luigi Bodio, secretary general of the Commissariat of Emigration, for a historical report on the activities of his missionaries. At the time, the commissariat was considering approving funds requested for the congregation’s immigrant shelter in New York. Bodio wanted to publish the report in the first number of the bulletin of the commissariat to be published at the beginning of 1902.⁴⁸ The report, based on information submitted by the Marchese Volpe Landi, was published in the first issue of the *Bollettino dell’Emigrazione* for 1903. It gave information on the Scalabrinian congregation and the New York St. Raphael Society. The report had two attachments. The first listed the congregation’s missions in the United States and

Satolli, New York, April 24, 1896 (205-06), Zaboglio to Illustrissimo e Reverendissimo Monsignore (Sbaretto), New York, April 25 and 28 (207-12), May 4 and 25 (215-18), 1896. See AANY, G-15, Farley to My dear Archbishop (Corrigan), New York, April 25 and May 28, 1896; AGS, EB 02, Zaboglio to Scalabrini, May 15, 1897 (transcript); Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 412 (#805), 413 (#807, 809, 811); Scalabrini to Zaboglio, May 23, 1896, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 2:93; Zaboglio to Scalabrini, New York, July 30, 1896, in Francesconi, *Storia*, II:228-29. For the St. Raphael Society under Zaboglio, see Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 147-53.

⁴⁷ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendma (Scalabrini), Tontitown, Ark., November 10, 1902, and “Breve cenno.” See appendix II for an English version of Bandini’s account.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, RC 01, Bodio to Scalabrini, Rome, December 21, 1901, DH 02, Bandini to Scalabrini, Tontitown, Ark., October 11 and December 9, 1902; Scalabrini to Visconti Venosta, March 10 and August, 1900, in Scalabrini, *Scritti*, 2:167-68, 185-87. See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 440 (#916), 457 (#975).

included Tontitown, with Bandini as superior. The second gave an edited abbreviated version of Bandini's account on Tontitown. The "Brief account" was Bandini's most comprehensive description of his involvement in both Sunnyside and Tontitown in the earliest years. Because of its significance, it will be cited piecemeal in appropriate parts of this study and as a whole document in appendix II.⁴⁹

The "Brief account" began with a description of how and why he got involved with the Sunnyside colony:

It is six years since about 200 families were transported directly from Italy by New York financial millionaire Mr. Corbin, who together with Prince Ruspoli, Mayor of Rome, had formed a colonization plan. They were settled in Sunny Side, Chicot County, state of Arkansas. It was difficult to choose land more rich and productive and at the same time a more attractive place. On one side rises the majestic Mississippi ploughed by large steamboats and by sailing ships full of goods and travelers. On the other side the plantation is almost entirely surrounded by the very large lake Chicot, 22 miles long, also busy with many small rowing boats and small steamboats. The families were arriving and taking possession of the different and small fields assigned them, when Corbin himself wanted one day to speak to me and interest me so that I would take some part in the foundation of that Colony. It did not take much to persuade me

⁴⁹ AGS, RC 01, Volpe Landi, Copia della relazione trasmessa all'on. Senatore Commend.re Luigi Bodio, Segretario Generale dell'emigrazione, Piacenza, December 8, 1902; (Marchese) Volpe Landi, "Sulla associazione detta di *San Raffaele* per la protezione degli immigranti italiani negli Stati Uniti," *Boll. Emig.* 1 (1903): 56-62. See ASDMAE, busta 174, fasc. 3920, Bandini to A Sua Eccellenza L'Ambasciatore (Mayor des Planches), Tontitown, Ark., June 8, 1903, rough draft, Mayor des Planches to Bandini, Washington, June 26, 1903; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II: 461 (#1003).

since I myself had understood the absolute necessity of sending our immigrants to the fields if one truly wished to provide for their salvation and I longed and dreamed a thousand plans so as to form a stable and well-off Italian Colony; plans however that I did not see a way of realizing for the lack of material means. I had many invitations and offers before this one, but having studied the conditions of the contracts I found them disadvantageous to the Italians and rejected them. The one by Corbin satisfied me.⁵⁰

“Austin Corbin’s Colony”

Italian ambassador Fava recalled Corbin’s ambitious and apparently generous plans for Sunnyside:

As soon as I succeeded in establishing and activating at Ellis Island the Office of assistance mentioned above [Italian Bureau], the banker Corbin of New York...came to tell me that, being the owner of very large cotton plantations on the Mississippi, he wanted to colonize with Italian farmers the one at Sunny Side irrigated by the great river. He invited me to visit it with him. He told me that it was his intention to divide a part of that plantation into many more or less large lots of land to be cultivated by more or less large families; of building on each lot farmhouses for three, four, even up to six persons; of also giving the colonists a sufficiently elevated daily wage, the necessary agricultural instruments and machines, the livestock, draft animals, seeds, etc., and to establish on the plantation a large farmhouse; of digging two

⁵⁰ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, “Breve cenno,” 1-2.

artesian wells so as not to force the colonists to go to draw and drink the water of the Mississippi; to open a primary school with Italian books and teachers; of building a Catholic church served by an Italian priest; of founding a pharmacy led by a doctor; and finally of establishing a savings bank for the use of those colonists who would want to deposit in it their savings at a 6% interest. A narrow-gauge railway already ploughed the entire plantation to transport to the nearby station the bales of cotton compressed and tied by powerful steam machines.

After 20 years the various colonists who would have worked on the plantation would have become owners of the lots of land they cultivated, of the houses, the livestock, the tools, the animals attached to the same lots, and the existing buildings on the plantation would have become the common property of the colony after 20 years.⁵¹

The pamphlet from the mayor of Rome about Corbin's Arkansas colony that persuaded Tony Fiori's family from Recoaro to move to Sunnyside rather than South America was cited in a full and literal translation in the December 1, 1895, edition of New Orleans' *The Daily Picayune*. Scattered in the portions of Italy from which the colonists came, it described the plantation, its location, climate, and its many assets in very favorable terms. It noted that "Large families will have the privilege of establishing themselves on lots of twenty-five acres with double colonial houses." The choice of lot from one to 250, it stated, "will be based alone on the order of dates of application for purchase followed by contract." It listed various advantages provided by the company "with the view of furthering, as much as possible, the

⁵¹ Fava, "Le Colonie Agricole Italiane," 466. See ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), Sunny Side, Arkansas, November 21, 1895.



Austin Corbin; Web; Austin Corbin

interests of the colonists, and for their moral and material benefits..." It added that the "object of the company is, aside from the development of its own legitimate interests, to create a model Italian colony where the families of Italian parents may immigrate to better their conditions and find in the State of Arkansas...an important agricultural center, without fear or uncertainty for the morrow." The pamphlet further specified that the Anchor Line Steamboat Company, which owns more than three-fourths of the plantation and manages it, would give them special rates and that it was "negotiating with the State of Arkansas

for the construction of a railway trunk line twenty miles to the west, for the purpose of putting Sunny Side in communication with the west and in direct communication with the company's headquarters, which will be in the west."⁵² The Anchor Line's steamers connected New Orleans, Memphis, and St. Louis via the Mississippi. According to the *New York Sun*, in an article titled "Austin Corbin's Colony," he planned to build a railroad westward from Sunnyside via Hamburg to the Texas border, giving the plantation a water outlet as well as a railroad link to the Southwest.⁵³

MELETTA & STODDART, AGENTS, 319 CANOND ST., NEW ORLEANS

LIST OF PASSENGERS.
(UNDER "THE PASSENGER ACT, 1882.")

Mrs. Chabot, Master of the *Fr. St. Chateau Yquem*, do solemnly, sincerely List or Manifest, subscribed by me, and now delivered by me to the Collector of the Customs of the Port of *Genoa Italy*, from which it is truly designated the age, sex, calling, country of citizenship, native country, intended destination or location, and date and cause of death of passengers, as required by the "Passenger Act of 1882," with reference to the intention of each alien passenger as to a protracted sojourn in this country. *So help me God*

November 30th 1895

Lawford, Collector. whereof *Jules Chabot* is Master, from *Italy*

NAME	AGE		SEX	CALLING	The Country of which they are Citizens	Native Country	Intended Destination or Location	No. of Family or Group
	Years	Months						
<i>Ornello</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>laborer</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Arkansas</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Quattrini</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>laborer</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Arkansas</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Anna</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>female</i>	<i>laborer</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Arkansas</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Polonice</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>female</i>	<i>laborer</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Arkansas</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Anna</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>female</i>	<i>laborer</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Arkansas</i>	<i>1</i>

List of Passengers, Chateau Yquem, November 30, 1895; Ancestry Library Edition, Historical Records.

⁵² "The Italians Leave for Arkansas Homes," *The Daily Picayune*, December 1, 1895, 11. See ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 3 Vescovo Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald to Rooker, Little Rock, Ark., December 4, 1895 (includes attachment) (10).

⁵³ ASDMAE, LSRD, Busta 110, fasc. 2194, newspaper clipping, "Austin Corbin's Colony. Collapse of His Plan to Settle Italians in Arkansas," *The Sun* (New York), January 21, 1898. See "Corbin's Dagoes," *The Arkansas Gazette*, December 10, 1895, 1.

On November 8, 1895, 98 Italian families, 30 from the Marche, 34 from Emilia, and 34 from Veneto (province of Vicenza), for a total of 540 persons including many children, left Genoa on the Chateau Yquem.⁵⁴ The event received extensive newspaper coverage.⁵⁵ An account of the voyage, which chronicled key events on a daily basis, noted that it had its rough as well as good days. The Chateau Yquem arrived at New Orleans the morning of Friday, November 29, 1895. "All day was spent by inspection of the vessel, examinations by the Internal Revenue Department Officers, a visit of the Italian Consul, examinations by the Medical and Health authorities, and then we disembarked." The immigrants loaded their baggage on the Anchor line vessel, City of Hickman, owned by Corbin, and arrived at Sunnyside, accompanied by Oldrini, on the morning of Wednesday, December 4.⁵⁶ At their request, the lots and houses were divided not by date of application for purchase but by their province of origin, i.e.,

⁵⁴ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, newspaper clipping, "Corbin's 700 Italians," *The World* (New York), November 21, 1895, 1, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), Sunny Side, Arkansas, December 7, 1895; Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 144.

⁵⁵ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Fava, Sunny Side, Arkansas, November 22, 1895, newspaper clippings, "Austin Corbin's Colony," *The World* (New York), November 22, 1895, "Una Colonia Agricola Italiana a Sunnyside nell'Arkansas," *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* (New York), November 22, 1895, "Colonizzazione?" *L'Araldo Italiano* (New York), November 23, 1895, "Waiting for the Chateau Yquem," *The World* (New York), November 29, 1895, C. A. Andrina, "A proposito di Colonizzazione" *Avanti* (New York), December 22, 1895, 1.

⁵⁶ SMOH, AC, Relazione del Viaggio degli emigranti Italiani per Sunny Side; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), New Orleans, November 29, 1895, Papini to Fava, New Orleans, December 2, 1895. See ALE, HR, Immigration & Travel, New Orleans Passenger Lists, 1813-1945, "Chateau Yquem," November 30, 1895 (accessed 10/17/2013); U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:505; Joseph Logsdon, "Immigration through the Port of New Orleans" and Randall M. Miller, "Immigration through the Port of New Orleans": A Comment," in *Forgotten Doors. The Other Ports of Entry to the United States*, ed. M. Mark Stolarik (Philadelphia: The Balch Institute Press, 1988), 105-42.

Marche, Emilia, and Veneto.⁵⁷ According to a March 15, 1897, report Oldrini submitted to Ambassador Fava, 100 families composed of 544 persons arrived that day, two more families and four more individuals than the above numbers given by Pilotti. 279 were adults above 16 and 265 were children between the ages of one and sixteen. In 1896, the immigrants' first full year at Sunnyside, there were among them 25 births and 23 deaths. 10 adults and 13 infants and children died mostly from "accidents or ordinary diseases."⁵⁸

In January 1896 Oldrini resigned from his position at the Italian Bureau in order to work for the Sunnyside Company.⁵⁹ With his departure from Sunnyside, Ambassador Fava turned to Bandini, who left New York on March 20 and arrived at the colony several days later, for information on developments at the colony.⁶⁰ At Sunnyside, Bandini resided with the Alexandro Alpe family.⁶¹ On March 9, 1896, Italian Undersecretary of State Giulio Adamoli informed Ambassador Fava that the king of Italy, in a decree dated January 16, 1896, had named Austin Corbin Knight of the Order of the Crown of Italy in recognition of his work on behalf of Italian colonization in the United States. Corbin graciously accepted the honor, telling Fava on May 25:

⁵⁷ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), Sunny Side, Arkansas, December 12, 1895; rough drafts, R. Amb. (Fava) to Signor Min. (Blanc) and Signor Professore (Oldrini), Washington, December 28, 1895.

⁵⁸ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Oldrini to Fava, New York, March 15, 1897 (copy). See *ibid.*, fasc. 2193, Oldrini to Mio Caro Barone (Fava), New York, August 3, 1896.

⁵⁹ Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 146-48.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 150. See ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Vacrai to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, March 21, 1896, rough draft, Ro. Ambasciatore (Fava) to Signor Ministro (Caetani), Washington, April 7, 1896, rough draft, R. Ambasciatore (Fava) to Signor Reggente (Papini), Washington, April 7, 1896, rough draft, R. Amb. (Fava) to Bandini, Washington, April 7, 1896, Bandini to Ro. Ambasciatore (Fava), Sunny Side, Ark., April 13, 1896 (transcribed copy).

⁶¹ Elizabeth O. Borgognoni, comp. and ed., *Our Lady of the Lake Church, Lake Village, Arkansas, Centennial, 1866-1970* (Lake Village, Arkansas: Our Lady of the Lake Church, 1970), 7.

“My desire to get off the papers for the Decoration in proper order, must be my excuse for this long delay. I wanted to do and write, just the right thing, and I hope I have. If I have not, I must still throw myself upon your kind offices to put me right, and I will do it over again.”⁶²

Problems at Sunnyside

On his first visit to Sunnyside, Bandini had told Cardinal Satolli that water was a concern, especially in the summer, unless it was boiled. But he assured the cardinal that “a remedy for this has begun with pumps for every three houses, and Mr. Corbin is ready for any vigorous means so as to assure good water besides rainwater.”⁶³ However, on May 25 he informed Fava that with the coming of the summer heat, marsh fevers have appeared, but so far without any fatal consequence.⁶⁴ In early June Bandini informed Satolli that May had been a difficult month and that many colonists had gotten the fever from the mosquitoes in the swamps around Lake Chicot.⁶⁵ Milani has pointed out “that two major difficulties hampered the progress of the colony - fear of disease and the economic stress of learning new farming techniques in the South.” But the colonists also faced other difficulties:

First, the Sunnyside managers did not speak Italian

⁶² ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 78, fasc. 1142, Adamoli to Fava, Rome, March 9, 1896, rough draft, Fava to Corbin, Washington, May 17, 1896 (2 letters), telegrams, Corbin to Fava, New York, May 18 and 22, 1896, Corbin to Fava, May 25, 1896, rough draft, Fava to Ro. Min. Aff. Esteri (Caetani), Washington, May 1896.

⁶³ ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Bandini to Eminenza (Satolli), Sunny Side, Ark., February 7, 1896 (164). See Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, II:411 (#794).

⁶⁴ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Bandini to Eccellenza (Fava), Sunny Side, Ark., May 25, 1896 (2 letters), rough draft, Fava to Signor Mini. (Caetani), Washington, June 1, 1896, rough draft, Fava to Revdo Padre (Bandini), Washington, June 1, 1896, Bonin to Fava, Rome, June 19, 1896.

⁶⁵ ASV, DAUS, sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Bandini to Eminenza (Satolli), Sunny Side, Arkansas, June 3, 1896 (220-221); Follens, “Ozark Vineyards,” 26.

and would not be able to understand the immigrants' concerns and needs. Furthermore, the immigrants found that the Sunnyside Company had less extra work available than had been promised. They would have to rely on company advances - half in cash and half in commissary paper -for their livelihoods until the first cotton crop came in. Some immigrants complained that there was no price differential for less productive land being sold to them. The Italians also discovered that the water supply was unsanitary...The installation of filters was the only remedy offered by the company in spite of requests to provide artesian wells.⁶⁶



Archbishop Francesco Satolli; *The Catholic Church in the United States of America*, I: 505.

⁶⁶ Milani, "Marchigiani and Veneti," 27 and "Peonage at Sunnyside," 32. See Martellini, *Fra Sunny Side e la Nueva Marca*. 237-38.

As Follens would later point out, despite the “business-like precision” with which Corbin had planned his colony, there were things that he could not have foreseen. The most important was his unexpected death six months after the colony had been started. Moreover, his heirs took little interest in the colony.⁶⁷ Corbin’s death at almost age 69 at his Newport, New Hampshire, home on Thursday June 4, 1896, after being thrown from his carriage when the horses bolted and as planting season was starting, compounded the problem caused by the fever and proved disastrous for a colony that had started with so much promise.⁶⁸ Corbin’s remains were taken to New York, where a private funeral was scheduled to be held from his residence at 425 Fifth Avenue on Monday, June 8.⁶⁹ The public funeral was held on Tuesday, June 9, at St. Bartholomew’s Protestant Episcopal Church on Madison and 44th Street. He was buried at Woodlawn Cemetery beside his daughter.⁷⁰ Bandini’s “Brief account” described the impact on Sunnyside of Corbin’s sudden and unexpected death this way:

Everything was proceeding with universal satisfaction and no one doubted that in a very short time Sunny Side would have become a very thriving Italian Colony of some thousands of families, when the almost sudden death of Corbin, who did not leave any disposition for the Colony, the unwillingness of his heirs to continue the colonization on the plan conceived by him, and the breaking of the malarial fever, which cut down numerous victims, placed such confusion and fear in the colonists that many fled in a disorderly way. A

⁶⁷ Follens, “Ozark Vineyards,” 26.

⁶⁸ “Austin Corbin Dead” and “Mr. Corbin’s Career,” *NYT*, June 5, 1896, 1, 8; Milani, “Peonage at Sunnyside,” 32.

⁶⁹ “Remains to be Taken to New York,” *The Boston Daily Globe*, June 6, 1896, 4; “The Remains of Austin Corbin,” *NYT*, June 6, 1896, 1; “Austin Corbin Body Here,” *NYT*, June 7, 1896, 5.

⁷⁰ “Funeral of Austin Corbin,” *NYT*, June 8 and 9, 1896, 2.

large part, trusting land and transportation agents, were miserably robbed and betrayed by them.⁷¹

Corbin's passing did not keep the colony from celebrating the closing exercises of the school year and its first picnic on Monday June 29, the feast of St. Peter. The *Greenville Times* reported that the students read and sang in English and Italian and an address in English was delivered to their pastor on the feast of his patron saint. The Sunnyside band, composed of the colony's young members, gave its first public performance and "accompanied the children and visitors on a special train from the school to the Sunny-Side picnic ground, where tables were laden with bread, fruit, lemonade etc., for four hundred people."⁷²



Bandini at Sunnyside (detail); Bastianelli Collection/Tontitown Historical Museum.

⁷¹ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, "Breve cenno," 3-4.

⁷² "From Sunny Side Arkansas," *Greenville Times*, July 7, 1896. See Young, "So Big, This Little Place", 8; ASV, DAUS, Sez. II - Stati Uniti, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Bandini to Revmo Monsignore (Sbaretti), Sunny Side, Arkansas, June 29, 1896 (222).

Even before Corbin's funeral, *The New York Times* speculated that George Stephen Edgell, who was married to his daughter Isabella, would take control of the properties in which Corbin had held a controlling interest. According to that newspaper, "For some years his son-in-law, Mr. George S. Edgell, has been associated with Mr. Corbin in business matters, and he is well qualified to carry out the plans and policy of the dead financier."⁷³ On July 2, Corbin's will was filed. His estate, estimated at \$10,000,000, was given entirely to his family. Power to sell and invest funds was given to the executors, i.e., his widow, George S. Edgell, and Austin Corbin, Jr.⁷⁴ The next day, Ambassador Fava expressed his concern to Foreign Minister Onorato Caetani regarding the contracts made by Corbin and the colonists and informed him that he planned to go to New York to personally point out the need to provide them with drinkable water as soon as possible.⁷⁵ Two weeks later, Edgell, referring to their recent conversation, told the ambassador "that the heirs of the late Mr. Corbin have at heart the success and welfare of the Italian colony which has been established at Sunny Side, and that it will be the purpose of the heirs to do all in their power toward making that success complete." He added "that we have done everything in our power to satisfy the colonists, and give them pure drinking water." Barrels to be cleaned and filled daily with Mississippi River water as well as special wells and pumps had been provided and the colonists had been ordered not to drink surface or bayou water. He had also told Ruspoli not to send additional colonists, pending the settlement of the estate.⁷⁶ However, the estate's heirs got

⁷³ "The Remains of Austin Corbin," *NYT*, June 6, 1896, 1; *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, XXXI, s.v. "Corbin, Austin."

⁷⁴ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, newspaper clipping, "Austin Corbin's Will Filed" *New York Herald*, July 3, 1896; "Austin Corbin's Will Filed," *NYT*, July 3, 1896, 9.

⁷⁵ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, rough draft, Regio Amb. (Fava) to Sig. Min. (Caetani), Washington, July 3, 1896.

⁷⁶ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Edgell to Fava, New York, July 15, 1896. See *ibid.*, rough draft, Fava to Signor Mi. (Visconti Venosta), Washington, July 18, 1896,

involved in litigation that delayed its settlement and matters dealing with Sunnyside.⁷⁷

Despite the assurances Edgell had given to Fava, the drainage project started by Corbin was not finished and “mosquitoes swarmed out of the swamps around Lake Chicot.” Deaths from malaria increased, leaving few families untouched. The railway scheme that was to connect Sunnyside with the Southwest was abandoned.⁷⁸ In August 1896 some of the colonists lodged complaints. Bandini met in New York with Consul General Girolamo Naselli and Edgell’s representative and reassured them that the complaints had been retracted.⁷⁹

In late summer 1896 Ruspoli made a second visit to Sunnyside and, under pressure to support the colonization project, gave a favorable report and permission for a second migration, a decision seconded by the Italian government.⁸⁰ In early December, he told Scalabrini that the cotton crop at Sunnyside had been excellent and that on the 17th about 100 families will depart from Genoa.⁸¹ In fact, a second group of 72 families, 400 individuals, left Genoa on the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse* on December 17, 1896, arriving in New York on December 29 and at

Bonin to Fava, Rome, July 23 and August 7, 1896; Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 149.

⁷⁷ See “Austin Corbin’s Estate,” *NYT*, October 28, 1897, 5; “Austin Corbin Estate,” *NYT*, December 22, 1903.

⁷⁸ Follens, “Ozark Vineyards,” 26; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, newspaper clipping, “Austin Corbin’s Colony. Collapse of His Plan to Settle Italians in Arkansas,” *The Sun* (New York), January 21, 1898.

⁷⁹ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, rough draft, Regio Ambasciatore (Fava) to Signor Reggente (Naselli), Washington, August 16, 1896, Oldrini to Caro Barone (Fava), New York, August 18 and 26, 1896, Naselli to Signor Barone (Fava), New York, August 20 and 24, 1896, fasc. 2194, Bonin to Fava, Rome, July 12, 1897.

⁸⁰ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, rough draft, Fava to Signor Min. (Visconti Venosta), Washington, October 11, 1896, Bonin to Fava, Rome, October 31, 1896. See Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 6-7; Milani, “Peonage at Sunnyside,” 32.

⁸¹ AGS, DH 02, Ruspoli to Monsignore Revmo (Scalabrini), Rome, December 8, 1896.

Sunnyside on January 5, 1897.⁸² Despite the confusion and fear that affected many colonists, making them leave in a disorderly way, Bandini believed that, with proper management, the colony had great potential:

A good number of families gathered around me, begging me not only not to want to abandon them but on the contrary to want to escort them to a healthier place, where in some way they could make a living. Besides, the climate of the plantation was not such that it could not in some way be remedied or adapted to, as experience has afterwards been able to demonstrate. If the new administration had been more favorable at that time to the Italians and had followed in Corbin's footsteps, perhaps the Colony of Sunny Side would still subsist and be prosperous. And if we had to move, it could have been done with greater consideration and without the after-effect of victims that the furious and disordered exodus brought about. But, on the one hand, the new administration appeared always to be more demanding and seemed to seek ways of freeing itself from the Colonists, on the other hand, in the second immigration various families had come that were not actually from the countryside but rather day laborers, already accustomed to noise and demonstrations, suspicious by nature, who did not know either how to consider or listen to a calm word. Nothing was left then but to bend oneself to events.⁸³

⁸² ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, rough draft, Fava to Signor Min. (Visconsti Venosta), Washington, January 8, 1897, Puccioni to Fava, Rome, January 8, 1897. For the passenger lists, see ALE, HR, Immigration & Travel, New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957, "Kaiser Wilhelm II," December 29, 1896 (accessed 10/17/2013). For Marco Ceola's 1896 passport and identification certificate, see Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*. See Milani, "Peonage at Sunnyside," 32.

⁸³ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, "Breve cenno," 4-6.

Bandini was not the only one to feel optimistic about the colony's potential. In response to Ambassador Fava's request for "information concerning the outcome of the first year of Italian Colonization of The Sunny Side Plantation," Corbin instructed Oldrini to "give the Baron [Fava] every information he wishes without reserve." Oldrini submitted the information for 1896 under three categories. The first category was "Health and Acclimation." He began by noting that it takes new settlers in the Mississippi River region "between two and three years" to adapt to the climate. Of the hundred families that settled at Sunnyside in December 1895, only "one or more members have actually been tried by acclimation last summer," referring to 1896. Moreover, "the Weekly and Monthly Reports of the physician attending the Italian colonists show that the character of the malarial spell has been lenient, and one that, with the exception of a limited number of cases only temporarily prevented the tried colonists to stand their work in the fields." The physician, a Dr. V. M. Johnson, who was "voluntarily furnished in 1896 by the [Sunny Side] Company without an obligation (together with the supply of all medicines)," had submitted 166 reports listing the number of visits from December 1895 to December 1896. It was his opinion that "after the second year of residence the colonists will undoubtedly stand the climate as well as the natives of the region" and "that the cause of most of their malarial cases during the past year resulted from the water which they had used." He recommended the use of artesian water. According to Oldrini, the colonists, as well as the colored people, drank pump water, considered healthy. The colonists "have a pump every two houses, but the case is that when in Summer a part of them gets dry, they drink any kind of water at hand, to their sure disadvantage." As noted above, 23 colonists died in 1896, 10 adults and thirteen infants, mostly as a result of "accidents or ordinary diseases." Only two deaths resulted from "endemic malarial causes, a boy of 12 and a young woman of 28, although both were suffering from pulmonary trouble and consumption."

The second category was “The Accounts for 1896 with the 100 Families.” Oldrini reported that “Out of the said 100 accounts, 62, or 2/3 came out on the credit side, and 38 on the debit side” during the first year of settlement. The average credit was \$99.10 and the average debit was \$59.87. This included the \$100 annuity due the Sunny Side Company per lot, provisions bought at the store, and money loaned or advanced to families interest-free by the company amounting to \$22,603, an average of \$226 per family. On top of that, the company paid the colonists \$9,775 for labor at 80¢ per day or an average of \$97 per family. “If added to the result of their crop [it] would bring all the accounts of the 38 families in debit, also on the credit side.” He gave an up-beat conclusion to this part of his report: “It is permitted to foresee a more profitable result for the second year, since the first 100 families will have no more debit on account of voyage, furniture, cows, etc.; especially if guided by experience, the colonists keep a more moderate account for the two items: provisions and outside help for crop.”

The third category was “General Information.” Oldrini noted that “This year [1897] the whole colony is composed of 176 families including about 1,000 people; of which 76 families arrived at Sunny Side January 3rd, ’97. They will cultivate lots of 12 ½ acres or 2750 acres.” Corbin had agreed, at Prince Ruspoli’s suggestion, to give each lot-owner a grant of 7½ acres of woodland, increasing each lot to 20 acres, thus reducing the per-acre price from \$160 to \$100. He was also disposed to set up a commission to handle the complaint that some land was inferior. Oldrini also described how the colonists’ crop was handled, basing the sale price on the New Orleans Cotton Exchange, and mentioned additional concessions made by the company. He concluded his report with the following comments:

When I will have added that the Sunny Side Company has furnished the Colony with the Church and a School, under the direction of Rev. P. Bandini, and an assistant Rev. J. Gastaldi and of three school-

mistresses of whom two are nuns; that the school is frequented by about 150 children of both sexes and that Mr. Corbin has made among other presents to the Colony that of an incubator, of a complete printing press, of an organ for the church, and of instruments for a band; that the railroad train of the plantation has been put twice a day at disposition of the school for the commodity of the children, I think I have conveyed to you all the information of a certain importance, that you may form an opinion on the future of the Italian Colony of Sunny Side, Arkansas, founded by the ever-regretted Mr. Austin Corbin.⁸⁴

Bandini's "Brief account," confirming some of these comments, noted that "In a very brief space of time the new Colony of Sunny Side was organized, divided in districts with school, church, teachers and a small convent of nuns for the care of the girls."⁸⁵ According to the *Official Catholic Directory* for 1897 and 1898, the parochial school was taught by 3 Sisters of Mercy from Little Rock and had 120 pupils. Bandini also attended to the spiritual needs of Our Lady of the Lake Church in Lake Village, west of Lake Chicot.⁸⁶ Bandini's work at Sunnyside was recognized in early 1897 with the gift of a chasuble (pianeta) by the Queen of Italy. It was presented to him while he was

⁸⁴ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Oldrini to Fava, New York, March 15, 1897 (copy), Risultato conti di ogni colono per l'annata 1896-7 (1mo anno) a Sunny Side, Ark., n.d. See appendix III for Oldrini's letter.

⁸⁵ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, "Breve cenno," 3.

⁸⁶ *OCD*, 1897 and 1898 (Wiltzius), 321, 332, which lists 120 pupils in 1897 and 250 pupils in 1898; Borgognoni, *Our Lady of the Lake Church*, 7, 10-11. See Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 110; Woods, *Mission and Memory*, 266; Sisters of Mercy in Arkansas with Jane Ramos, *Arkansas Frontiers of Mercy: A History of the Sisters of Mercy in the Diocese of Little Rock* (Fort Smith, AR: St. Edward Press, 1989), 138-39; Lucey, "The Catholic Church in Arkansas," 445; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, 1897 Second Annual Commencement; AANY, G-13, Allen to Corrigan, Sunny Side, Arkansas, February 17, 1897.

passing through New York. He thanked the queen on his own behalf and that of the Sunnyside colonists “for the very rich gift and for the memory that Her Majesty deigns to harbor for subjects so far away.”⁸⁷

Apparently, by the Spring of 1897 Bandini’s optimism had given way to skepticism that the situation at the colony would improve. This can be seen from Bandini’s confidential reply for information requested by Fava, which is not available in the diplomatic archives, and which was forwarded by the ambassador to Foreign Minister Emilio Visconti Venosta. But details of that reply can be inferred from a letter Lelio Bonin Longare, the undersecretary of state, sent to Fava which stated that, according to Prince Ruspoli, the situation at Sunnyside was not as bad as Bandini now claimed, that work had begun on digging an artesian well, and that the company had never promised salaried work beyond earnings from field work.⁸⁸ On June 23, 1897, Dr. William Krauss of the Hygienic Institute in Memphis, Tennessee, sent the Sunny Side Company a report of an analysis of water it had sent for examination. The water was found “fit for drinking and cooking purposes. There is rather too much organic matter and a great deal of lime, but these are not specially of a character to act injuriously on health.”⁸⁹

But this positive view was not shared by many colonists led by Giovanni Delpidio, who, in a letter sent to Fava on June 25, argued that the Sunnyside Company had failed to follow through on

⁸⁷ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, rough draft, Fava to Signor Min. (Visconti Venosta), Washington, March 12, 1897. See AANY, G-13, Allen to Corrigan, Sunny Side, Arkansas, February 17, 1897; “Romantic Tontitown,” *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, Centennial Edition, June 11, 1936, E, 3, which includes photographs of Fr. Bandini, vestments presented to the Catholic church at Tontitown by Queen Marguerite of Italy, and the parish school.

⁸⁸ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, Bandini to Eccellenza (Fava), New York, March 20, 1897, fasc. 2194, rough drafts, Fava to Signor Min. (Visconti Venosta) and Bandini, Washington, May 23, 1897, Bonin to Fava, Rome, July 12, 1897.

⁸⁹ Ibid fasc. 2194, Krauss to Gents, Memphis, Tenn., June 23, 1897 (copy).

promises made to them in its advertisements. The complaints included a favorable description of the air when many colonists are exposed to fevers, the failure to provide day work to supplement their income from cotton cultivation, and the lack of a promised artesian well. These complaints were repeated in December by Egisto Polmonari and Giovanni Vivarelli.⁹⁰

In July, Ambassador Fava again turned to Bandini for advice on the complaints submitted to him by Delpidio in June. In his reply, Bandini outlined the colony's four major concerns as he saw them. The first was drinkable water, which the company had promised. Lately the company has said that water was not the cause of the fever. But in many places the water was not drinkable and the promised artesian well has not been built, even though the colony was in its second summer. The second was draining the swamp at the sawmill which endangered the health of those living nearby. The third dealt with payment of both five per cent interest on the balance of the loan and the principal until the debt was fully paid. Given the enormous original cost per acre, the decision to scrap the railway scheme, which would have increased property values, and the failure to provide promised manual labor for additional income, it was too much to expect the colonists to pay both principal and interest. Finally, the company should reduce the price of less productive lots.⁹¹

On November 11, Count Giulio Vinci, who had assumed temporary direction of the embassy while Baron Fava was on leave, asked Bandini for information on Sunnyside. Referring to his July

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Delpidio to Fava, Sunny Side, Ark., June 25, 1897, Polmonari and Vivarelli to Illmo Sig.r Console in New Orleans (Magenta), Sunny Side, Ark., December 4, 1897, Magenta to Vinci, New Orleans, December 27, 1897, rough draft, Vinci to Polmonari, Washington, December 28, 1897, Vinci to Ro. Console New Orleans (Magenta), Washington, January 11, 1898, Mazzocchi to Illmo Signore (Vinci), Sunny Side, Ark., January 23, 1898.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, rough draft, Fava to Bandini, Washington, July 11, 1897, Bandini to Eccellenza (Fava), Sunny Side, Ark., July 31, 1897.

report to Fava, Vinci pointed out that he had been informed by Rome that work on the artesian well had begun and that meanwhile a satisfactory system of filters had been adopted. He requested that Bandini inform him on the accuracy of that claim as well as on the health of the colonists.⁹² Bandini's reply, dated December 1, clearly showed how much the situation had deteriorated since July. Events, he wrote, "have made me lose every hope that the colony could be a success." He added that the hope that someone from the embassy would come and examine conditions at Sunnyside never materialized. Moreover, no work on the artesian wells had begun and no filters had been received. He noted that the health of the colonists, especially those here for two years, was "very bad," himself included. "I have been seriously ill and have not been well since July. Few of those who have been here only one year have been sick, though now the number is slowly increasing. 72 are buried (28 adults and the rest children) compared to 56 births." Moreover, while the cotton crop had been very abundant, the market price was very low. He told Vinci that the discontent had not diminished but was growing daily and had manifested itself in several meetings. Listening to them, all would leave by March, though few families can afford to move and find new farms. Vinci relayed the information to the Sunnyside Company and Foreign Affairs Minister Visconti Venosta.⁹³ The Italian diplomatic archive includes a list of those who died at Sunnyside in 1897. Victor Alpini, who signed the list, noted at the bottom: "The total deaths of last year amounted to 53. As this list only contains 34 [22 adults ages

⁹² Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 159; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Vinci to Bandini, Washington, August 8 and rough draft, November 11, 1897.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Illmo Signore (Vinci), Sunny Side, Ark., December 1, 1897, rough draft, Vinci to Edgell, Washington, January 2, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Minro Esteri (Visconti Venosta), Washington, January 3 and 11, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Bandini, Washington, January 22, 1898. See APF, NS, Vol. 332 (1905), rubr. 153, Bandini to Eccellentissimo Sign Cardinale Prefetto di Propaganda (Ledochowski), Springdale, Ark., January 15, 1899 (172), where he said that the doctors had diagnosed him three times as being in grave danger of death.

13 to 71 and 12 children ages 1 to 7], the balance (19) must be infants born here and died afterward of which I have no record.”⁹⁴

An undated document in the diplomatic archives titled “Elenco” (“List”) included an opening statement and enumerated the Sunnyside colonists gathered in general assembly. It stated that the committee elected by the assembly to assert the colonists’ rights before the company and about to approve serious consequences on the side of the administration, decided to request a vote of confidence so that it can protect their interests without fear. There followed the signatures of the twelve members of the committee and 141 colonists, for a total of 153. Bandini was not among them.⁹⁵

The administration replied with an undated four-page statement that addressed the committee’s demands. First, the question of renting the lots for a certain amount of time could not be taken seriously, unless the colonists agreed to pay rent for them and for the use of mules and tools monthly, which they could not do. Second, the company will consider reducing the price of less productive lots after examining the matter. Third, their objection on the company retaining half of what they earned from extra work so as to alleviate their debt to it was seen as unjust and an indication that they did not want to share their fate with that of the company. Fourth, the promise that the company would provide non-agricultural work for 300 men could not be kept. It was Corbin’s intention to install a railroad in the hope of establishing a village at Sunnyside where manufacturing could be started, providing work for the colonists. But that project had to be postponed indefinitely. The administration also called attention to benefits the colonists have enjoyed, none of which had been promised, i.e., the free use of mules, tools, and the railroad as well as the salaries of the priests and doctor. Finally, the company rejected the argument that the malarial fever was

⁹⁴ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Elenco Morti, Anno 1897.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Elenco, n.d. See *ibid.*, Memorandum, Fayetteville, Ark., n.d.; Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 149.

entirely caused by bad water. The miasma produced in the lower parts of the region during the hot summer was the major cause of the fevers. The company planned on draining these parts. Regarding artesian wells, fresh water could be had from properly filtered pumps. In conclusion, the company assured the colonists of its concern for their interests and that the complaints were due to misunderstandings “and perhaps through the influence of some of the colonists who are not farmers , but mechanics, shopkeepers, etc., who do not understand agricultural work, and, consequently, had a meager crop last year, where an expert farmer would have experienced success.”⁹⁶

Since the above documents are undated, it's not known when the above exchange between colonists and administrators occurred. The concluding statement about the non-agricultural colonists behind the complaints would later be repeated by Bandini in his “Brief account”: “in the second immigration various families had come that were not actually from the countryside but rather day laborers, already accustomed to noise and demonstrations, suspicious by nature, who did not know either how to consider or listen to a calm word.” Bandini's comment and the reference to “a meager crop last year” suggests that this exchange took place some time after the 1897 harvest. The administration's reply did not satisfy the colonists. By September 1897 deputations of men from Sunnyside sought new homesteads. Two committees chosen by colonists checked out land in Missouri owned by the Frisco Line but found it unfavorable. Suitable land was found six miles west of Springdale, in northwestern Arkansas.⁹⁷

On January 14, 1898, Bandini wrote to Vinci restating the points made in his December 1 letter and asking that a prudent person with an official mandate be sent to examine the situation at the colony.

⁹⁶ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Al Comitato Rappresentante Le Diverse Sessioni della Colonia Italiana, Sunny Side, Ark., n.d.

⁹⁷ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, “Breve cenno,” 5-7; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Edgell to Vinci, New York, April 22, 1898.

Vinci replied that he had brought the complaints to the attention of the company and that Edgell had indicated his willingness to do what he could and had requested that a representative of the embassy be sent to Sunnyside.⁹⁸ Bonin authorized sending Camillo Furio Romano, who had been sent by Vinci to discuss the situation at Sunnyside with Edgell in New York. The latter suggested accompanying Romano to Sunnyside and aid him in reviewing the situation there.⁹⁹ But Vinci suggested sending Guido Rossati of the Royal Italian Wine Production Station in New York (R. Stazione Enotecnica Italiana), whom he considered more competent on agricultural matters, to investigate conditions at Sunnyside. Bonin agreed.¹⁰⁰

Rossati arrived at Sunnyside on February 8 and was well received by Albert Allen, the manager of the Sunnyside Company. Within a few days, he received complaints from a number of colonists.¹⁰¹ He submitted his report to Vinci on March 6, 1898.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Illmo Signore (Vinci), Sunny Side, Ark., January 14, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Bandini, Washington, January 22, 1898, Bandini to Illmo Signore (Vinci), Sunny Side, Ark., January 28, 1898.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, Romano to Vinci, New York, December 30 and 31, 1897, rough drafts, Vinci to Edgell, Washington, January 2 and 10, 1898, telegram and letter, Edgell to Vinci, New York, January 4 and 6, 1898, Oldrini to Caro Conte (Vinci), New York, January 7, 1898, telegrams, Corbin to Vinci, New York, January 11 and 18, 1898, Bonin to Signor Incaricato d'affari (Vinci), Rome, January 24, 1898, rough draft, telegram, Bonin to R. Ambasciata (Vinci), Rome, January 25, 1898.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, rough drafts, telegram and letter, Vinci to R. Ministero Esteri (Visconti Venosta), Washington, January 27 and February 5, 1898, rough draft, telegram, Bonin to R. Ambasciata (Vinci), Rome, January 30, 1898. See *ibid.*, rough drafts, telegrams and letter, Vinci to Corbin, Washington, January 12 and 19, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Rossati, Washington, January 30, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Edgell, Washington, January 30, 1898, Rossati to Vinci, New York, February 1, 1898.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, Rossati to Vinci, New York, February 10, 1898, Pianaldo to Rosati [sic], Sunny Side, February 10, 1898, Pirondelli to Rosatti [sic], Hebron, February 13, 1898, Pianaldo to Illmo Sig Rappresentante (Rossati), Hyner, February 13, 1898, Fiori to Gregio Signore (Rossati), Sunny Side, February 15, 1898, Contini to Ecelenza Illustrissima [sic] (Rossati), n.d., Marocco to Illmo Signor Rappresentante (Rossati), n.d.,

On March 10 Vinci notified Visconti Venosta that he had received Rossati's report, although he did not send him a copy until the end of the month.¹⁰² The 17-page typed transcript of the report, described as "observations regarding the state of that Italian colony, made up of 174 families comprised of 932 souls" was the most detailed and reliable contemporary account of the colony's troubled situation in its brief history. It described sanitary and economic conditions, the price of land, property title, promises made and not kept, particular complaints, and offered several suggestions. On sanitary conditions, which take up the first six pages or one-third of the report, Rossati noted the unhealthy nature of the Mississippi Delta region. He found illness pervasive at Sunnyside, blaming it on air and poor water. All families have been affected by the malarial fever. Many have complained of various illnesses. He found that the filtered pumps failed to remove the bacteria causing sickness. He rejected Krauss' finding that the water was "fit for drinking and cooking purposes." His conclusion was that "Without healthy water from artesian wells and the draining of the most harmful ponds it cannot be reasonably expected that the colonists would remain any further on the plantation." Rossati described the colonists' economic condition as generally fair ("discreta"). In the first year or 1896, 60% of colonists ended with credits and 40% with debts. These figures were almost identical to those submitted by Oldrini to Ambassador Fava in March 1897. In the second year or 1897, Rossati estimated that 80% of colonists would end with credits and 20% with debts. This was due to the fact that the cotton crop that year had been "extraordinarily abundant," but could not be expected to be the norm for the future. Compared to the "Approximate settlement 2nd year" outlined below, his estimate more than doubled the number of

Unknown to Illmo Sigr Prof. (Rossati), n.d.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, rough drafts, Vinci to Ro. Ministero Esteri (Visconti Vensota), Washington, March 10 and 31, 1898, rough draft, telegram, Vinci to Bandini, New York, March 12, 1898, Bandini to Illmo Signore (Vinci), Sunny Side, Ark., March 14 and 15, 1898. See *ibid.*, Visconti Venosta to Signor Incaricato d'affari (Vinci), Rome, April 30, 1898.

colonists in debt and his projection that, given a normal cotton crop, increased expenses, and lack of other work, many colonists would find it difficult to survive financially seemed overly pessimistic.

Rossati found the price of land at \$160 a lot plus 5% interest on the principal, even including the farmhouse, the use of a railway to transport the bales of cotton to the nearby station, and other services, “exorbitant” by local standards. Similar land in the Mississippi River Valley sold for \$40 to \$50 for the best lots, not unlike the amount suggested by Bishop Fitzgerald who had noted that at \$2000 for 12½ lots the cost of the land was too high. Moreover, on October 1, 1890, the Sunnyside Company had taken out a \$600,000 mortgage from the Central Trust Company of New York, giving it title to the property. The colonists were never informed of this. Rossati raised the problematic question of what would happen to the colonists’ property should the company default on its loan. He suggested that the embassy look into this. The promises made by Corbin and after his death repeated by his son or Prince Ruspoli to employ the colonists in work such as clearing the land near their property and building a railroad were not kept, forcing indebted colonists to remain on the plantation. Rossati listed particular complaints brought up by the colonists, such as company funding in case of illness, the poor quality of food provided by the company on credit, and the rude way in which the local administration dealt with them. In conclusion, Rossati summarized his concerns about the colonists’ health, economic conditions, and property title outlined above. Given the company’s unwillingness to improve the health and economic conditions, it cannot be recommended that the colonists remain at Sunnyside. He noted that they were demanding that they be repatriated or brought to a healthy part of the country. Moreover, some families had already left for St. James, near St. Louis, and others for Springdale in Northwest Arkansas, where, according to Fr. Bandini, some fifty families from Hyner (Venetians) will relocate. He recommended that the company aid those who have decided to leave. He suggested that if the company were to dig artesian wells and

drain the ponds, the colonists of the second migration and those of the first who were less affected by illness could try another year. Since the sojourn of the Italians on the plantation, even with improvements, will be temporary and they will never become owners of the land they work, the company should look into renting the land for a certain amount of time, as the colonists had suggested. But the company would only consider renting the land if the colonists agreed to pay rent for it and for the use of mules monthly, which they could not do until after the harvest, a position Rossati found unreasonable. Given the difficult conditions at Sunnyside, Rossati suggested to the embassy that Prince Ruspoli be invited to go there and work them out.¹⁰³

An undated document in the diplomatic archives titled “Liquidazione approssimativa 2o anno” (“Approximate settlement 2nd year”), referring to 1897, listed the debit and credit of 77 colonists. Five colonists had debits averaging \$53.40 each and 71 had credits averaging \$142.21 each. One colonist with a debit of \$100 was listed as dead. This compared very favorably to the 1896 accounts for 100 families in the Oldrini report cited above which stated that “Out of the said 100 accounts, 62, or 2/3 came out on the credit side, and 38 on the debit side” during the first year of settlement. The average credit was \$99.10 and the average debit was \$59.87. If accurate, the 1897 document supported Oldrini’s conclusion that “It is permitted to foresee a more profitable result for the second year, since the first 100 families will have no more debit on account of voyage, furniture, cows, etc.; especially if guided by experience, the colonists keep a more moderate account for the two items: provisions and outside help for crop.” The document listed the cost of the voyage at \$149.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, rough draft and transcript, Rossati to Vinci, New York, March 6, 1898. The rough draft or handwritten version of the report was 22 pages long. See, *ibid.*, Rossati to Vinci, New York, March 10, 12, 30 and April 1, 1898; Indenture, February 28, 1891.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, Liquidazione approssimativa 2o anno, n.d., Oldrini to Fava, New York, March 15, 1897 (copy).

Unfortunately, Rossati's sensible recommendations were too little too late. Even before he had arrived, newspapers were reporting on the serious problems confronting the Sunnyside colony and the fact that some of the immigrants had started to leave, as he himself acknowledged in his report.¹⁰⁵ The Sunnyside Company's failure to provide artesian wells and drain the most harmful ponds, as the colonists, Bandini, and Rossati had demanded, and the "day laborers, already accustomed to noise and demonstrations, suspicious by nature, who did not know either how to consider or listen to a calm word," who had come in the second immigration, mentioned by Bandini in his "Brief account" or "mechanics, shopkeepers, etc., who do not understand agricultural work," as the company referred to them, combined to make Sunnyside a failed experiment in Italian colonization in the South. Interestingly, Bandini told Rossati in early April that had the company been willing to rent the land to the colonists before the exodus had begun, as he had insisted, "more than half and maybe two thirds would have remained."¹⁰⁶

Exodus from Sunnyside

In 1898, Sunnyside was leased to O. B. Crittenden & Company of Greenville, Mississippi. That may explain why Edgell kept stalling on making the major investments required to meet the colonists' demands. The plantation's new managers put additional burdens on the colonists. According to Milani, "Their first edict, issued on 1 February 1898, declared that too many benefits had been given the colonists and that these would be eliminated. The mules, the doctor,

¹⁰⁵ See *Ibid.*, newspaper clippings, "Austin Corbin's Colony. Collapse of His Plan to Settle Italians in Arkansas," *The Sun* (New York), January 21, 1898, "Fine di una colonia," *Italia di Chicago*, January 29-30, 1898; Martellini, *Fra Sunny Side e la Nueva Marca*. 240-45.

¹⁰⁶ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Bandini to Caro Professore (Rossati), Springdale, Ark., April 7, 1898.

the priest, the teacher, the gardener, the heating for the church, the railroad, and the filter for the water all had a price that the colonists must now pay.”¹⁰⁷ That was probably the proverbial straw that broke the camel’s back, reluctantly prompting Bandini and the good number of families that had gathered around him to bend to events and go to a healthier place, where in some way they could make a living:

For me, already three times seriously ill and, according to the doctors, reduced to extremes, to engage myself in escorting many families to a new land without the financial means to purchase it seemed to me a fabulous undertaking, and the responsibility of providing for so many families an unbearable weight on my shoulders...Yet the thought that these families could have easily fallen in the hands of cruel people who would have completely ruined them mattered for me more than any other consideration. Throwing myself in the arms of Providence, I chose to go with them.¹⁰⁸

In his “Brief account,” Bandini noted: “And since two Committees chosen from among the colonists, charged with visiting some lands owned by the Frisco Line in the state of Missouri, reported an unfavorable impression about them, we went all together to the Ozark hills in North West Arkansas.”¹⁰⁹ According to some accounts, Bandini had traveled to the Ozarks to recover his health and found it ideal for a settlement.¹¹⁰ On February 4, 1898, at the bishop’s request, Bandini wrote to the apostolic delegate, Archbishop Sebastiano Martinelli, asking for help in finding an Italian priest who spoke English to assist him. The archbishop replied that he did not know

¹⁰⁷ Milani, “Marchigiani and Veneti,” 27; Gatewood, Jr., “Sunnyside,” 26-27.

¹⁰⁸ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, “Breve cenno,” 6.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 6-7. See Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 14- 15. For those who followed Bandini to Tontitown, see Borgognoni, *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995*, 31-34.

¹¹⁰ Mayor des Planches, *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti*, 239; Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 93.

of any available Italian priest. The bishop was probably interested in providing an Italian priest for the colonists who planned to stay at Sunnyside after Bandini had left.¹¹¹ Apparently he did not succeed, since the 1899 *Official Catholic Directory* recorded that Sunnyside and Our Lady of the Lake were “attended by Rev. P. Bandini from Springdale,” where Bandini was listed as residing, though a “(Church building)” but no parish church was named and a school with a lay teacher and 50 pupils was given. The 1900 *Official Catholic Directory* recorded that Sunnyside and Our Lady of the Lake were “attended by Rev. W. Larkins from Clarksdale, Miss.” Bandini was still listed at Springdale.¹¹² In 1902 Sunnyside Italians wrote to Bishop Fitzgerald asking for a resident Italian pastor. The bishop asked Bandini to write to Bishop Tito Maria Cucchi of Senigallia, province of Ancona, for a priest. The latter sent Fr. Joachim F. Galloni, who arrived in 1903 and was first listed in the 1904 edition of the *Official Catholic Directory*.¹¹³

In early March Vinci tried to schedule a conference with Edgell on the future of Sunnyside.¹¹⁴ He met with him in New York later that month and asked for “a short but detailed report on the concessions and payments made by the Company to the Italian colonists. This report had to contain the list of the families which were provided with the means to go back to Italy, of those others which received money

¹¹¹ ASV, DAUS, 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1894-1900), Bandini to Eccellenza Revma (Martinelli), Sunny Side, Ark., February 4, 1898 (240), Martinelli to Bandini, March 8, 1898 (242).

¹¹² *OCD*, 1899, 1900 (Wiltzius), 349, 360. See Demetrious, “Tontitown,” *SN*, April 11, 1902.

¹¹³ Borgognoni, *Our Lady of the Lake Church*, 8 and *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995*, 9, 38-40; *OCD*, 1904 (Wiltzius), 398, 1906 (Wiltzius), 414, which lists Fr. Galloni at St. Anthony’s, and 1909 (Wiltzius), 439, which lists him at St. Lucia. See ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Fitzgerald, Tontitown, Ark., March 10, 1903; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 55; Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 105.

¹¹⁴ ASDMAE, LSRD, Busta 110, fasc. 2194, Corbin to Vinci, New York, March 8, 1898, telegram, Corbin to Vinci, New York, March 8, 1898, telegrams, Mazzocchi to Vinci, Greenville, Miss., March 8 and 9, 1898, rough draft, telegrams, Vinci to Mazzocchi, New York, March 9, 1898.

to be able to transfer themselves in some other state of the Union, with the amount that was given them, and finally of those who were satisfied to remain in the colony and in what condition.” He also asked for information on the Catalani family in New Orleans. On April 22, Edgell reported to Vinci on the colonists’ destination and the situation of the Catalani family:

There were 160 families on the property January 1, 1898, of which number 33 families remain there as renters, at their own request; 37 families have gone to St. James, and Knob View, Missouri; 30 families to Irondale, Alabama; 41 families to Springdale, Arkansas; 7 families to Hot Springs, Arkansas, and 12 families to Italy. Of those who went to Genoa, the Sunny Side Co. paid the passage-money for 5 families, consisting of 19 persons, besides furnishing them money in order that they might be properly provided for en route, and their transportation between their sea-port and their home, which amounts aggregate nearly \$750.

He then went on to blame the colonists’ decision to leave on their fear of illness brought on by their own neglect and bad habits and on land agents and two or three discharged employees, echoing comments made by the administration and Bandini:

From the information I have been able to gather, and from my own personal knowledge of the situation, I attribute largely the cause of their leaving to a fear of ill-health. Both Doctors Johnson and Barricelli repeatedly informed me that they could not get those people to take the proper medicine prescribed for them as directed; that they would not refrain from eating unripe fruits and vegetables, and would persist in taking quinine in excess, which

affected them to such an extent as to indirectly cause hemeteria, of which we had something like 30 cases, and lost, I believe, 10 or 20, principally among the Venetians on the Hyner section. As a consequence, the scare went through the entire colony, and as early as September, '97, they began sending committees to other sections of the country, urged on by land agents, and two or three discharged employees.

In conclusion, he defended the company and its efforts to make the colony successful:

Being aware of the large amount of money expended to get these people settled; to encourage them to remain on the property for the past two years, besides furnishing them with priest, physician, teachers, pharmacy, mules, and implements, and allowing them the use of the railroad, all of which was done voluntarily and free of charge for the past two years, at an outlay of \$15,000 per annum, you can readily see that we did all we could toward making the colony a success. When the question as to the quality of the drinking water was brought up, we furnished 150 filters in December, '97, at a cost of \$1,000, distributing them to every family who desired one. The result of the cotton crop for the year 1897 may be shown from the fact that the colonists themselves took between \$19,000 and \$20,000 over and above their maintenance and all expenses, to say nothing of their having received between \$11,000 and \$12,000 for labor done on the Plantation, for which they received 80 cents a day, when the same work might have been done through other sources for about 50 cents a day. This gives an average of \$192.00 net per family,

which we think shows the success which would have attended the colony if they had not been in the fear of their health. So you can see that notwithstanding the reports in the newspapers to the contrary, the cause of the disintegration of the colony was not because they had not been honorably and liberally dealt with; not because they suffered for the necessities of life, and not because they had not made money, but simply because of their becoming panic stricken on account of the fear of sickness.¹¹⁵

Edgell informed Vinci that the Catalani family of Senigallia had voluntarily left the plantation for New Orleans with over \$90, which was sufficient for their needs and travel back to Italy. Unfortunately, they made an alliance with Celestino Tocchi, who claimed to be a sub-agent of the Piaggio agency and who swindled them and others of their travel money.¹¹⁶

In late March, Edgell told Vinci that the company would provide funds to colonists to return to Italy and that 96 accounts had been settled. He thought that one third of these 96 will remain at Sunnyside. He had wired Allen, the manager of the Sunnyside Company, "to rent to any colonists who desire to do so, and wish

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Oldrini to Vinci, New York, March 15 and April 22, 1898, rough drafts, Vinci to Edgell, Washington, April 20 and 25, 1898, Edgell to Vinci, New York, April 22 and May 3, 1898. See U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:333.

¹¹⁶ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, newspaper clipping, "Un Furfante," *Italo-Americano* (New Orleans), April 8, 1898, 1, Oldrini to Vinci, New York, April 9, 1898, rough draft, telegrams, Vinci to Ro Consolato New Orleans (Magenta), Washington, April 10, 14, 16, 18 and rough drafts, April 22, 30 and May 9, 1898, Magenta to Signor Incaricato (Vinci), New Orleans, April 11, 15 (letter and telegram), 19 and 20, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Edgell, Washington, April 15, 1898, Magenta to Gaster, New Orleans, April 18, 1898, Gaster to Magenta, New Orleans, April 19, 1898 (copy), Edgell to Vinci, New York, April 22, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Diparto di Stato, Washington, April 22 and 30, 1898, Moore to Vinci, Washington, April 29, 1898, Day to Fava, Washington, May 7, 1898.

to remain, upon the surrender of their contracts.” By the end of the month, all accounts had been settled and Allen was scheduled to go to New York and make a presentation on the situation at Sunnyside.¹¹⁷ Oldrini added that to avoid swindlers the funds for the return to Italy will be handled by New Orleans’ Consul Carlo Magenta, who held that position from September 21, 1896 to March 4, 1900.¹¹⁸ In early April, when some twenty Sunnyside colonists showed up at New Orleans to return to Italy, funds from the company to pay the cost of the trip had not been received.¹¹⁹ By April 14, Magenta was able to tell Vinci that all the Italian families had left, except for that of Serafino Catalani.¹²⁰ On the same day, Oldrini sent Vinci a list of ten families for whom the Sunnyside Company “paid the voyage as far as their native village.” The list included the following families: Curzi, \$120.50 voyage expenses and \$50 cash for a total of \$170.50; Moruzzi, \$90 voyage expenses and \$25 cash for a total of \$115; Paolazini, \$51 balance voyage expenses; Matteucci, \$51.25 balance voyage expenses; Campore, \$59 fare to New York; Delpidio, \$100 cash; Ern. Piazza, \$50 cash; Alpe, \$55 cash; Cel. Pianalto, \$15 cash;

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Edgell to Vinci, New York, March 24, 29 and April 1, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Edgell, Washington, March 27 and 30, 1898, Oldrini to Vinci, New York, March 30, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Ro Console New Orleans (Magenta), Washington, April 2, 1898.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Oldrini to Vinci, New York, March 24, 1898, rough draft, telegram and letter, Vinci to Consolato Italiano New Orleans (Magenta), Washington, March 25, 1898, Magenta to Vinci, New Orleans, March 28, 1898. See Patrizia Catani and Roberto Zuccolini, eds., *I Fondi Archivistici dei Consolati in Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, New Orleans e S. Francisco Conservati Presso l'Archivio Storico Diplomatico* (Roma: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1990), 281 (available online).

¹¹⁹ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Magenta to Signor Incaricato (Vinci), New Orleans, April 4, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Ro Console di New Orleans (Magenta), Washington, April 6, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Ro Console New York (Branchi), Washington, April 6, 1898, newspaper clipping, “Italian Immigrants,” *The Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), n.p., [April 8, 1898].

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, Magenta to Italian Embassy (Vinci), New Orleans, April 14, 1898, rough drafts, telegram and letter, Vinci to Ro. Consolato New Orleans (Magenta), Washington, April 18 and 24, 1898,

Dalle Rive \$30 cash. The total, which did “not include several other allowances made to them at the settlement of the accounts,” amounted to \$696.75.¹²¹

In Edgell’s April 22 report to Vinci, he noted that there were 160 families at Sunnyside as of January 1, 1898, of which number 33 remained there as renters, 37 went to St. James and Knob View in Missouri, 30 went to Irondale in Alabama, 41 went to Springdale in, Arkansas, 7 to Hot Springs in Arkansas, and 12 to Italy.¹²² Other contemporary reports on the exodus from Sunnyside provide additional destinations and often conflicting numbers, reflecting the chaotic situation that prevailed at the time. In early February 1898 Chicago’s Italian Consul Antonio Rozwadowski informed Rossati that Fr J. Gastaldi, the assistant at the church, planned to bring fifty families from Sunnyside to an area near Louisville, Kentucky.¹²³ Two days after Rossati had submitted his report, Bandini gave him the following answer on where the colonist had gone: “In Italy some 20 families, the same number to the state of Mississippi - maybe some in Alabama, some to N. Jersey, others in Springdale. All would want to go to Springdale, but there are those families that don’t have absolutely one penny and truly arouse pity. Upon my return, I have found two agents, one of steamships, the other a land agent for Alabama. They work actively.”¹²⁴ On April 18, Bandini gave Vinci a revised account

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, Oldrini to Vinci, New York, April 14 and n.d., 1898 (includes Families assisted by Sunny Side Company to return to Italy).

¹²² *Ibid.*, Edgell to Vinci, New York, April 22, 1898; Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 150.

¹²³ ASDMAE, LSRD, Busta 110, fasc. 2194, Rozwadowski to Rossati, Chicago, February 4, 1898.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Caro Professore (Rossati), Sunny Side, Ark., March 8, 15 and Springdale, Ark., April 7, 1898. See *ibid.*, Delpidio to Eccellenza (Branchi), Sunny Side, Ark., March 5, 1898, rough draft, Vinci to Bandini, Washington, March 15, 1898, Rossati to Vinci, New York, March 18 and April 16, 1898, rough drafts, Vinci to Ro Minist. Esteri (Visconti Venosta), Washington, April 25 and May 10, 1898.

of the exodus from Sunnyside: 18 families have left for Italy, 18 for Alabama, some 32 for Knob View (changed to Rosati in 1931), 58 for Springdale (Tontitown), and 34 remained at Sunnyside.¹²⁵ An undated document in the diplomatic archives listed 53 families that went to Springdale, 39 to St. James, Mo., 24 to Irondale, Ala., 6 to Leota, Miss., and 10 were listed as “Sundry.”¹²⁶ Giovanni Battista Pranzini, listed under “Sundry,” went to Blocton, Alabama.¹²⁷ Some families

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Eccellentissimo Signore (Vinci), Sunny Side, Ark., April 18, 1898. On Knobview, see, C.E.F. Greve, “Storia delle Colonie Italiane di Tontitown, Arkansas, Knobview, Missouri, Marshfield, Missouri, Stati Uniti d’America,” 14-16; Guido Rossati, “Gl’Italiani nell’ Agricoltura degli Stati Uniti d’America,” in *Gli Italiani negli Stati Uniti d’America* (New York: Italian American Directory Co., 1906), 41-42; U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:377-83; Mayor des Planches, *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti*, 248-49; Edward A. Drayer, “Italy in the Ozarks,” *American Fruit Grower Magazine* XLIII (September 1923): 6, 14-15; Giovanni E. Schiavo, *The Italians in Missouri* (1929; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1975), 151-54; Joseph Velikonja, “Contributo Italiano al Carattere Geografico di Tontitown, Arkansas, e Rosati, Missouri,” in *Gli Italiani negli Stati Uniti* (1972; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1975), 423-52; Borgognoni, *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995*, 35-37; Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 100. On Springdale (Tontitown), see, SMOH, RF, Bandini, “These are the families I led from Sunnyside in 1898,” n.d.; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Families gone to Springdale, St. James, Mo., Irondale, Ala., Leota, Miss., Sundry, Rossati to Romano, New York, May 1, 1899, Alpini to Oldrini, New York, November 15, 1899; Greve, “Storia delle Colonie Italiane,” 1-10; U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:359-68; Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, 17-18; Velikonja, “Contributo Italiano,” 423-52. On Sunnyside, see ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, rough draft, Vinci to Bandini, Washington, April 25, 1898, Rossati to Romano, New York, May 1, 1899, Alpini to Oldrini, New York, November 15, 1899; U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:320. On the families that remained in Chicot County, see Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, 22; Borgognoni *Our Lady of the Lake Church*, 8 and *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995*, 38; Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 105.

¹²⁶ See, ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Families gone to Springdale, St. James, Mo., Irondale, Ala., Leota, Miss., Sundry, Rossati to Romano, New York, May 1, 1899, Alpini to Oldrini, New York, November 15, 1899.

¹²⁷ See, *Ibid.*, busta 112, fasc. 2201, Trigg to unknown, Blocton, Alabama, June 21, 1898, Pranzini to Illmo Sig.r Ambasciatore Italiano (Fava), Blocton, Alabama, July 17 and August 21, 1898, rough draft, Fava to Edgell, Washington, August 2, 1898, Edgell to Fava, New York, August 10, 1898, rough draft, Fava to Pranzini, Washington, August

went to Birmingham, Alabama, about 15 to Shelby, Mississippi, and some to Tennessee.¹²⁸ In 1901, the U.S. Industrial Commission listed Tontitown and Montebello and Verdella in Missouri as Sunnyside's "derivative colonies."¹²⁹

The Italian authorities and Oldrini retained, at least initially, an interest in those who remained at Sunnyside or left the colony.¹³⁰ Reporting to Oldrini in late 1899, the year after the big exodus, Vittorio Alpini cited several letters he had recently received regarding the health and harvest of the various colonies in Arkansas and Missouri. Umberto Pierini, in letters dated October 26 and November 21, gave an upbeat report on what was left of the Sunnyside colony. The harvest had been good and had brought in a good price. There had been some illness, but not as much as usual. Some families had returned to Sunnyside and all had paid their debts to the company. Pierini's comments seemed to somewhat mitigate the prevailing narrative that the colony had been a complete disaster, as the terms "collapse" and "liquidation" would imply.¹³¹

The New York Sun, in its report on the "collapse" of Austin Corbin's colony, pointed out that "This was one of the most carefully planned attempts ever made to colonize Italians in the South. That the project failed is due wholly to the untimely death of its chief

13 and September 7, 1898. See G. Moroni, "Lo Stato dell'Alabama," *Boll. Emigr.* 1 (1913): 57.

¹²⁸ See ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Rossati to Romano, New York, May 1, 1899, Bandini to Caro Professore (Rossati), Springdale, Ark., June 5, 1899; Borgognoni, *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995*, 37; Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 181.

¹²⁹ U.S. Industrial Commission, Reports, XV:505-06.

¹³⁰ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, rough draft, Vinci to Bandini, Washington, April 25, 1898, rough drafts, Vinci to Cav. Rossati, Washington, April 17 and May 12, 1899, Rossati to Vinci, New York, June 8, 1899, rough draft, Vinci to Esteri (Visconti Venosta), Washington, June 24, 1899, January 3 and March 3, 1900, Oldrini to Dear Barone (Fava), New York, March 2, 1900.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, Alpini to Oldrini, New York, November 15 and December 15, 1899.

promoter. Had Austin Corbin lived the colony would have prospered and added to its membership.”¹³² In her authoritative study of the Italian Bureau in New York, Laura Pilotti had this to say about the “liquidation” of Sunnyside: “Thus was concluded the most important colonization initiative that, directed in the South of the United States, involved almost 1000 Italian families, and the combined effort of the Italian embassy, of Oldrini first as chief agent at Ellis Island, later as a functionary of the Sunnyside Company, and of the Italian consul in New Orleans.”¹³³ In a brief biographical entry in *American National Biography*, John H. Hepp IV concluded that “Although Corbin had a successful and highly profitable career, few of his achievements survived him, and thus he is little remembered.” Though not his fault, it is a conclusion that must surely also apply to the failed Sunnyside experiment in Italian agricultural colonization.¹³⁴

¹³² *Ibid.*, newspaper clipping, “Austin Corbin’s Colony. Collapse of His Plan to Settle Italians in Arkansas,” *The Sun* (New York), January 21, 1898. See U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:506.

¹³³ Pilotti, *L’Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 150.

¹³⁴ *American National Biography*, 1999 ed., s.v. “Corbin, Austin,” by John H. Hepp IV.

Chapter VI

Colonizer in Arkansas: Tontitown in the Ozarks, 1898-1917

“First Trials”

As with Sunnyside, the story of Tontitown's first two decades, 1898-1917, has also been ably told and documented, especially in the accounts of the 1911 U.S. Immigration Commission, Italian ambassador Edmondo Mayor des Planches, W. J. Lemke, Jeffrey Lewellen, Paul V. Canonici, and Susan Young. The aim of this chapter, as with the previous one, will be to revisit and add to that documentation, viewing the story primarily, though not exclusively, as it emerged in the letters and reports of Fr. Pietro Bandini, Tontitown's founder and first leader.¹ Joseph Velikonja, in a paper presented at a 1969 symposium in Florence, made reference to most published accounts on Tontitown up to that date, accurately pointing out that many were repetitive. The same can be said for most accounts published since 1969. Because of their repetitive nature, inaccurate and incomplete information has often been perpetuated. To be fair, misinformation on his personal background and activities could have only come from Bandini himself. This narrative of his role in Tontitown's early history will attempt to paint a picture based mainly on primary material and, where available, somewhat more reliable contemporary and later published accounts, and thus address a number of inaccuracies and embellishments that have found their way in the literature.² Such accounts include those

¹ See U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:359-68; Mayor des Planches, *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti*, 238-48; Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*; Jeffrey Lewellen, “‘Sheep Amidst the Wolves’: Father Bandini and the Colony at Tontitown, 1898-1917,” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* XLV (Spring 1986): 19-40; Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 91-100; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place.*”

² Velikonja, “Contributo Italiano,” 423-52. For somewhat embellished accounts, see Valentino Ferliga, “Tontitown. Storia di una Piccola Italia nell’America del Nord,” *Rivista di Emigrazione* III (Marzo-Aprile 1910): 24-33; Bruno Roselli, “An Arkansas Epic,” *The Century* XCIX (January 1920): 377-86; John T. Faris, *The Romance of Forgotten Towns* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1924), 320-25; “Tontitown in Arkansas,” *The Interpreter* VIII (April 1929): 56-58; Oren M. Stephens, “Little Italy in the Ozarks,” *Atlantica* 18 (January 1936): 6-7; Ruth E. Davis, “Pietro in Search of the Sun,” *The Vigo Review* I (April-June 1938): 15-16, 20; 10-11, 22; 14-16; Robert

of John L. Mathews, who visited Tontitown in 1906, Virginia Follens, and Leslie Hewes. Lemke has included a translation by Rosa Zagnoni Marinoni of the Mathews article on pages 7-16 and excerpts of the Follens and Hewes articles on pages 23-26 and 29-31 respectively.³

As previously noted, some sources claim that Bandini had visited the Ozark country of northwestern Arkansas prior to the decision to migrate there. In his description of his travels in the United States while serving as Italian ambassador there, Mayor des Planches, who had visited Tontitown in 1905, noted that when Fr. Bandini had fallen ill with the fever at Sunnyside, he was advised to seek a "change of air." He went to Rogers, not far from Springdale, and stayed with a friend, most likely either Charles F. Renner or A. M. Byrnes. In a few days, the excellent air, pure water, and delicious fruit completely cured him. The experience must have influenced his later decision to settle in that area.⁴ Young, citing later accounts in local newspapers,

Schick, "A Queen's Gift to Arkansas," *Arkansas Gazette*, September 29, 1946, 11 B, and "Father Bandini: Missionary in the Ozarks," *The Ave Maria*, December 20, 1947, 782-86; Thomas Rothrock, "The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* XVI (Spring 1957): 84-88; Andrew F. Rolle, *The Immigrant Upraised: Italian Adventurers and Colonists in an Expanding America* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), 82-84; Salvatore Saccone, "L'opera di Pietro Bandini nella fondazione di una colonia agricola nell'Arkansas alla fine dell'Ottocento," in *Miscellanea di Storia delle esplorazioni VIII* (Genova: Centro Stampa Rozzano, 1983), 245-56.

³ John L. Mathews, "Tontitown. A Story of the Conservation of Men," *Everybody's Magazine* XX (January 1909): 3-13; Mariuccia, "Tontitown," *SN*, July 6, 1906, 1; Follens, "Ozark Vineyards," 25-30, 90-100; Leslie Hewes, "Tontitown: Ozark Vineyard Center," *Economic Geography* 29 (April 1953): 125-43. Lemke did not explain why he used a translation of the Mathews article since it was originally published in English. Bandini may have translated it into Italian.

⁴ Mayor des Planches, *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti*, 239. See "Some Notes About Tontitown," *Flashback* II (May 1953): 13-15, where Mrs. Dorothy Byrnes Benbrook states that "My father (A. M. Byrnes) was really the guardian angel of Tontitown from the day Father Bandini made his first visit to Fayetteville. This was his home when here." See Fay Hempstead, "Charles F. Renner," in *Historical Review of Arkansas. Its Commerce, Industry and Modern Affairs* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911), III:1134-36.

wrote that “In November 1897 Bandini visited the northwest Arkansas town of Springdale, looking to purchase sizable acreage for the new settlement. A committee of men accompanied him from Sunnyside to help ‘spy out the land’: Felice (Felix) Ardemagni, Pietro Pianalto, and Domenico Pianalto, who brought along his eight-year-old son Leo.” They apparently found a good location for a settlement several miles west of Springdale.⁵ In his 1902 “Brief account,” Bandini did not mention a previous visit to the area or how the colonists got there, but he did indicate a key reason for choosing it. “This place,” he wrote, “is known for its healthy climate and is rich in very good waters and living springs. Fruit of every quality grows well and will constitute the wealth of the land.” He added that “After long difficulties I succeeded in purchasing about 800 acres of land, in large part woodland to be paid by instalments and at great intervals.”⁶ The land, formerly owned by the federal government and known as Smith’s Chapel, had been given to Civil War veterans. Its owner had failed to make a profit and was willing to sell it for \$8 per acre, later raising the price to \$15 per acre.⁷ Bandini was aided in its purchase by the Welton-Renner Real Estate Co. of Springdale and the Frisco Railroad Company.⁸ The area bordered Indian Territory, later the state of Oklahoma.⁹

In his March 6, 1898, report cited in the previous chapter,

⁵ Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 14-15.

⁶ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, “Breve cenno,” 7. Hewes, “Tontitown,” 135, suggested three reasons for choosing the new location: suitability for growing grapes, it reminded the settlers of Italy, and it was free of malaria. The U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:360, noted that at first the land cost \$3 an acre but growing demand raised the cost to \$15 per acre, requiring a cash down payment and the balance to be paid in three years at 6% interest.

⁷ Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 93; Joseph C. Neal, comp., *Washington County History* (Springdale: Shiloh Museum, 1989), 250-52.

⁸ Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 15. See WCA, CR, Abstract of Title No. 13,166, 15-17 (copy at SMOH).

⁹ Follens, “Ozark Vineyards,” 26.

Rossati noted that some families had already left for Springdale, Washington County, in northwestern Arkansas, where, according to Fr. Bandini, some fifty families from Hyner (Venetians) will relocate. Bandini himself claimed to have led 43 families from Sunnyside, a number consistent with the one given by Young.¹⁰ The settlers, apparently, arrived at Tontitown at different times that winter and spring. The *Springdale News* reported that the first two Italian families arrived in January 1898 followed by two more in February, and more after that.¹¹ In an interview on August 16, 1979, Albinio Roso, only 4 years old when his family left Italy for Sunnyside, remembered “riding in a box car with many people and luggage, trunks, etc. & being crowded,” as the migrants made their way to Washington County.¹²

On April 7 Bandini informed Rossati that “Here in Springdale I have now 58 Italian families. I have placed 52; between today and Sunday I hope to have put all of them in place. It is a mental and physical effort superior to my strengths.”¹³ The migrants lived in several already built small cabins scattered over the property. Since there were just a few of them, several families lived together until new houses were built.¹⁴ Bandini recalled that “The first houses were improvised with tree logs, rough tables and mud and their extreme modesty did not keep some from assuming grand names, such as that of ‘roman castles’ given to those of more pretentious appearance. A name that then has remained in that location even after better houses

¹⁰ SMOH, RF, Bandini, “These are the families I led from Sunnyside in 1898,” n.d.; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 21-22. See Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, 17-18.

¹¹ Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 93-94. The U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:360, mentioned an initial group of 15 families and a second group of 40 families who had spent all their money for fare from Sunnyside to Springdale.

¹² SMOH, RF, Bobbie Lynch and Martha Brogdon, “Tontitown,” interview with Albinio Roso on August 16, 1979.

¹³ ASDMAE, LSRD, Busta 110, fasc. 2194, Bandini to Caro Professore (Rossati), Springdale, Ark., April 7, 1898.

¹⁴ Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 94; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 22.

replaced those undeveloped ones.”¹⁵ At first, each family settled on 10 acres of land and cultivated one acre of grapes. The work of creating an economically viable settlement had begun: “With primitive ploughs and other tools, such as could be suggested by necessity, work on the land began and the building of fences to protect the seeds and the harvest. And the bodies already weakened by the fever, worn-out by privations and the hard work, began to recover strength and the yellow color that the fever had painted on them began to disappear from their faces. This occurred in March and April 1898.”¹⁶



Domenico Fiori home, 1898; Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, Roma.

The settlement was named Tontitown, after Enrico di Tonti, 1649-1704, a Neapolitan who served in the New World under the French explorer Robert Cavalier de LaSalle. On the last page of his “Brief account” Bandini explained the choice of name:

¹⁵ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, “Breve cenno,” 7.

¹⁶ Neal, *Washington County History*, 252; AGS, DH 02, Bandini, “Breve cenno,” 7-8.

We have called the colony and town Tontitown thus resurrecting from history a glorious Italian name; Tonti, the Piedmontese official who was the lieutenant of La Salle in the Americas, who founded the first colony in Arkansas in 1686 and built the military fort that took the name of Arkansas Post. No county, no town in Arkansas remembered this name. So it has fallen on the Italians to recall the glorious memory of their fellow citizen and bind to his name the fates of a new town risen in those same lands made bright by him and where he planted the first seed of civilized life.¹⁷

That first Easter, which occurred on Sunday, April 10, a petition with 45 names was “gotten up” and presented by Bandini to Bishop Edward Fitzgerald requesting a resident priest and pledging that each petitioner would contribute \$1.00 monthly for his support, outside of fees for baptisms, funerals, weddings and masses.¹⁸ On April 24, Pierina Tessaro and Antonio Sbanotto married, the first wedding in the new colony.¹⁹ On Thursday, May 5, the bishop replied and appointed Bandini temporary pastor, a position he held until his death in 1917. The following year, 1899, he was incardinated in the Little Rock Diocese.²⁰ On May 26, 1898, a powerful tornado hit

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 19. On Tonti, see Remigio U. Pane, “Enrico Tonti,” in *Seven Italians Involved in the Creation of America*, ed. Peter Sammartino (Washington, D.C.: The National Italian American Foundation, 1984), 5-10; *The Italian American Experience: An Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Tonti, Enrico di (ca. 1649-1704),” by Donald J. D’Elia.

¹⁸ ADLR, PHSJT, Tontitown - St. Joseph’s Church, Priests serving the parish: (Pastors) (includes 1898 history on back of page); Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 126; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 22. See Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, 19.

¹⁹ SMOH, RF, Lynch, “Tontitown”; Neal, *Washington County History*, 1401-02. See Judy Bicknell, “They Carved a Living Out of the Land,” *SN*, August 10, 1966, 6.

²⁰ ADLR, PHSJT, Tontitown - St. Joseph’s Church, Priests serving the parish: (Pastors) (includes 1898 history on back of page), PBF, Personal Visitation (Fr. Peter Bandini),

Washington County and Gaetano Galante lost his life.²¹ The next day, *The Springdale News* reported: "In the property formerly owned by Uncle Billy Woods were four Italian families. It was a log house one and a half stories high. The walls only were left standing. In the upper portion of the building was a young man confined to a sick bed. He and the bed were blown 100 yards from the house, and the young man, age about 20 years, was killed."²² He was the first person to be buried in the Tontitown cemetery on an acre of land half a mile south of the church donated by Pietro Maestri two days after the storm. In January 1909 thirteen graves were removed from their original location and buried in the cemetery.²³ Bandini, mistakenly giving March 20 as the date of the tornado, later recalled:

Well into the middle of spring a severe cold killed all the fruit in bloom and damaged the seeds. On March 20th a cyclone uprooted trees, knocked down various houses, flung the fences and, that which is more important, killed with one blow one of our bravest youngsters. That year the harvest was almost nothing, both because work began too late and because the season was unfavorable. Moreover our neighbors who from the beginning very much disapproved of us, both as Italians and as Catholics, began with relentless persistence to molest us in a thousand ways with the evident purpose of giving rise to a conflict in

Tontitown, Ark., February 9, 1914; Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 126; Young, "*So Big, This Little Place*," 22.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 44, gives May 20 as the date of the tornado. Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 126-27, states that "on May 28, 1898, a tornado hit the newly established community and one of the colonists lost his life." See, Lewellen, "'Sheep Amidst the Wolves'," 32.

²² *Ibid.*, 32, states that the young man was Pacific Bastianelli.

²³ *Ibid.*, 32; Young, "*So Big, This Little Place*," 81. On the cemetery, see Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, 21.

which in the long run we would have had the worst.²⁴

Smith's school house was a wood frame building which was also used as a church. On July 17, 1898, Virgil Pozza was born and was the first to be baptized in the community. Despite the "trials," a thanksgiving festival was held that year.²⁵ Patsy Taldo Phillips recalled in 1988 that "The church was the center of worship and social activities. Some of the social activities consisted of music, singing, dancing, games, visiting, and laughter." On their first August at Tontitown, she added "the people gathered to celebrate and give 'thanks to God' for their recovery from the fate at Sunnyside, for their new location, and for the harvests they received during the year. This celebration has been observed yearly and is now known as Tontitown Grape Festival."²⁶

Initially, the Italians were not welcome in the area. The U.S. Industrial Commission, in the first federal government report on the new colony issued in 1901, noted that in the first year Bandini "held his people together in spite of adverse circumstances - a most killing frost, a destructive cyclone, and the prejudice of the neighboring Baptists and Adventists." Ten years later, the U.S. Immigration Commission reported that the newcomers ""met with nothing but hatred from the native farmers. The arrival of the poor, sickly Italians angered the whole neighborhood, and neither sympathy nor aid was extended them. The opinion prevailed among the natives that one winter would be all the Italians could stand and that in the summer

²⁴ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, "Breve cenno," 8-9.

²⁵ Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 126; SMOH, RF, Lynch, "Tontitown," Frances Franco and Margie Ceola, eds., "Tontitown. Seventy-Five Years of Memories and Heritage," n.d., 2. See Young, "*So Big, This Little Place*," 48-50, for Mary Morsani Pianalto's recollection of the early picnics and a picture of the Smith schoolhouse..

²⁶ Neal, *Washington County History*, 726. See "Picnic at Tontitown," *SN*, May 27, 1904; "Big Celebration Now at Tontitown," *The Southern Guardian*, June 29, 1912, 8; "Celebration in Tontitown Grape Day Festival," *The Guardian*, August 19, 1916, 1.

they would abandon their land and allow it to revert to the former owners.” Moreover, “The settlers had very little money to spend for food and many of them would have starved during the first winter had it not been for the rabbits and other game that they caught in traps. This game furnished the settlers with the only meat, sometimes the only food, they had during the winter months.”²⁷ In his comprehensive 1989 compilation of Washington County history, Joseph C. Neal pointed out that “These immigrants were resented by some residents, probably because they spoke Italian, and as immigrants, they stuck together and did not quickly assimilate into the existing community in northern Washington County.”²⁸ This animosity provided the context for what followed.

On a Friday in September 1898 the schoolhouse used also as a church was set on fire. Most of the accounts listed above recorded the event, blaming a “rough element from the adjacent Indian Territory” or “a group of young persons.” Lemke, in his 1963 compilation of material on Tontitown, included an influential article on the town written by John L. Mathews and published in the January 1909 edition of *Everybody's Magazine*, giving it wider exposure. In that article Mathews described how a “rough element from the adjacent Indian Territory repeatedly raided their settlement. One Saturday night they came in and set the schoolhouse on fire, and would have destroyed it but that the watchful priest saw flames and beat them out with his own hands.”²⁹ The U.S. Immigration Commission’s report indicated that after Bandini had opened a school in an unused schoolhouse in September 1898, “on Friday night following the opening of the school an attempt was made to burn the schoolhouse by a group of young persons who had determined to intimidate or, if possible, drive away

²⁷ U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:506; U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:360. See Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 44, for samples of prejudice.

²⁸ Neal, *Washington County History*, 252.

²⁹ Mathews, “Tontitown,” 9.

the ‘Dagoes’.”³⁰ Lewellen, Canonici, and Young, in their respective 1986, 2003, and 2009 accounts on Tontitown, cited the Mathews article. Lewellen added information not found in it without giving any supporting evidence: “Father Bandini and other men of the village spent most of the night fighting the flames, and miraculously lost only a portion of one wall. Ironically, the picture of St. Joseph was spared, and the parish had its name for the future.”³¹ In his 1902 “Brief account,” Bandini gave his recollection of that event:

Their nightly stone throwing and gunshots not having achieved their intent and never having succeeded with different accusations to the courts in convicting any colonist of having violated the law, they resorted to violence attacking us in our properties. On a Friday night, having saturated the wooden walls of the school with petroleum and throwing inside bundles of matches and other flammable materials, they set off the fire. That was the only valuable building that we had in the colony at that time. The best that we owned was locked in there, including the organ and all the furnishings of the Church of which we have some beautiful ones, in particular the one given me as a present by H.M. the Queen Mother. The attempt did not have the desired success, since the fire spent itself after having blackened the walls up to the roof and burned two inches under the beams.

Bandini decided that it was time to confront the vandals: “The

³⁰ U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:367.

³¹ Lewellen, “‘Sheep Amidst the Wolves’,” 33. Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 45, repeats the item about the picture of St. Joseph and cites an undated article in the Tontitown Historical Museum Archives; Neal, *Washington County History*, 726, in a brief account by Patsy Taldo Phillips, notes that “Part of the rear wall was burned, but a picture of St. Joseph hanging on the wall was not damaged. Hence they named the church St. Joseph.” See Follens, “Ozark Vineyards,” 28-29.

time had come to put ourselves on the defensive, since our position was beginning to be insupportable. I put together a report and sent it to the constable who did not deign to come or reply. I then drafted a report of the facts and sent it through a trusted person to the court.” The attempted burning of the church and school drew a large crowd on the Sunday after the incident had taken place:

Meanwhile rumor of what had happened and of the fire of the Italian school, which was taken as an accomplished fact, attracted an extraordinary crowd of Americans the following Sunday, who were curious to find out what happened and who were anxious to satisfy their grudge in that accident. Yet to their amazement the school still stood. But that multitude there under my eyes awoke again in me the resolution of ending the attitude of impossible victim already sustained for as many as six months and to cling to new ways of defense. Having finished the Gospel I preached to the Italians in our language on the theme of the day and then addressing the Americans I began to speak approximately like this: “Brothers, for some months you assiduously and in large number attend our religious service, for you new and mysterious. You should have been able to convince yourselves that our Sunday assemblies have no other purpose than to give homage and adoration to God with those forms and those ceremonies which our Church prescribes for us. You know by examination that the Catholic Priest does not serve himself of the altar or the pulpit to support this or that political party, as not infrequently occurs with your ministers. You are my witnesses that in all the time you have not heard from my lips but the word of God, depending on whether the reading of the day came now from St. John, now from

St. Matthew or another evangelist. But this morning I find myself in such exceptional circumstances that, leaving briefly aside the usual way, I find myself constrained to direct to you my own frank and sincere word. Having found in the rich lands in the South of the state many Christian families that were dying from malarial fevers, I brought them in these balsamic hills, fearing nothing from the well renowned cordial American hospitality. If I had brought them among savages perhaps they would not have been victims of many molestations, nor would they be witnesses of so much senselessness, such as was that of setting fire to that school, where they with much love and with much assiduity study to learn your language and become familiar with your customs. Do not certainly delude yourselves that we do not know who the leaders of these uprisings are and we say to them - 'think well about the responsibility that you assume and the consequences of your illegal behavior. Since we have come honestly to the legitimate possession of these lands, so we will protect our rights with all those means that the law places in our hands. Observe this growing colony and you will see that the band of men both young and mature is sufficiently large. All of these, obeying the law of the native government, were instructed in the use of weapons. Many are good shots, others are very skilled and have earned medals and honors in national target practice. They are the ones who from now on will defend our property. And you know that the law of the state of Arkansas guarantees a generous award to whoever brings before justice an arsonist living or dead. They will make sure to merit the award.'

In his “Brief account” Bandini noted “How this unusual talk was received I will leave to the imagination of the reader.” But whatever the reaction of his American audience, the small colony put itself on guard. “But the order was kept by our brave improvised soldiers. The guards changed regularly as is done in military camps and they were removed only when things actually changed, so that this precaution became unnecessary.”³² Later accounts, starting apparently with Mathews’ 1909 article on Tontitown, gave an abbreviated and sharper version of Bandini’s warning to the troublemakers, depicting him as a regimental colonel leading an army ready to shoot: “We are all Americans here, and I give you notice that we shall exercise the American right of self-defense. There are few men among us who have not served in the Italian army. We are familiar with our guns. I am hereafter the colonel of our regiment, and I assure you that night and day a sentinel shall patrol our streets. Any person coming among us and manifesting malice will be shot.”³³ Unlike the constable, “The judge came the following Monday from the county capital.” The county judge from 1893 to 1898 was Frank Hill. Bandini pointed out that “Canadian in origin, he is a man of large views and not a partisan.”:

He approved our conduct and insisted that every manner be studied so as to be able to bring before the tribunal any of those scoundrels who had disturbed the peace of the colony and finally it was decided to change some boundaries of the district eliminating some territory to the S. W. that was the den of those most relentless against the colony. They, not having any more interest in the district, it was thought, and not wrongly, that many causes of conflict would likewise be removed. So it happened that the district, with the exception of 4 or 5 American families, remained

³² AGS, DH 02, Bandini, “Breve cenno,” 9-14.

³³ Mathews, “Tontitown,” 9.

Italian and our school became at that time, besides the church, our town hall, the hall for elections, meetings, etc. etc. Among the American flags and coats of arms that adorn the walls also waves the Italian flag, and among the portraits of the great men of the American land are also encamped those of Christopher Columbus and Enrico Tonti.

“At that time” he recalled, “the colony emerged from its first trials, replaced by peace that was the herald of that harmony and brotherhood that unites and now fraternizes the two peoples.”³⁴

“A Model Italian Colony in Arkansas”

On top of the great challenges and hostility, the small colony had to deal with pressing economic and financial issues. The colonists had to start paying the loan and property taxes for the 10 acres of land each family had settled on after the first harvest. But the destructive tornado that hit the community on May 26, 1898, and the poor harvest that year, made it difficult to come up with the cash to pay off the loans and property taxes. After the first harvest, many colonists went to work in the Oklahoma coal mines at Wilburton, Dow, and Krebs to help pay their debts. Some went to Missouri to work on the railroads. This became a regular pattern for many colonists willing to work hard to establish themselves economically.³⁵ Some of the women helped

³⁴ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, “Breve cenno,” 14-15; WCA, elected officials. No documentation on this incident is available in the WCA.

³⁵ Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 45. See Kenny L. Brown, *The Italians in Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 23-26 and “Peaceful Progress: A History of the Italians of Krebs, Oklahoma,” *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 53 (Fall 1975): 332-352; Stanley Clark, “Immigrants in the Choctaw Coal Industry,” *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 33 (Winter 1955-56): 440-455. For Italian government reports on Italians in the coal mines, see “Per la tutela degli italiani negli Stati Uniti (Lettere dell’Ispettore cav. Adolfo Rossi, scritte al Commissariato dell’emigrazione nel corso di una sua missione negli Stati Uniti dell’America del Nord),” *Boll. Emig.*

by working as maids, mending and sewing.³⁶ Follens noted, based on the recollection of some of the original colonists, that “Father Bandini became an employment agent, searching out jobs for these men who could not speak English well enough to ask for themselves. Wage-work held no enchantment for them. It was only a means to an end, a way to obtain quick cash with which to make their second payment, and develop their own land.”³⁷ The colonists’ persistence and hard work was slowly starting to pay off. On May 2, 1899, Bandini informed Rossati:

I hope that you will be happy to hear that [in] the colony of Springdale, which last year underwent a thousand trials, a cyclone, the destruction of the orchards and the ruin of the crop etc...the appearance of the land so far is very consoling. In a short time we will pick the strawberries and the orchards that have been preserved promise much. All have built their homes and barns. 500 acres have been sown and they have planted 10,000 fruit trees and as many grapevines. If we can have a good year, I believe there will not be more to complain about. But we have gone through some ugly quarter hours.³⁸

A month later, Bandini acknowledged the difficulties in another letter to Rossati: “In reply to your letter of May 23 I can tell you that

16 (1904): 90-94; Giacomo Fara Forni, “Gli Italiani nel distretto consolare di Nuova Orleans (Stati Uniti),” *Boll. Emig.* 17 (1905): 10-11 and in *Emig. e Col.: Raccolta di Rapporti dei RR. Agenti Diplomatici e Consolari. Volume III. - America*, ed. Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Commissariato dell’Emigrazione (Roma: Tipografia dell’Unione Editrice, 1909), 210-11 (same article but slightly edited).

³⁶ Agatha M. Smith, et al., “The Emidio Morsani Family and Associates,” Washington County Historical Society *Flashback* XXIX (August 1979): 8. See Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 45-47.

³⁷ Follens, “Ozark Vineyards,” 28.

³⁸ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Bandini to Pregmo Sig. Professore (Rossati), Springdale, Ark., May 2, 1899.

the colony continues to make progress and that the current aspect could not present better guarantees of prosperity. It remains to overcome the difficulty of paying this year's instalment, which considering the poor crop and last year's expenses, is not a small trifle. Nevertheless the colonists have engaged in other labors." He added that "the colony has expurgated itself of a number of families that had not decided to settle permanently and put all in a bad mood due to the constant letters and incitements that they received from Sunny Side and other cotton places."³⁹ Bandini's projection for 1899 proved accurate. On November 2



Construction of Tontitown church; Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, Roma.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Caro Professore (Rossati), Springdale, Ark., June 5, 1899, Rossati to Vinci, New York, June 8, 1899, rough draft, Vinci to Esteri (Visconti Venosta), Washington, June 24 and October 31, 1899, Alpini to Oldrini, New York, November 15, 1899. The U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:361, noted that the second group of 40 families to arrive at Tontitown, who had come uninvited and without money, became dissatisfied and returned mostly to the cotton districts. See Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 47, on the colonists' tax problems for 1898.

he reported that “At Springdale our health is good and the harvest has been abundant.” Some three weeks later, he reported that “This year things have gone much better.” Almost all have paid two thirds of what they owed on the land. “I have reason to believe that a year from now they will be free of all debts...At the same time I have completed the inside and outside of the school...” The church, he said, would also be completed in a year.⁴⁰

To help with the construction of the church at Tontitown, Bandini sought, in January 1899, financial help from Propaganda Fide, the church’s missionary arm. He told the prefect that the purchase of the land and the building of a modest but sufficient wooden church would require some two thousand dollars. Bishop Fitzgerald wrote a letter granting permission for the request. However, due to the many requests for help that it received, Propaganda Fide replied that it could not provide a subsidy.⁴¹ Not one to give up easily, Bandini wrote to the secretary of Propaganda Fide at the end of November informing him that the school, where he celebrated Mass, had been completed and that he had begun to build the church. But he needed help to finish it. “The regions of the Southwest of the United States are poor and don’t have as many Catholics as the N.E.,” Bandini told him. No reply to this request was found.⁴² On the feast of St. Joseph in 1899, the

⁴⁰ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Alpini to Oldrini, New York, November 15 and December 15, 1899.

⁴¹ APF, NS, Vol. 332 (1905), rubr. 153, Bandini to Eccellentissimo Sign Cardinale Prefetto di Propaganda (Ledóchowski), Springdale, Ark., January 15, 1899 (172), Fitzgerald cover letter, Little Rock, Ark., January 20, 1899 (172), Prefetto Segretario (Ciasca) to Fitzgerald, Rome, February 20, 1899 (173). See *ibid.*, Horan to Ledóchowski, Little Rock, Ark., January 23, 1899 (171), where Fr. Patrick F. Horan, pastor of the Church of Good Counsel in Little Rock, thanked the prefect for money he had received for the new Italian church that will be completed in April, presumably in the Italian settlement of Saint-Joseph near Center Ridge, Arkansas, that he had founded, as recorded in Mayor des Planches’ *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti*, 213.

⁴² APF, NS, Vol. 332 (1905), rubr. 153, Bandini to Reverendmo Segretario di Propaganda (Veccia), Springdale, Ark., November 29, 1899 (190-91).

cornerstone was laid for the new church, which was dedicated on Sunday November 18, 1900, and named after that saint. It also served as a school.⁴³ A month later, Bandini sent Bishop Fitzgerald pictures of his church, the school building, and the day scholars. He told the prelate that “This winter, I hope, will have two small altars...The oldest boys and girls have a night-school, which in some season of the year is pretty regular.” He also sought his approval for establishing an infirmary at Eureka Springs in Carroll Co., which was one of his missions. The local people were anxious to have it and the Sisters of Mercy of St. Louis were willing to manage it. The sisters were also willing to manage the Tontitown school.⁴⁴

The *Official Catholic Directory* for 1899 and 1900 listed Bandini at Springdale, though a “(Church building)” but no parish church was named and a school with a lay teacher and 50 pupils was given. It first listed Bandini at St. Joseph’s in Tontitown in 1901. That year, it also listed a school with a lay teacher and 50 pupils, and missions in Eureka Springs and Springdale. A rectory was built soon after. It was an eight-room, two-storey building.⁴⁵ Prior to this, Bandini had resided in a boarding house in nearby Fayetteville.⁴⁶ In 1903 a telephone to the Springdale Telegraph office was installed in the rectory.⁴⁷ The parish eventually introduced the St. Joseph’s Society, the Rosary Society, the Children of Mary Sodality, and the Catholic Knights of America branch No. 1054. A brass band under the direction

⁴³ ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Fitzgerald, Tontitown, Ark., November 14, 1900; Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 126; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 50.

⁴⁴ ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Fitzgerald, Tontitown, Ark., December 19, 1900.

⁴⁵ *OCD*, 1899, 1900, 1901 (Wiltzius), 349, 360, 366. See *OCD*, 1903 and 1904 (Wiltzius), 388, 398, which lists only Springdale as a mission, and 1906 (Wiltzius), 414, which lists stations at Cincinnati and Springdale in Washington Co. and Rogers and Siloam Springs in Benton Co., and a school with a lay teacher and 77 pupils.

⁴⁶ ALE, HR, Census & Voter Lists, 1900 United States Federal Census, “Peter Banddin,” (accessed 10/17/2013).

⁴⁷ SMOH, RF, Lynch, “Tontitown” and Franco and Ceola, “Tontitown,” 3.

of Fr. Bandini was also started, not unlike the ones he had started at St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier missions in Montana.⁴⁸ At about this time, Bandini was asked to care for Catholics at the Church of St. Blaise in Harrison, Ark.⁴⁹



Tontitown school daytime class with teacher Bernadette Brady at far right; Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, Roma.

The 1925 history of the Little Rock Diocese pointed out that, despite the colony's economic limitations and problems, Bandini did not neglect the education of its young children, something that had also been true at Sunnyside:

⁴⁸ Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 128, 201; Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 53. For a standard history of the parish, see *St. Joseph Church* (Hackensack, N.J.: Custombook, Inc., 1973).

⁴⁹ Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 130; ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Fitzgerald, Tontitown, Ark., March 10, 1903.

Father Peter Bandini secured, early in the history of the colony, an able instructress for the children of the congregation, in the person of Miss Bernadette E. Brady, from St. Louis, who is now happily married in Arizona. Her task was a hard one, as the children for the most part spoke only Italian. But she managed well and even acquired a good use of the Italian language herself. She is remembered as a good disciplinarian and as the possessor of excellent teaching qualities. She was succeeded for a term by Miss Josephine Pantaleone, who acquired a thorough education from the Sisters of Mercy of Little Rock. She is now Mrs. Josephine Maestri, living with her husband at Fort Smith. After her, Miss Rose Neal taught successfully until the day came when the old school house was found insufficient for the increasing number of children.⁵⁰

He also sought the aid of the Italian government, which at the end of 1899 granted 100 Italian lire in gold (L. it. cento in oro) for the school and an equal amount for the building of the church. The government also provided scholastic material for the school. Bandini was very grateful for the assistance.⁵¹ In keeping with Ambassador Fava's request that he be kept informed on developments in the colony,

⁵⁰ Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 127. See Lewellen, "‘Sheep Amidst the Wolves’," 37; Woods, *Mission and Memory*, who says on page 145 of his 1993 history of the Little Rock Diocese that in 1903 Bandini "opened a school with Bernadette Brady, a woman of Irish-American and Indian descent, as the first mistress."

⁵¹ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, rough draft, Vinci to Esteri (Visconti Venosta), Washington, October 31, 1899, Fusinato to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, November 27, 1899, rough draft, Regio Ambasciatore (Fava) to Bandini, Washington, December 15, 1899 and February 10, 1900, Bandini to Fava, Springdale, Ark., December 22, 1899, rough draft, Fava to Esteri (Visconti Venosta), Washington, December 27, 1899, January 29 and March 1, 1900, Puccioni to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, January 14 and 26, 1900, A. Scalabrini to Fava, Rome, March 14, 1900.

Bandini reported in June 1900 that it now had postal and telephone offices, that the appearance of the colony had never been so promising and that the colonists were full of activity and good will. The school, he told the ambassador, had closed on May 10 and will reopen the first Monday of September. Finally, he wished that the postmaster, Giovanni Pozza, be allowed to make notarial deeds valid in Italy and asked for a map of Italy for the school. Fava relayed the information to Foreign Minister Visconti Venosta, including the request for a map, which was sent later that year. Making notarial deeds, on the other hand, could only be authorized by the local governor. Bandini thanked the ambassador for the map and sent him photographs of the church and school, pointing out that when the families were busy with farm work the students attended evening school. From December to February they attended school in the daytime, where they learned both English and Italian.⁵² At the end of the year, Bandini informed the ambassador that Tontitown was doing well. The colonists were satisfied and the hard times were behind them. Additional families had arrived and others will come soon. Moreover, Tontitown now received mail twice a day and the post office was authorized to issue money orders. But funds for the school were very limited due to minimal taxation by the state, a clear pitch for more support from the Italian government. On February 27, 1901, Fava wrote to the foreign minister submitting Bandini's request for a "modest subsidy" for the Tontitown school. The Italian government agreed to grant "an extraordinary subsidy of 200 lire for the current year 1900-

⁵² *Ibid.*, Bandini to Fava, Tontitown, Ark., June 8 and November 29, 1900, rough drafts, Fava to R. Mro Esteri (Visconti Venosta), June 12 and December 2, 1900, Malva to Fava, Rome, July 9, 1900, rough draft, Fava to Bandini, Washington, November 18, 1900. The post office was opened on May 2, 1900, in the Pozza-Maestri Merchandise and Millinery store with John Pozza the first postmaster. In 1911 Pozza was replaced as postmaster by Josephine Maestri. See Deane G. Carter, comp., *Washington County Postmasters and Postoffices 1829-1976* (Fayetteville, AR: The Washington County Historical Society, 1976), 33; *Postal History of Washington County Arkansas* (Springdale, AR: Postal History Society of Washington County Arkansas, 1994), 89. For a photograph of the first post office, see Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, 32.

1901.” The subsidy was the equivalent of \$36.70.⁵³ The school had been established as County School District 74.⁵⁴ In November, Bandini sent the ambassador a copy of the entry on Tontitown in the *Reports* of the U.S. Industrial Commission.⁵⁵

The colony’s progress began to change its neighbors’ attitude. Looking back some four years after the church had been set on fire, Bandini noted that “The aversion of our neighbors has changed to admiration and they themselves marvel at the change that has taken place in these lands. Admiring now the beautiful fields, and orchards, and vineyards, they have begun to understand them to be the true wealth of the region.” Even more important, the colonists had in just three or four years paid off the cost of the land and become landowners:

Meanwhile the Italians, besides having improved and enlarged their farms, have built good homes and barns. But that which matters most, they have already entirely paid for their lands, in such a way that they now find themselves on a solid basis. But it is true that to reach this point cost some of them enormous sacrifices and privations. They buried themselves in the coal mines and went to work in the railroads. But they reached their goal. They have accumulated the necessary money and freed themselves from debt. They own and

⁵³ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, Bandini to Fava, Tontitown, Ark., December 30, 1900 and March 25, 1901, rough draft, Mayor des Planches to Signor Ministro (Visconti Venosta), Washington, December 31, 1900, rough drafts, Fava to Signor Ministro (Prinetti), Washington, February 27 and March 30, 1901, Dellartina to Fava, Rome, March 2, 1901, R. Ambasciatore (Fava) to Bandini, Washington, March 15, 1901, Perera to Fava, New York, March 16, 1901.

⁵⁴ Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 47-49.

⁵⁵ See U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:506; ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2194, newspaper clipping, “Tontitown” *Arkansas Sentinel*, November 5, 1901, n.p., Bandini to Mayor des Planches, Tontitown, Ark., November 27, 1901, rough draft, Mayor des Planches to Bandini, Washington, December 1, 1901.

daily improve their possessions. But I will make these improvements and the sources of prosperity of the new town the subject of another article.

The 19 page "Brief account" concluded with a glowing description of Tontitown, its climate and its products four years after its foundation. The very best city booster or Madison Avenue advertising agent could not have waxed more eloquently:

Tontitown rises six miles west of Springdale and has the appearance of a pleasant city with its fine post office which issues money orders, telephone even at great distance, stores, offices, school and a very beautiful church. The view from this point is very enchanting. The eye moves all around roaming in the distant horizon and can see a breeding ground of houses, which with their lively colors often break the now clear and now dark green of the blooming countryside. And to think that 4 years ago only a lone roof could be seen!

Climate. These localities are very suited for recovering health and encouraging strength. Since on one side we are protected from the cold winds that rage in the prairies of the North and West and [on the other side] the height of the hilly land, between 1500 and 2500 feet above sea level, protects us from the suffocating heat and malaria that reigns in the lower regions. In the summer the heat is moderated by the gulf breezes and hence sunstrokes are unknown while the nights are invariably cool. Fresh and clear waters are also abundant. This mildness and wholesomeness of climate explains why there are so many renowned summer meeting places and water cures a few miles from where we are. In fact we have in the West Siloam

Springs, in the N.W. Sulphur Springs, in the N.E. Eurika Springs and Montene, in the South Winslow etc.

Products. Vegetables and cereals of every kind grow abundantly, but large and small fruit from these lands is much sought in the markets and is the most profitable source of income. As a matter of fact in any exhibition in which this fruit was displayed it has always received the first prizes, as it received at the Expositions of Chicago and Paris. Above all grapevines grow well and the colonists who have begun to enjoy the first fruit and the first sales rejoice and are preparing ample cellars.⁵⁶

On Tuesday, September 30, 1902, Bandini celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination on September 29, 1877. The local paper detailed the event. Bishop Scalabrini, who had played such a big part in his life, wrote him for the occasion. Bandini replied:

Your letter of this past September 25 which I received this morning is for me the best gift that I have received these days on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of my ordination as a priest. And yet I cannot say that the spontaneous and cordial demonstration of so many who participated in the feast has not been for me of some comfort and reward for the exertions of body, mind and heart of many months. Four and a half years ago we did not have a friend, we did not have a bed. Now the colony has friends all over, and the multitude that has come here to take part in the celebration on a weekday and from various places some miles away is enough to demonstrate that. A little over four years ago my bed was a cloth hanging between two trees, then a

⁵⁶ AGS, DH 02, Bandini, "Breve cenno," 15-18.

small room made of rough tree logs, after that a small wooden room added to the post office, later one of the rooms adjacent to the sacristy of the new church and now I occupy a beautiful two-storey house that would cut a fine figure in any American city. To get around after a few months I had to get used to going by horse; then I had a country style tribune, then a small carriage and the other day I had a beautiful pair [of horses] with the necessary equipment. The progress that the pastor has made is only a mirror of the greater and more rapid progress made by the parishioners.⁵⁷

Bandini followed up at Christmastime by asking Scalabrini for a subsidy and scholastic material for his school. Apparently, he wanted the bishop to put in a good word for him with the Italian government. The following Christmas, Bandini repeated his request for a subsidy. He told the bishop that “thanks to God, Tontitown is still progressing, and some companies are studying connecting our town with the railroad and electric car.” He mentioned that he had yet to receive a reply to his request for a subsidy and added that “I hear that the Holy Father distributes church items, could Tontitown have something?” In March 1904 Bandini reminded the bishop of his unsuccessful request for a subsidy the previous Christmas. He told him that he was thinking of making a considerable addition to the school because of the increase in the number of students. He also inquired about the availability of an Italian priest who also knew German for a new colony made up of some 30 Italian and the same number of German families.⁵⁸ At the May 1904 Tontitown picnic, Congressman Hugh Dinsmore was the scheduled speaker. But rain forced the cancellation of the speech. Nevertheless, Tontitown was

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Bandini to Scalabrini, Tontitown, Ark., October 11, 1902. See Demetrius, “Tontitown,” *SN*, October 10, 1902; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 53.

⁵⁸ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Scalabrini, Tontitown, Ark., December 9, 1902, January 22 and December 16, 1903, March 27, 1904.

starting to gain acceptance and respectability.⁵⁹

In the same year, the apple crop was struck by St. Joseph's scale disease, destroying most of it. Follens recounted that Bandini "called the men together and suggested they investigate the possibility of expanding their dooryard grape arbors to commercial vineyards. A committee was formed and the priest wrote to the manufacturers of grape baskets, to the commission houses that handled grapes wholesale, and to the Department of Agriculture and agricultural colleges. He translated the replies to the committee and to the farmers." After much discussion, they "decided to go ahead with the project. As a trial balloon, a few thousand baskets were assigned to a commission house in Fort Smith, Arkansas, for sale. The profits from this first commercial venture encouraged them to enlarge their vineyards, and eventually grapes became the chief crop of the village."⁶⁰ In June of that year, *The Rogers Democrat* reported that "Of late Father Bandini has been experimenting with the silk worm, and has succeeded in procuring several pounds of silk which he sent to the head of the government for inspection." The report was very positive for establishing a successful silk industry in Tontitown.⁶¹

The biggest event in the town's young history, one worth a fortune in publicity, was the 1905 visit by the Italian ambassador, Baron Edmondo Mayor des Planches. It was part of a tour to explore the possibility of a more diverse and better distribution of Italian immigrants to the United States. The ambassador's account of the tour was first serialized in 1906 in the Italian publication *Nuova Antologia*.⁶²

⁵⁹ "Picnic at Tontitown," *SN*, May 27, 1904; Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 55.

⁶⁰ Follens, "Ozark Vineyards," 30.

⁶¹ "Additional News," *The Rogers Democrat*, June 29, 1904, 4. See Young, "So Big, This Place," 72.

⁶² For the southern part of the tour, see Edmondo Mayor Des Planches, "Nel Sud degli Stati Uniti - II," *Nuova Antologia* CXXII, Serie V, Marzo 1, 1906, 3-30, "Nel Sud degli Stati Uniti - IV," *Nuova Antologia* CXXIV, Serie V, Luglio 1, 1906, 10-40, and "Nel Sud

In 1913 it was published in book form with the title *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti per l'Emigrazione Italiana* (*Across the United States for Italian Emigration*). In late March of that year, Bandini had informed Bishop Scalabrini of the ambassador's forthcoming visit to Tontitown, "thanks to the good success of this colony." The ambassador, he told the bishop, "wants to personally learn what has been done, so as to have an idea of what can be done in other similar circumstances."⁶³ Fr. Bandini went all out to entice and welcome the distinguished guest to his small settlement. On May 9, 1905, the ambassador on a visit at Fort Smith, Arkansas, noticed among the carriages decked with Italian and American colors a stagecoach in which "young musicians in grey uniforms play patriotic or martial airs: it is the Tontitown band, which has come with Fr. Bandini, who would want me in his colony. Due to previous engagements, I will defer for several days." After visiting other cities, including Clarksville, Little Rock, Pine Bluff, Lake Village, and Hot Springs, the ambassador arrived in St. Louis on May 15. He was received at the train station by Bandini and the board of directors of the Missouri Pacific RR. Arrangements were made with the vice-president of the Frisco Line for the Tontitown visit. After lunch with Bandini, the ambassador met with various dignitaries in the city.⁶⁴ The next day, May 16, he left for Tontitown, arriving at Springdale, at that time a city of some 2500 inhabitants, at ten thirty in the morning. He and his party were given a rousing welcome, including from a delegation from Tontitown. From the train station, they traveled by carriage the five miles to the Italian colony, which at that time had from 350 to 400 Italians who together owned 2300 to

degli Stati Uniti - V," *Nuova Antologia* CXXIV, Serie V, Agosto 1, 1906, 353-68. See Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 57-58.

⁶³ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Revma (Scalabrini), Detroit, March 27, 1905.

⁶⁴ Mayor des Planches, *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti*, 203, 209-39. See SMOH, AC, S-86-140-1-2, Hughes to Renner, St. Louis, Mo., May 11 and 12, 1905. "Some Notes About Tontitown" gives interesting details on the ambassador's visit based on information provided by Mrs. Dorothy Byrnes Benbrook.

2400 acres of land. For the ambassador, Bandini was “the soul of the colony, the creative and life-giving spirit”:

He is the pastor, notary public, inspector of the district schools, first named by the judge, then confirmed by popular vote, postal assistant and guarantor of the postmaster. He directs agricultural cultivation, gives Italian lessons to the young. He supervises the elementary school, entrusted to a brave American teacher who also knows our language. He teaches the violin, trains the head of the musical band. He has become a notary so as to examine the property titles and review the contracts.



Father Bandini and Ambassador Edmondo Mayor des Planches (detail), 1905; Bastianelli Collection/Tontitown Historical Museum.

After three quarters of an hour the pointed bell tower of Tontitown’s church could be seen. At the town’s border a shrill band, a festive crowd, and a waving of flags welcomed the visitors. The

carriages stopped in front of Bandini's house. After seeing the church, a plenary meeting was held at the school. After speeches by the pastor, Congressman Dinsmore, and others, the group visited the countryside. The ambassador questioned several individuals, including the postmaster Giovanni Pozza, Giuseppe Taldo, and others. After lunch and additional visits, the ambassador and his party returned to Springdale in the afternoon, accompanied by the band. The next day they returned to St. Louis.⁶⁵ Even though the ambassador was in Tontitown no more than five or six very crowded hours, the enthusiasm and publicity the brief visit generated was remarkable for such a small colony.⁶⁶

On May 21, 1905, the *St. Louis Republic* published a lengthy article titled "The Italian Colony of Tontitown, Arkansas" on the occasion of the ambassador's visit. It repeated information found in the ambassador's account, adding additional details and a lot of color.⁶⁷ The Frisco Line capitalized on the event by publishing an article meant to publicize the colony and attract new settlers to it.⁶⁸ Events such as these, and the publicity that came with them, gave the small colony visibility, recognition, and a sense of pride and confidence in Bandini's leadership. Soon, other favorable articles followed, giving Fr. Bandini and his small settlement a national reputation for successful

⁶⁵ Mayor des Planches, *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti*, 239-49.

⁶⁶ See "Italian Ambassador at Tontitown," *Fayetteville Democrat*, May 18, 1905, 2; "He Liked Tontitown," *The Rogers Democrat*, May 24, 1905, 4; "When the Ambassador Visited Tontitown," *SN*, Souvenir Number. - Section Three, May 15, 1908, 1; ACMS, 005, box 13, *SN*, Souvenir Number. - Section Two, May 15, 1908.

⁶⁷ SMOH, RF, "The Italian Colony of Tontitown, Arkansas" and Frisco System, "La Colonia Italiana di Tontitown, Ark" (from an article in the *St. Louis Republic*, May 21, 1905). See Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 57-61.

⁶⁸ See Frisco Lines, "Colonia Italiana: Tontitown, Arkansas, Stati Uniti d'America," in Cordasco, *Italians in the United States*. See APF, NS, vol. 332 (1905), rubr. 153, Bandini to Gotti, Tontitown, Ark., August 15, 1905 (396), where Bandini writes that he sent a copy of an article on Tontitown published by the Frisco RR. He Prays that the new auxiliary bishop to be sent to Arkansas will show concern for immigrants in the countryside.

immigrant agricultural colonization. *Maxwell's Talisman* published in October 1905 what was probably the first American periodical article on Tontitown, written by A. W. Hadley. Referring to Tontitown as a "successful Italian colony," he listed many of its achievements in the seven years since its founding:

A general merchandise store was opened. A postoffice was secured, which receives mail twice daily from Springdale. Many orchards have been laid out and dryers and wineries installed. An excellent telephone system, and one of the handsomest rural churches in Arkansas are other features. In the latter are nineteen beautiful memorial windows. Every mortgage in the colony has been paid in full and the only debt outstanding is a \$400 lumber bill on the church which Father Bandini has now taken unto himself to pay and has secured the same with his own residence.⁶⁹

Forty three years later, Follens confirmed the view of Tontitown as a "successful Italian colony":

Within five years Tontitown was a prosperous farm community. When a glutted market caused a drop in the price of apples, the town met the difficulty in typical fashion, as a community. The wooden building that had already served as a church and a school was converted into an apple drying plant and cider works. Only choice apples that brought top prices were sold for table use; the second were dried, the culls pressed into cider. The parings from the drying process and the pulp from the cider presses were turned into vinegar and the remnants of the pulp were returned to the soil for fertilizer. Tontitown

⁶⁹ A. W. Hadley, "The Tontitown Settlement. History of Successful Italian Colony in Arkansas," *Maxwell's Talisman* (October 1905): 16.

received \$6.00 a barrel from the apple crop, ten times what their neighbors made.⁷⁰

On November 30, 1905, in an article titled "Immigration to the South," the *Manufacturers' Record* cited S. A. Hughes' glowing account of Tontitown under "the able management of Father Bandini." Hughes was the general immigration agent of the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad Co., St. Louis, MO.⁷¹ In September 1906, *The American Monthly Review of Reviews* published an article titled "A Model Italian Colony in Arkansas." It was prompted by the publication that year of Italian ambassador Mayor des Planches' account of his tour across the south of the United States in the Italian journal *Nuova Antologia*. The somewhat embellished article repeated previously published information.⁷² *The Arkansas Gazette* of January 14, 1907, mentioned the forthcoming publication of the ambassador's notes on his American tour and published a survey of Italians in the South. It had nothing but praise for Tontitown. Unlike its mostly negative view of Sunnyside, it noted that "Tontitown is the pride and the glory of the Italian colonies, the biggest and best of the 'Little Italies' in the Southwest, and Father Bandini, the good priest who stood by the colonists in their early struggles is the local hero."⁷³ Mathews' previously mentioned 1909 article on Tontitown in *Everybody's Magazine* was cited in the same month in the national Catholic publication *The Ave Maria*, edited by Fr. Daniel Hudson, calling its attention to a large Catholic audience.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Follens, "Ozark Vineyards," 29.

⁷¹ "Immigration to the South," *Manufacturers' Record*, November 30, 1905, 514-15.

⁷² "A Model Italian Colony in Arkansas," *The American Monthly Review of Reviews* XXXIV (September 1906): 361-62.

⁷³ "The Italian in the South," *The Arkansas Gazette*, January 14, 1907, 8.

⁷⁴ "Notes and Remarks," *The Ave Maria*, January 9, 1909, 55. See Young, "So Big, This Place," 81-82, for correspondence between Bandini, Mathews and Hudson.

“Thriving Tontitown”

On June 28, 1906, the souvenir paper *L'Avvenire* was published, in conjunction with the annual picnic. Bandini and Domenico Danzero, president of the Tontitown Wine and Fruit Distilling Company, were listed as editors and publishers. 10¢ was charged to benefit the new school. It contained brief articles on Bandini, Enrico Tonti, and the May 1905 visit by the Italian ambassador taken almost verbatim without citation from the first part of an article published in the *St. Louis Republic* on May 21, 1905, various town photographs, one of the building at 113 Waverly Place in New York that served as the home of the St. Raphael Society during Bandini's tenure there, and advertisements for businesses such as the Tontitown Wine and Fruit



L'Avvenire June 28, 1906 (detail); Tontitown Historical Museum.

Distilling Company, Peter Pianalto's blacksmith shop, builder and contractor Emilio Morsani, Pozza E. Maestri's general merchandise store, miller John Bash, Josephine Maestri and Rose Bastianelli's

millinery store, and others.⁷⁵ Bandini sent copies of the paper to Ambassador Mayor des Planches, claiming that even though he had been listed as editor, he had never even seen the proof sheets.⁷⁶ The souvenir paper was meant to take advantage of the crowds attending the popular annual picnic to raise money for the school and advertise Tontitown and its merchants. But, in its own way, it documented the significant economic progress achieved by the small colony in just eight years and Bandini's knack for advertising that fact.

The 1925 diocesan history recorded that in 1906 a school with a convent for the sisters was erected to replace the old one, which had become insufficient for the increased number of children: "The building contained large rooms to accommodate the children and commodious quarters for the new teachers. The new building was called St. Mary's Academy, and stands on the property of the church and belongs to the church, although it serves School District No. 74. After the building was completed, Sisters of Mercy from Fort Smith arrived to continue the work of education, and they served most ably and efficiently until 1912."⁷⁷ The school, which opened on September 10, served as a boarding school for girls six and older and boys six to twelve. Bandini served as director and taught foreign languages and music.⁷⁸ As he had done before, he requested books and financial support from the Italian government for his school.⁷⁹ The church and its missions, the school,

⁷⁵ *L'Avvenire*, June 28, 1906. See Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, 28; Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 67-69.

⁷⁶ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 174, fasc. 3920, Bandini to Eccellenza (Mayor des Planches), Tontitown, Ark., July 18, 1906.

⁷⁷ Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 127. The U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:367, put the total cost of the school at nearly \$5,000, with the colonists providing their labor. See Sisters of Mercy in Arkansas with Jane Ramos, *Arkansas Frontiers of Mercy*, 146; WCA, CR, Abstract of Title No. 13,166, 18-19 (copy at SMOH).

⁷⁸ Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 69.

⁷⁹ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 136, fasc. 3068, Attolico to Mayor des Planches, New

fund raising, and other responsibilities proved physically taxing on him.⁸⁰ Moreover, he had taken responsibility for the Bastianelli sisters, Zelinda and Mary, who became his housekeepers.⁸¹

On June 4, 1907, Bandini wrote to Bishop John B. Morris, who had recently succeeded Bishop Fitzgerald, concerning possible changes in Tontitown and Fayetteville: "During the episcopal visit in Eureka Your Excellency made an allusion to changes that you were thinking about regarding Tontitown and Fayetteville. And for this reason I would also have the pleasure of seeing you and I would therefore come to Little Rock, as soon as I would know that Your Excellency would be there." The 1925 and 1993 diocesan histories make no reference to any changes at this time.⁸² On the tenth anniversary of Tontitown's foundation, the *Springdale News* published on May 15, 1908, a souvenir issue that summarized the colony's achievements since 1898. It included a highly embellished biographical sketch of Fr. Bandini, an account of the May 1905 visit by the Italian ambassador and, under the headings "Thriving Tontitown" and "New Industry Developing at Tontitown," it highlighted the colony's history and economic progress. The small colony, which had worked so hard to survive and establish itself, was ready for its next

York, May 4, 1908 (includes attachment), Mayor des Planches to Attolico, Washington, D.C., May 9, 1908.

⁸⁰ See ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Fitzgerald, Tontitown, Ark., March 10, 1903, Bandini to Morris, Tontitown, Ark., March 26, 1907 (2 letters), Bandini to Fulton, Tontitown, Ark., March 27, 1907 (copy), Morris to Bandini, Little Rock, Ark., March 29, 1907. See Young, "*So Big, This Little Place*," 69.

⁸¹ Mayor des Planches, *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti*, 246; Young, "*So Big, This Little Place*," 110. See Judy Bicknell, "They Carved a Living Out of the Land," *SN*, August 10, 1966, 6; Carol Robinson, "More Feeling Than Fact...A Visit with Tontitown's Bastianelli Sisters," *SN*, August 16, 1968.

⁸² ADLR, PBF, Bandini to Morris, Tontitown, Ark., June 4, 1907 (2 letters). See Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 126-28; Woods, *Mission and Memory*, 144-46. On Bishop Morris, see Lucey, "The Catholic Church in Arkansas," 459-60; Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 19-23; Woods, *Mission and Memory*, 161-222.

big move at the start of its second decade.⁸³

That fall, Bandini attended the first American Catholic Missionary Congress, sponsored by the Catholic Church Extension Society of the United States of America, held in Chicago from November 15-18, 1908. The society was founded to assist needy Catholic churches in the United States. He had received a personal letter from Fr. Francis C. Kelley “the president of the Society, urging me to be present at the Congress. In such a case I would have a good opportunity of finding some assistance for my plan.”⁸⁴ He succeeded, since the society provided financial assistance in the next several years. In March 1910 the parish was given \$500. Fr. Emmanuel B. Ledvina, the Extension Society’s vice president and general secretary, sent the check to Bishop Morris with the comment: “It gives us additional great pleasure to be able to forward this assistance to the Church in charge of Father Bandini. It strikes us that Father Bandini is a very earnest worker, and that the help granted him in this instance is well placed.” The bishop thanked Fr. Ledvina, noting that “The church has been built a number of years, but it is still in debt, and your timely contribution will be a great relief.” Two years later, the society sent Bandini twenty Mass intentions. In February and March 1913, Bandini was granted \$33 and \$20 respectively together with Mass intentions.⁸⁵

⁸³ SN, Souvenir Number - Section Three, May 15, 1908, 1. See ACMS, 005, box 13, SN, Souvenir Number. - Section Two, May 15, 1908.

⁸⁴ Luna, “Tontitown, “ SN, November 20, 1908; ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Morris, Tontitown, Ark., October 14, 1908. See Francis C. Kelley, ed., *The Two Great American Catholic Missionary Congresses* (Chicago, Ill.: J.S. Hyland & Co., 1914), 307-535 and *The Story of Extension* (Chicago: Extension Press, 1922), 149-58; James P. Gaffey, *Francis Clement Kelley & the American Catholic Dream* (Bensenville, Illinois: The Heritage Foundation, Inc., 1980), 1:98-99.

⁸⁵ ADLR, TSJC, Morris to Ledvina, March 2 and 17, 1910, January 28, 1912, Ledvina to Morris, Chicago, March 14, 1910, January 24, 1912, February 15 and March 18, 1913.

Tontitown's First Mayor

In the Spring of 1909 the Tontitown Townsite Company, composed of John E. Felker, cashier at the Bank of Rogers, R. S. Willie, field manager for the Arkansas Loan Company and manager of real estate and several townsites, such as Highfill, Tontitown etc., and Fr. Bandini as trustees, was formed. It was neither a partnership nor a corporation, but a clone of Willie's German-American Realty Company, which, according to Felker, "had exclusive handling of that townsite down there." No articles of incorporation for that company are on file in either Washington or Benton counties, the two most likely places where such papers would have been filed. In his deposition in the November 1910 *Lucinda P. McMasters vs. Tontitown Townsite Co., et al*, case, Felker testified that "The object of Trust was that I should, as Trustee, hold the property in Trust for the purpose of when sold by the German-American Realty Company, distribute the profits from the sale of same, to the parties at interest." He listed the German-American Realty Co., or R. S. Willie, to be given 40% of profits, and Fr. Bandini, to get 50% of profits, as the parties at interest. He was to receive the remaining 10% in compensation for his services as trustee. He indicated that his understanding with Willie and Bandini took place "at the time the deed was executed and delivered," presumably the McMasters sale that was executed and delivered on March 5, 1910. Apparently, the Tontitown Townsite Company was an "understanding" or agreement, at first primarily between Bandini and Willie, and not a legally incorporated entity. Felker testified that "When I accepted Trusteeship, it had never been called Tontitown Townsite. I accepted Trustee-ship merely for parties interested, the German American Realty Company or R. S. Willie, and Father Bandini, and for my services, I was to retain ten percent of the profits. As to where Tontitown Townsite Company originated from, I do not know." That summer, the distribution of profits from the sale of lots was changed to 50% for the Arkansas, Oklahoma & Western Railway Co, or Felker, 40% for Willie, and 10% for Bandini. The purpose of the change was

“to induce the Railroad Company to build in there.”

In his deposition in that case, Willie agreed with Felker that the Tontitown Townsite Company was not a corporation and described its origin and his involvement with it:

I went down to Mass at Easter [April 11], 1909, Tontitown. I met Father Bandini. I am pretty well known as a promoter, having promoted Arkoma and handled various additions Father Bandini knew of, and incidentally I was controlling for loaning purposes, about \$25,000 per month. Father Bandini said he wanted me to interest myself in Tontitown, and as I recollect, showed me the magazine article published that year in Everybody's Magazine, reciting in a sentimental way the history of Tontitown. I asked him why the Frisco did not come in. He said they had been promising to come in for ten years. I asked him then why he did not interest Col. Felker. He said he had talked to the Colonel about the special fitness of Italians for growing strawberries, and he believed he could get the road in. I promised to take it up with Felkers and did so explaining to them my faith in the proposition as a townsite. At the same time I told the Felkers that Father Bandini would do for them what he had agreed to do for the Frisco; furnish so many days of labor, as they had no money. Negotiations were then opened. It being my idea and still my idea that properties be purchased, with the understanding that all property be deeded to the Bank of Rogers with the understanding with the purchasers that they were deeded for the purpose of being sold in town lots and five acre tracts and vendors would be paid their money out of the first proceeds, and balance to him as Trustee for division on certain agreed terms.

That was how the Tontitown Townsite Company was hatched. Willie defined it as “an attempt to develop the Tontitown Townsite by parties who are using Trustees with the view of protecting both buyers and sellers, by using Trustees to safe guard money, and dividing the profits if there be any, in ratio 10% - 40% - 50%.” He hired an engineer and had the town platted. According to Young: “The two-hundred-acre townsite was platted in a square-to-square design of more than one hundred blocks, most of which were located on the south side of Weddington Gap Road...in the heart of the Tontitown settlement.” But problems surfaced at once on the bonus or profits to be given the trustees. Moreover, Bandini insisted on buying farms despite his lack of capital and the railroad was getting nothing. It was then decided, as noted above, to change the distribution of profits from the sale of the lots to 50% for the Arkansas, Oklahoma & Western Railway Co, or Felker, 40% for Willie, and 10% for Bandini.⁸⁶

According to the U.S. Immigration Commission, by 1909 there were 70 families in Tontitown, numbering approximately 400 people.⁸⁷ The 800 acres of land with which they had started had almost doubled to 1,400.⁸⁸ Given its growing population and economic importance, the colony was ready for its next big move, its incorporation as a town. Young claims that “The formation of the Townsite Company spurred the move to incorporate Tontitown,” both meant to lure the railroad to it.⁸⁹ Tontitown applied for and was incorporated in October

⁸⁶ WCA, CR, Chancery Court Records, Lucinda P. McMaster vs. Tontitown Townsite Co., case 630, November 1910, 4, 29, 44-45, 47, 57-58, 63-64 (copies at SMOH). The documentation in this case involves three documents: the filing of the lawsuit by the defendant’s solicitor (2 pages), testimony by plaintiff and defendants (83 pages), answer and counterclaim for defendants by Willie (3 pages). A search of the WCA indicates that Bandini, a trustee, never testified. One reason may be that it wasn’t common then for priests to do so; Young, *“So Big, This Little Place,”* 82.

⁸⁷ U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:359.

⁸⁸ Neal, *Washington County History*, 252.

⁸⁹ Young, *“So Big, This Little Place,”* 82.

1909.⁹⁰ After its incorporation, Bandini was elected its first mayor for two terms, 1909 to 1913.⁹¹ The *Atlanta Constitution* reported the event: "Father Bandini a Catholic priest has been selected as the first mayor of Tontitown. This was decided at a primary election, held in preparation for the incorporation of Tontitown as a city, despite the many protests of the priest. The nomination was finally accepted, with the understanding however, that his tenure of office should last only until the framing of the most essential city ordinances."⁹² The Italian periodical *Italica Gens* reprinted in its March 1910 edition the article in *The St. Louis Republic* reporting on Bandini's election as Tontitown's first mayor.⁹³ The first order of business was the passage of nine ordinances for the newly incorporated town, dealing mostly with taxes and public order.⁹⁴ Another priority was growing the town's economy, especially by giving it a railroad link and advertising. To help achieve this goal, Bandini got involved with the Tontitown Townsite Company even before his election as mayor. A land record search shows Bandini was extensively involved in property deeds as both grantor and grantee.⁹⁵ He was also a defendant in cases involving

⁹⁰ WCA, LR, Deed Record Book 100, 466-69 (incorporation of Tontitown; copy at SMOH)), AFR, Index to County Court Records, 1835-1976, Townships & Cities, 29. The plat record produced by the Tontitown Townsite Company was submitted as part of Tontitown's incorporation application. See WCA, LR, Plat Records, Book 4, 55, Dec. 2, 1909 (copy at SMOH); Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 82-85.

⁹¹ TCHR, Mayors of Tontitown. See Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 83.

⁹² "Catholic Priest Made Mayor of Town," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 9, 1910.

⁹³ "Un Prete Italiano Primo Sindaco di un Comune degli Stati Uniti del Nord-America," *Italica Gens* I (Marzo 1910): 86-87. See Antonio Mambelli, "Forlivesi Illustri. Padre Pietro Bandini Fondatore e Sindaco di una Città Americana," *Il Momento*, September 29, 1934, 3, reprinted in *La Pie* XLI (Novembre-Dicembre 1972): 245-46.

⁹⁴ TCHR, Ordinances I to IX, March 1, 1910-May 18, 1910, pp. 3-18 (copies at SMOH). See Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 83, 88-89.

⁹⁵ See WCA, LR, Land Record Search 1834-1991, Peter Bandini (Grantee/Grantor). The Grantor/Grantee Index to Washington County, Arkansas Land Records, 1834-1903, 34-35, 1904-1920, 337, 41, 1121, first listed the Tontitown Town Site Company in 1910.

John M. Davis, John F. Myers & Son Milling Company, and the Tontitown Townsite Company.⁹⁶ Bandini's involvement with that company would later put him at odds with his bishop.

Albert L. Fletcher, the bishop of Little Rock, Arkansas, from 1947 to 1972, recalled in 1969 how his family moved to Tontitown with the help of the Tontitown Townsite Company when he was just a teenager. His comment in the letter, "In spite of the business transactions he was obliged to make in the early days," was an obvious reference to Bandini's involvement with that company. The document is worth citing extensively since it may be the best eyewitness account of Tontitown and Bandini when he was the mayor and still in his prime:

My family arrived in Tontitown early in July of the year 1910. I was the oldest of four children - three boys and one girl.

My father was a physician who was determined to take his family from a malarial area around Paris, Arkansas to a non-malarial country where we would not be down with chills and fever about every two weeks. He had an idea that he might have a "model farm" in some area of the northwest Ozark mountains of Arkansas. I remember that he took a tour through the country in order to pick out what he thought would be the best location for us. He had an opportunity on

⁹⁶ On the Davis and Myers & Son cases see, WCA, CR, Defendant Index to Circuit (Civil & Criminal) Court Records, 1829-1973, 57-58, Civil Case files, John M. Davis vs. Bandini, 10-9-1915 (includes attachment; copy at SMOH), L&R, Abstract of Title No. 2130, 20-33 (copy at SMOH). On the Tontitown Townsite Company see *ibid.*, CR, Defendant Index to Chancery Court Records, 1839-1973, 1288-91; Chancery Court Records, Nora B. Rice vs. James Pozza et al, case 888, January 22, 1913 (copy at SMOH). See SMOH, RF, Lexis Nexis Academic, Supreme Court of Arkansas, Felker v. Rice, November 3, 1913; ADLR, TSJC, Willie to The Bishop of The Catholic Church, Little Rock, Ark. (Morris), Meridian, Miss., August 16, 1911, Chancellor (Aretz) to Willie, August 21, 1911, Klenc to Bishop of Little Rock (Morris), Memphis, Tenn., February 6, 1913, Secretary (Aretz) to Klenc, February 7, 1913.

this tour to meet Father Bandini and it was through him, as Trustee, that my father bought our 40 acres farm from a Mr. Felkers of Rogers. The farm was located a mile west of Tontitown at the southeast corner of a crossroads known as the old James place.

I can readily remember our first trip to Tontitown. We hired a team of horses and a buggy in Springdale and drove the then seven miles to Tontitown where Father Bandini met us in his rectory. At that time, I remember that Miss Zelinda and Miss Mary Bastianelli were cooking and keeping house for Father Bandini...

At that time Father Bandini was, I presume, about middle age, stockily built but small in stature. He gave a person the impression of benevolence and personal concern. I believe I suspected, at our first meeting, that Father Bandini would have a lot to do with my vocation.

Life in Tontitown was strange to all of us. We were living on a little farm in one big room of a log cabin with a "lean to" attached. Our house was not as good as many places in Tontitown at that time but I would say that it was average.

When coming into Tontitown I remember reading the sign "Peter Pianalto, blacksmith." These Italian names sounded very strange to us but we soon became accustomed to them and learned to love the Italian people...

In the days we lived in Tontitown, from 1910 to 1913, the community was smaller and many things were comparatively primitive. The people still cooked on their fireplaces, bread was cooked in a stone oven out

in the yard. They had fine vineyards, even in those days, but there was little sale for the grapes. They did not get rich in those days but they made a good frugal living, enjoyed good health, and were very happy.

Father Bandini and his example were accountable for the development of not only that fortitude and patience required in the early days, but also the progress made as the settlement grew older. I believe it was this intangible inheritance from Father Bandini, of which he set the example, which still lives in the community.

As I think back, I realize that Father Bandini was a man with great patience and fortitude. In spite of the business transactions he was obliged to make in the early days, he was primarily the spiritual father of his people.⁹⁷



Kansas City & Memphis Railroad. L. to r. Roscoe C. Hobbs (#6), Dick Rice (#5), John. E. Felker (#4), George D. Lock (#3), Father Bandini (#2), William. R. Felker (#1); Rogers Historical Museum, AR.

⁹⁷ ACMS, 005, box 13, Fletcher to Ascioffa, Little Rock, Ark., July 8, 1969. On Bishop Fletcher, see Woods, *Mission and Memory*, 215, 231-59; Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 92-93.

The Arkansas, Oklahoma & Western Ry was formed on February 13, 1907, with the purchase of the Rogers Southwestern for one dollar. William R. Felker and John E. Felker of the Bank of Rogers were two of the ten men who formed the AO&W. Robert G. Winn has pointed out that "During this period of fever pitch excitement over railroads, almost every hamlet offered every inducement it could think of to secure a rail through town."⁹⁸ Tontitown and its mayor were no exception. A promotional brochure published by the German-American Realty Co. of Rogers described the terms of the agreement by which a branch of the AO&W would reach Tontitown: "Father Bandini is to market the recently laid out townsite, and, as well, the adjoining farm lands in tracts of five acres or multiples of five acres. Of these 1,000 are on the market, and the wish is to sell them on easy terms to practical men." The brochure noted that up to now additions to the town had been discouraged because of the limited market for its produce. But with the coming of the AO&W, the town's market extended all the way to Kansas City and St. Louis. It referred those interested to Fr. Bandini and the German-American Realty Co., the selling agents for the AO&W.⁹⁹ In June 1910 he told Bishop Morris: "The grading of the new railroad is fairly well advanced and the President told me that he is aiming to come in in August and by September or October the Interurban would run in Tontitown, using for 6 or 7 miles the rails of the new road." At the end of December he gave the bishop an update: "The Railroad to Tontitown is almost finished. The Co. is now constructing bridges and trestles. This RR instead of being a branch as bargained for, will be a main road or better a system by which we'll have straight communication with Kansas City at the N.W., with St. Louis at the North, with Memphis by the way of Bald

⁹⁸ Clifton E. Hull, *Shortline Railroads of Arkansas* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 250-52; Robert G. Winn, chronicler, *Railroads of Northwest Arkansas* (Fayetteville, AR: The Washington County Historical Society, 1986), 112-13.

⁹⁹ *Tontitown, Arkansas, Washington County* (Rogers, Ark.: German-American Realty Co., n.d); Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, 27. See Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 91.

Knob, and with Fayetteville and further in the S. E.” In early 1911 the AO&W was bought by the Kansas City and Memphis Railroad, some say financed by French capital.¹⁰⁰ It was completed in August 1911, with connections to all the Frisco lines, putting Tontitown within nine hours of Kansas City and ten hours of St. Louis. To advertise this, the KC&M put out a pamphlet titled “Tontitown, Ark.: The World’s Ideal Vineyard.” It described Bandini as the people’s “Guide, Philosopher and Friend.” It also pointed out that “Now the new road,” the realization of Fr. Bandini’s dream “assures an outlet for any and all its products, be they fruits or vegetables, and there is nothing to hinder its [Tontitown] full development.”¹⁰¹ On August 22, 1912, the first regular KC&M train passed through Tontitown on its way to Fayetteville.¹⁰² A small train depot was built, but the line was discontinued with the advent of World War I.¹⁰³

1910 census figures gave Tontitown 222 inhabitants.¹⁰⁴ With the railroad link assured, Mayor Bandini began to place advertisements

¹⁰⁰ ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Morris, Tontitown, Ark., June 4 and Fort Smith, Ark., December 28, 1910; Hull, *Shortline Railroads of Arkansas*, 252. See Luna, “Tontitown,” *SN*, March 31, 1911, who has been assured that the railroad will reach Tontitown by April 5th.”

¹⁰¹ Kansas City & Memphis Railway Company, “Tontitown, Ark.: The World’s Ideal Vineyard,” in Cordasco, *Italians in the United States*. See Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 99-101.

¹⁰² Hull, *Shortline Railroads of Arkansas*, 252; Winn, *Railroads of Northwest Arkansas*, 123-26. See Ben Shreve, “Locating the Extension of the Felker Railway from Tontitown into Fayetteville,” *Flashback V* (February 1955): n.p.; Flip Putthoff, “Rogers to Siloam line served fruit belt,” *Morning News*, February 18, 1990; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 98-99.

¹⁰³ Hull, *Shortline Railroads of Arkansas*, 252; Winn, *Railroads of Northwest Arkansas*, 123-24, includes a picture of the Tontitown depot. See “Ask that the Felkers be Declared Bankrupts [sic],” *The Rogers Democrat*, June 15, 1916, 2; “End Receivership for K. C. And M. Road,” *Fayetteville Democrat*, September 10, 1919, 3; Clara B. Kennan, “A Railroad Empire Rose and Fell in Benton County,” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* XIII (Summer 1954): 154-59.

¹⁰⁴ Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 89-91. See Velikonja, “Contributo Italiano,” 434.

in *Extension*, the magazine of the Extension Society of the United States of America whose Missionary Congress he had attended in Chicago in November 1908. This advertisement appeared in the September 1910 edition, with the aim of attracting families looking for a non-malarial country and a “model farm,” like the Fletchers:

Catholics of every nationality wishing to have a home, either in town or on a small or large farm, will find it in Tontitown, Ark., where a thriving community of about a hundred Catholic families have already a beautiful Church, School, Resident Priests, Academy and Sisters' Convent. This garden spot is in the heart of a vast district, comprising a thousand acres of fertile land in the Ozark Mountains, in a latitude suitable for all crops, fruits, vegetables, grains, etc. Tontitown is famous for its fine, healthy climate and its excellent water. Its vineyards are renowned. There are no swamps, no malaria, no mosquitoes, no negroes. There are shops, stores, postoffice, telephone, several industries, and a new railroad under construction which will, about September, 1910, connect Tontitown directly with the greatest markets of the country.

Catholics looking for a home with the best advantages of Church, school, climate and land, please apply for further information to any of the following: The Catholic Colonization Society, Chicago, Ill. Rev. P. Bandini, Tontitown, Ark. The Bank of Rogers, Rogers, Ark.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ *Extension* Tontitown, Ark., advertisement, September 1910, 35. See *Extension* Stratton, Colo., advertisement, September 1910, 22. See Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 71, for March 24, 1907 advertisement in the Decatur, Illinois *Review* and observation that “Touting an area for its lack of black residents was a common selling tactic in the South during this time.”

In 1911 Felix and Peter Ardemagni became members of the Arkansas State Horticultural Association and formed under its auspices the “Wine Growers Association” to encourage the manufacture of pure domestic wine throughout the state.¹⁰⁶ At St. Joseph’s church, Bandini maintained a regular schedule of services. The *Official Catholic Directory* listed Rev. Nicola Blanc as assistant at the parish in 1909 and Rev. Louis Sitter, O.S.B. as part time assistant in 1911. During the period 1909-1911, St. Catherine’s in Fayetteville was “attended from Tontitown” and the parish had stations in Bentonville, Rogers, and Siloam Springs in Benton County and Springdale in Washington County. For the same period three Sisters of Mercy and one lay teacher with 100 pupils were listed at the school.¹⁰⁷

1911 Visit to Italy

Bandini’s involvement with the Tontitown Townsite Company and the problems and litigations that went with it seemed to go beyond what was expected of the typical parish priest. It put him at odds with his bishop, who was concerned about the implications for the church and the diocese. As Bishop Morris told Fr. Patrick F. Horan of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Smith and the local dean:

Father P. Bandini has written me recently requesting permission to go to Europe. I am not satisfied with his explanation of affairs of a business character in which he has been recently involved, and although I have nothing whatever to do with the business matters in which he is engaged, all of which he entered into without consulting me, I am the

¹⁰⁶ See WCA, CR, Circuit (Civil & Criminal) Court Records, Criminal No. 75, State of Arkansas vs. Felix Ardemagni, Oct. 1914 (copy at SMOH).

¹⁰⁷ *OCD*, 1909 to 1911 (Wiltzius), 438-39, 450-51, 474-75. See Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 128.

guardian of the church's honor in this Diocese, and
I cannot willingly permit any priest to do anything
which might reflect upon religion.

It all came to a head in the Domenico Pianalto case, just as Bandini was preparing for an extended visit to Italy. On November 14, 1910, Pianalto sent a four page letter to Bishop Morris regarding the exchange of his 15½ acre farm in Tontitown to the Tontitown Townsite Company for a 79 acre farm some two miles west of town. Bandini, who had mediated and guaranteed the agreement, kept reassuring Pianalto, who had not yet received possession of the new land, that the complex agreement would be finalized. Pianalto, who had raised his selling price, expressed to the bishop the economic harm done to him and his concern that Bandini's departure for Italy would delay resolution of the matter.¹⁰⁸ The bishop asked Fr. Horan to look into it. The latter wrote the bishop on November 26: "I visited Tontitown Thursday 24th. Failed to meet Pianalto. I mailed him the inclosed. From Tontitown I went to Rogers, interviewed Felker and Willy [sic]. The company is evidently out of funds. The land selected for the townsite has been paid for only in part. I hesitated to enter into details lest the company should think the Church was coming to the rescue. Pianalto's statement to you was substantially correct." The inclosed letter to Pianalto referred to the letter he had sent to the bishop and noted: "I am informed by Father Bandini that he does not intend to leave until all Tontitown matters have been settled. This morning we have gone to Judge Berry in Springdale and have put together a way

¹⁰⁸ ADLR, TSJC, Pianalto to Monsignore (Morris), Tontitown, Ark., November 14, 1910, Morris to Horan, Little Rock, Ark., January 2, 1911. See Young, "*So Big, This Little Place*," 94. For a complaint sent to the pope involving Bandini and the Tontitown Townsite Company, see ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 34 Rev. Pietro Bandini, di Tontitown e di Roma (Italia), e proposta per sua onorificenza (1910-1912), Aschieris to Sua Santità Pio X Papa, Tontitown, Ark., August 19, 1910 (05), Gennari to R.mo Signore come Fr. (Falconio), Rome, November 17, 1910 (03), Falconio to Bandini, December 2, 1910 (06), Bandini to Eccellenza Reverendissima (Falconio), Tontitown, Ark., December 7, 1910 (includes 3 attachments; 07-13).

to assure you that the property is perfectly free.” He told Pianalto that there was no need to take legal action and asked him to wait for some time. A week later, the bishop instructed Horan: “You may write to Fr. Bandini and say that until every thing is arranged satisfactorily at Tontitown, I will not give my permission for him to go to Italy or any where else.”

On December 28, Bandini replied to the bishop from Horan’s church in Fort Smith:

V. Rev. Dr. Horan communicated to me some time ago your letter in which you stated that Pianalto and the Tontitown Townsite matter must be settled first before you’ll allow me to sail. I take the liberty to submit to you respectfully the following.

1. Though the Pianalto’s statement was not correct as for concerning my person or my liability in the matter, yet I took care that he would be protected in his deal, by the assumption by the Co. of the payment of the mortgage of his land, which mortgage is due in four years from now. All the necessary papers have been given to him by the Bank of Rogers through his lawyer. It was not so much the fault of the Bank as it was his own. For while he pretended that the Bank should assume the responsibility of paying out the mortgage of the land at the proper time, [he] was not paying to the same Bank a note of few hundred dollars overdue for some time.
2. The farmers who have sold their land to the Company for the Townsite and have been able to show clear titles, have been paid. For the others a deposit has been made so that they’ll be paid as soon the lawyers would have succeeded on fixing the titles. Titles, as a rule, have been found

mighty poor, through neglect of old owners.
 3. The liability of the Trustees on this matter is stated in every Deed (printed); namely - that whenever would be impossible to deliver the land, the purchaser will get back whatever money [he] has paid for [it].

Bandini concluded his reply to the bishop: "Now I beg Your Lordship to instruct me whatever is to be done so that I may prepare myself for the journeys that I wish to undertake as soon as possible. I accepted already invitations to pass few days in Washington and New York, and, of course, I like first to come down and confer with Your Lordship." The next day, the bishop asked Horan to check on the accuracy of Bandini's letter.¹⁰⁹

On January 2, 1911, the bishop told Horan that he was not making any accusation against Bandini but that there were many things that needed to be clarified. Only after things were found satisfactory would he grant his request to travel to Italy. On Bandini's claims that "Titles, as a rule, have been found mighty poor, through neglect of old owners" and that "whenever [it] would be impossible to deliver the land, the purchaser will get back whatever money [he] has paid for [it]," the bishop raised the following points:

1. Did he not exercise a personal supervision in the transferring of these holdings from the original owners to his people? The tenor of his letter implies that before the title, or titles, to the town site were perfected, lots were sold to bona fide purchasers. Now, I contend, and I think, every man of good common sense would contend, that if the defects in title were of moment in a particular instance, no portion of it

¹⁰⁹ ADLR, TSJC, Horan to Right Rev Dear Bishop (Morris), Forth Smith, Ark., November 26, 1910 (includes copy of letter sent to Domenico Pianalti), Morris to Horan, December 2, 1910, Bandini to Morris, Fort Smith, Ark., December 28, 1910, Morris to Horan, December 29, 1910. See Young, *"So Big, This Little Place,"* 92-94.

should have been sold, if immaterial, it seems to me, that it could be readily adjusted.

2. He states that trustees bind themselves to return the money to bona fide purchasers in the event that a clear title could not be obtained. Who are the trustees? Who signed the deeds? Has he seen to it that the purchase money of such lots has been securely placed in a reserve fund to be returned as indicated above in case of defective title? How much cash has been realized from the sale of such property? Where is it? In whose name is it deposited? Has Fr. Bandini affixed his signature to any note, or notes, in connection with any transaction of the Town Site Co.? If so, for what amount? Have such notes, if any, been paid? When are they payable?...Has the Company been chartered? What is the character of the charter? Is each member of the corporation liable for its entire indebtedness?

Regarding Pianalto, the bishop noted that "it seems to me, his previous indebtedness to the bank is wholly apart from his transactions with the Town Site Co. When the bank advanced him the money it was evidently satisfied with his collateral. If the bank and the Town Site Co. be unum et idem, is Pianalto not willing that the Company pay the \$1500.00 mortgage minus his personal indebtedness, and if Pianalto be willing, is the Company ready to pay him?" He concluded by telling Horan that "These are the matters which I wish you to look into, and you must not be satisfied with any general statement on the part of Fr. Bandini. The matters must be gone into, and proof must be given for everything. A priest is involved in this, and a priest living in the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Little Rock, hence, my solicitude." Ten days later, Bandini replied to Horan's request for details on the questions raised by the bishop. The latter forwarded the reply to the

bishop, who found it more obscuring than elucidating. A key concern was Bandini's liability as a trustee of the Town Site Co. Even though Bandini stated that "The Company is not chartered, and no member is liable for its entire indebtedness," the bishop argued that "the very contrary is true, it is not a corporation but a partnership, and each member is liable for the entire indebtedness." He demanded a clear and full explanation of these discrepancies, noting: "Fr. Bandini surely cannot fail to realize that the mere possibility of error attaches more than ordinary importance to the outcome of events, that his own and the credit of his fellow-priests is involved, and will be greatly injured in the event of failure."

On February 1, 1911, John H. Vaughn, a lawyer from Fort Smith, wrote to Morris on behalf of Bandini. He told him that he had gone to Rogers to meet with Felker, who told him "that all the property in connection with Tontitown had been deeded to him, as Trustee, and that Father Bandini had none of the property deeded to him as Trustee; that in fact Father Bandini had protested from the start about being made a Trustee, or becoming in any way responsible in relation to the real estate." He then outlined the facts on the "Peonalti" case:

Mr. Peonalti had fifteen acres of land, which was in the center of what they wanted for the Townsite. At first he wanted only a reasonable amount for it, but as he found out that it was needed for the townsite, he raised on the price, until I think he asked two or three thousand dollars for the place. Mr. Felker purchased seventy-nine acres which, I am informed, is as good if not better land than the fifteen acres, but there [was] a mortgage of Fifteen Hundred Dollars against the seventy-nine acres. Mr. Felker traded the seventy-nine acres to Mr. Peonalti for his fifteen acres, and Mr. Felker, as Trustee, assumed and agreed to pay the fifteen hundred dollar mortgage which was against

the seventy-nine acre tract. The fifteen hundred dollar mortgage was not to be due for three years or more, and Mr. Felker paid the interest upon the mortgage when it became due, and it seems that Mr. Peonalti thinks the mortgage should be released, or that Mr. Felker should assume the mortgage personally. I was informed by all of the parties concerned, except Mr. Peonalti, whom I have not met, that he was to take this seventy-nine acres in the manner above indicated. On his seventy-nine acres he has a new house and is more comfortably situated than he was on the fifteen acre tract. From all the facts that I have been able to gather, he has been treated fairly and justly up to the present time.

Mr. Vaughn informed the bishop that all the money received from the sale of lots in Tontitown was given to Felker, who signed all the deeds. In conclusion, he told Bishop Morris: "I cannot see how Father Bandini is interested in any of the business transactions in connection with the townsite; he has never taken any of the property in his name, as Trustee, and his name has never been used as Trustee with his consent or knowledge." Moreover, "Mr. Felker told me that at the beginning Father Bandini would not allow his name to be used as Trustee, and for that reason everything was taken in his (Felker's) name, as trustee." Vaughn's explanation apparently satisfied Bishop Morris, who gave Bandini permission to travel to Italy and a letter of recommendation.¹¹⁰ During his absence, the parish was left in the hands of Fr. Louis Sitter, O.S.B., from Sacred Heart Abbey, Oklahoma, his assistant at the time.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ ADLR, TSJC, Morris to Horan, Little Rock, Ark., January 2, 18 and 23, 1911, Vaughn to Morris, Fort Smith, Ark., February 1, 1911, Morris to Kennedy, March 13, 1911. See WCA, LR, Land Record Search 1834-1991, Domenico and Rosa Pianalto (Grantor; WarrantyDeed).

¹¹¹ *OCD*, 1911 (Wiltzius), 475; Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of*

In 1911 Italy celebrated the 50th anniversary of its unification. To mark the occasion, the Italian government organized a series of expositions, congresses, and contests in major cities such as Rome, Turin, Florence, and Bologna.¹¹² News of the celebration did not sit well with many American Catholics, angry at the takeover of the Papal States.¹¹³ Bandini, who had last gone to Italy in 1894, saw this as a good opportunity to visit his native land, as it turned out, for the last time. The limited documentation available does not allow the complete tracking of Bandini's six month visit to Italy from March to mid-September 1911. However, the most important parts of his visit are adequately documented.¹¹⁴ On April 3, 1911, after arriving in Rome, Bandini wrote to his bishop from the Albergo Santa Chiara, thanking him for his letter of recommendation and telling him that he was busy with the societies interested in emigration. He was referring to the Congresso degli Italiani all'Estero (Second Congress of Italians Abroad), organized by the Istituto Coloniale Italiano and scheduled to meet in Rome June 11-20 and the Catholic Italica Gens. His involvement with both of these societies will be described in the final chapter. He had turned down a request to visit southern Italy but in his lectures in the rest of the country he would explain "the necessary conditions to meet in sending emigrants or starting new settlements."¹¹⁵

Catholicity, 128; ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Morris, Tontitown, Ark., June 4, 1910.

¹¹² ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 140, fasc. 3104, Di San Giuliano to Regi Agenti diplomatici e consolari, Rome, June 4, 1911 (includes attachment).

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, Sabetta to Signor Incaricato d'Affari (Marchese Paolo di Montagliari), Chicago, September 13, 1911 (includes two attachments), Il R. Incaricato d'Affari (Marchese Paolo di Montagliari) to Sabetta, Manchester, Mass., September 15, 1911. See "Pope May Spoil Italy's Fetes," *NYT*, March 5, 1911, part III, 1-2; "Castle of St. Angelo Transformed Into a Museum," *NYT*, March 5, 1911, part III, 3; "Methodists Champion Italy," *NYT*, March 13, 1911, 4; "Resent Farley View of Italy's Festival," *NYT*, March 19, 1911, 14; "Pope Years to See Rome Exhibition," *NYT*, April 2, 1911, part IV, 3.

¹¹⁴ Luna, "Tontitown," *SN*, March 10, 1911, reported that Bandini was en route to Italy.

¹¹⁵ ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Rt. Rev. dear Bishop (Morris), Rome, April 3, 1911.

On April 27 Pope Pius X received Bandini in an audience.¹¹⁶ On May 17, Bandini wrote to Bishop Morris from the Hotel Meuble des Nations in Turin, where the Esposizione Internazionale delle Industrie e del Lavoro (International Exposition of Industry and Labor), which had opened on April 29 and would close on November 19, was being held. His involvement in that event will also be described in the final chapter. In his letter, he praised the religious piety of the Italian people and described the Congress of Catholic students representing Italy's state universities held in that city.¹¹⁷ From June 11-20 he attended the Rome Congress, after which he returned to Turin to attend the International Exposition of Industry and Labor.

Some of his friends tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain for Bandini a papal distinction while he was in Rome. The request was sent to the apostolic delegate in Washington, D.C., who forwarded it to Bishop Morris. On August 11, Morris replied:

I have your letter of the 7th regarding the conferring of some pontifical distinction on Father Bandini. In reply permit me to say that I would consider such an honor at the present time a serious mistake. Fr. Bandini has been mixed up in some business affairs which have caused me a great deal of anxiety. He had as one of his associates in the planning of a townsite a man of real questionable business honesty.

I likewise had considerable difficulty in straightening out the affairs of a poor Italian, Mr. Pianalto, whose property they had bought, and for which, he claimed, they would not pay him. He wrote

¹¹⁶ ACMS, 005, box 13, newspaper clipping, "Il Pontefice a Padre Bandini," n.d.; Young, *"So Big, This Little Place,"* 96-97. See "Father Bandini is Home from Italy," *SN*, October 20, 1911.

¹¹⁷ ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Rt. Rev. dear Bishop (Morris), Turin, May 17, 1911.

me saying that his confidence in Fr. Bandini had been misplaced, and that he and his family would be thrown out into the streets unless I interfered. I did interfere indirectly, and succeeded in protecting Mr. Pianalto.

There are many other troubles likely to arise in Tontitown, and there is a rumor current here that on account of these difficulties Fr. Bandini is not likely to return.

I think also Fr. Bandini tries to carry water on both shoulders. He will write me from Italy one day what the Holy Father said to him and the next what the queen said to him. Neither my clergy nor myself are familiar with what is known as the Italian Question, but we know one thing that we must be on the side of the Holy Father at all times and under all circumstances. Fr. Bandini is known to be a strenuous friend of what is called Italian Unity, and even for this reason I would not be in favor of the Holy See showing him any recognition.

Fr. Bandini is a great advertiser and what ever he does is sure to find its way into the papers. I have here a priest in the Diocese who is a real apostolic man, and who has done far more for the Italian people than Fr. Bandini. I speak of Fr. Joachim Galloni, Pastor of Sunny Side, Ark.

Now, I say all this because you asked it in confidence, and I sincerely trust that the Holy See may not confer this distinction at least at the present time.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 34 Rev. Pietro Bandini, Merry del Val to Falconio, Vatican, July 26 and September 12, 1911 (17 and 23), Falconio to Morris, August 7, 1911 (19), Morris to Falconio, Little Rock, Arkansas, August 11, 1911 (20-21), rough draft, Falconio to Merry del Val, August 24, 1911 (22).



Father Tito Bandini (detail); Bastianelli Collection/Tontitown Historical Museum.

In July Bandini went to Bertinoro where, on the 21st, he paid a visit to the local bishop. On September 14 he sailed with his nephew Tito Bandini on the *Konig Albert* from Genoa, arriving in New York on September 30. His nephew, who assisted at St. Joseph's parish from 1912 to 1916, would aid him with colonization projects in Arkansas, Texas, and Missouri.¹¹⁹ Like his father and uncles, Tito was

See ADLR, TSJC, Falconio to Morris, Washington, D.C., August 7, 1911, Morris to Falconio, August 11, 1911. For non-payment of samples of *Il Messaggero Italiano*, see *ibid.*, Torre to Bandini, San Antonio, Texas, May 1, 1914 (copy), Torre to Morris, San Antonio, Texas, September 12, 1914. See Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 94-96.

¹¹⁹ BCF, Guarini, *Diario Forlivese*, Volume Duodecimo Dal giorno 25 Marzo 1909 al giorno 5 Agosto 1912, p. 352, 354; ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 34 Rev. Pietro Bandini, Bandini to Eccellenza Revma (Falconio), Rome, June 18, 1911 (14-16); ALE, HR, Immigration & Travel, New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957, "Mr. G. Bandini" and "Mr. Petrus Bandini," (accessed 10/17/2013). See "Town Builder Home from Native Land," *The Southern Guardian*, October 21, 1911, 7;

educated at the seminary of Bertinoro. He earned degrees in theology, canon and civil law in Rome in 1894, where he was ordained a deacon on April 4 and a priest on May 1, 1896, by the cardinal vicar general. Afterwards, he taught theology and civil law at the seminary of Bertinoro, in Cesena, and in Forlì.¹²⁰

“My Heart is Here”

Back in Tontitown, Bandini, now aided by his nephew, resumed his responsibilities as pastor at St. Joseph’s parish and mayor.¹²¹ According to the *Official Catholic Directory* for the years 1912 to 1914, St. Catherine’s in Fayetteville continued to be “attended from Tontitown” and the parish had stations in Bentonville, Rogers, and Siloam Springs in Benton County and Springdale in Washington County. In 1914 Rogers was listed as a mission titled Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Three Sisters of Mercy and one lay teacher with 100 pupils were listed at the Tontitown school in 1912 and 1913. In 1914 three Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament with 170 pupils were listed there.¹²² In 1913, 24 Sisters of the Incarnate Word of the Blessed Sacrament from Gomez Palacio, Durango, Mexico, and two orphan children, found refuge in Tontitown, staying temporarily at the Golden Lion hotel. They had fled from Mexico on account of the rebellion there. Bandini, who had a hard time finding teaching sisters for his school, had written to the superior of that order

“Father Bandini’s Efforts are Quickly and Amply Rewarded,” *The Southern Guardian*, November 11, 1911, 1, notes that several Italians have arrived in Tontitown after Bandini’s return from Italy.

¹²⁰ Mambelli, *I Forlivesi*, 21-22 and *Uomini e Famiglie*, 31-32, ADLR, TBF, Personal Visitation (Fr. Titus Bandini), n.d. See Poponessi, *In America voglio andare*, 12.

¹²¹ Luna, “Tontitown” *SN*, October 27, 1911. See AGS, DH 02, small pamphlet, Order of Services, St. Joseph’s Church, Tontitown, Arkansas, n.d.; ADLR, TBF, Note (Italian and English), Personal Visitation (Fr. Titus Bandini), n.d.

¹²² *OCD*, 1912 to 1914 (Kenedy), 497-98, 523 and 525, 536 and 538.

more than a year before inviting them to Tontitown, should events force them to leave their convent and school. Some of the sisters taught at St. Mary's Academy in Tontitown, a boarding school near the parish church. Boarding accommodations were provided for boys and girls. All grades were taught, including high school, business courses, languages, and an art course. Others opened Incarnate Word Academy in Fayetteville. They also helped girls at the university in Fayetteville and conducted a day school in Rogers.¹²³ In 1914 they left unexpectedly for Cuba and were replaced by the Ursuline sisters from St. Louis, who remained until 1924.¹²⁴

The *Official Catholic Directory* first listed Bandini as dean for Benton and Washington counties in 1915. In the same year, St. Catherine's in Fayetteville got its own pastor, Rev. J. L. Kenney, with Rogers' Assumption BVM as a mission. Bentonville, Siloam Springs and Springdale continued as Tontitown stations. In 1916 the Fayetteville parish changed its name to St. Joseph, with Kenney still there. Bentonville, Siloam Springs and Springdale continued as Tontitown stations in 1916 and 1917.¹²⁵ According to the 1925 diocesan history, "In 1916, Father Peter Bandini started a Catholic school in Fayetteville and secured the Ursuline Sisters to assist him."

¹²³ "Sisters From Mexico Coming to Tontitown," *The Southern Guardian*, November 8, 1913, 6; "Twenty Four Exiled Nuns At Tontitown," *The Southern Guardian*, November 15, 1913, n.p.; Mother Vincent, "Boarding School and Academy for Tontitown," *The Southern Guardian*, January 3, 1914, 6; "Sisters Endure Many Hardships in Mexico," *The Southern Guardian*, January 17, 1914, 1; Melissa, "Tontitown," *SN*, November 7, 1913 and January 30, 1914. See Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 127; Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 105-06; ASV, DAUS, sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 34 Rev. Pietro Bandini, Bandini to Bonzano, Tontitown, Arkansas, August 22, 1912 (25), Bonzano to Bandini, August 26, 1912 (26).

¹²⁴ "Refugee Nuns from Mexico go to Cuba," *The Southern Guardian*, May 16, 1914, 4. See *OCD*, 1915 to 1917 (Kenedy), 530, 511, 488; Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 127; Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 108.

¹²⁵ *OCD*, 1915 to 1917 (Kenedy), 527 and 529-30, 510, 488.

It also listed both Peter and Tito Bandini as pastors at that parish.¹²⁶ The possible return of the Bandinis to St. Joseph's in Fayetteville after Kenney's resignation in March 1916 was opposed by some of its parishioners, who didn't care for them and wanted the latter to remain as pastor. A 2002 history of that parish lists Fr. Peter Bandini serving that parish in 1899-1901, 1906-1908, 1911-1914, and W. J. Tynin as Kenney's replacement in 1916.¹²⁷

As part of his pastoral duties during his long tenure at Tontitown, Bandini became an active member of the Knights of Columbus, Ft. Smith Council, and spiritual director of the Catholic Knights of America.¹²⁸ He invited prominent priests to speak at his parish. Fr. Cesare Spigardi of St. Charles Borromeo Church in St. Louis gave a mission in Italian from November 30 to December 6, 1913, and in January 1914 Paulist Fr. James Gillis gave a series of lectures for non-Catholics, both at St. Joseph's Church in Tontitown.¹²⁹ He and his nephew visited St. Louis, where St. Charles Borromeo Church was located, and he also gave missions at San Francesco Church in Detroit, Italian parishes served by former Scalabrinians

¹²⁶ Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 128.

¹²⁷ Gretchen B. Gearhart, *Faith and Fortitude: A History of St. Joseph Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas* (Fayetteville, Arkansas: St. Joseph Church, 2002), 44. See *OCD*, 1917 (Kenedy), 47; ADLR, FSJC, Healy, Mulrenin, and Flynn to Morris, Fayetteville, Ark., March 19, 1916, Morris to Healy and Others, March 21, 1916, Hennessey to Morris, Fayetteville, Ark., March 27, 1916, Morris to Lynch, April 7, 1916, Most Obedient Servant to Morris, April 7, 1916, Hodge to Morris, Fayetteville, Ark., April 28, 1916, Your Friend to Morris, Fayetteville, Ark., May 6, 1916, Unknown to Most Rev & Dear Bishop (Morris), Fayetteville, Ark., May 19, 1916, Non Catholic to Morris, Fayetteville, Ark., June 8, 1916.

¹²⁸ "Passes to His Eternal Reward After a Brief Illness," *The Guardian*, January 6, 1917, 1. On the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Knights of America, see Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 193-202.

¹²⁹ Melissa, "Tontitown," *SN*, December 19, 1913 and January 30, 1914. ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Morris, Tontitown, Ark., February 27, 1913.

Spigardi and Francesco Beccherini.¹³⁰ Bandini and his nephew also visited and preached missions for Italians in the Indian Territory.¹³¹ He was also very active in the popular annual grape festival.¹³²

Anita Moore, who had made a presentation on Tontitown in April 1908, published an article on the colony in June 1912. She gave much of the credit for its success to Fr. Bandini, who cautioned the colonists about becoming "land poor," insisting that "Forty acres is all that one man can profitably till. With twenty acres he can support a large family in comfort and save a little money. With forty acres he can become a man of means if he is industrious." In an article published in 1953, Leslie Hewes noted that "Tontitown vineyards are small. The most common amount of grapes per farm is 5 to 10 acres. No farm has more than 40 acres. The main reason for small size is that heavy labor requirements at the picking season restrict the grape area that a family can care for." In her article, Moore pointed out that the colonists "build up their land by rotation of crops and fertilization." She gave this picture of the colony in 1912:

The colony is now fourteen years old. It numbers 700 inhabitants, and owns 4,760 acres of good

¹³⁰ See ADLR, TSJC, Bandini to Fitzgerald, December 20, 1900; Demetrious, "Tontitown," *SN*, March 28 and December 19, 1902, December 23, 1904; "Tontitown," *SN*, March 14, 1902 and March 17, 1905; Papilio, "Tontitown," *SN*, February 9, 1906, 1; Melissa, "Tontitown," *SN*, November 15, 1912 and May 22, 1914; AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Eccellenca Revma (Scalabrini), Detroit, March 27, 1905; Brown, *The Scalabrinians*, 347-48, 375; Schiavo, *Italian-American History*, II:676, 695-98; John C. Vismara, "The Coming of the Italians to Detroit," *Michigan History Magazine* 2 (January 1918): 122-23.

¹³¹ See "Tontitown," *SN*, July 12, 1901; "Correspondence. Tontitown," *SN*, May 16, 1902, 1; Rodon, "Tontitown," *SN*, July 14, 1905; Melissa, "Tontitown," *SN*, July 25, 1913; Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 53. On the Italians in the Indian Territory, later Oklahoma, see Theophile Meerschaert, *Diary of a Frontier Bishop: The Journals of Theophile Meerschaert*, ed. James D. White (Tulsa, OK: The Sarto Press, 1994), 44, 161, 249, 385, 492-93, 529-30.

¹³² See "Big Celebration Now at Tontitown," *The Southern Guardian*, June 29, 1912, 8.

productive land, all clear of encumbrance, the value of which has increased from the original \$15 paid for it to \$50, \$100, and even \$150 an acre. In the village there are a modern hotel, three stores, a post-office, a land office, or town hall, and a school - St. Mary's Academy - which contains five large, well-equipped class rooms, several living rooms for the three Sisters of Mercy and the two young women teachers, and gymnasium. Here 130 children are enrolled.¹³³

A report in the *Bollettino dell' Emigrazione* on Italian farmers and the 1912 harvest in the New Orleans consular district noted that Tontitown's colonists successfully cultivated peaches, apples, plums, grapes and strawberries, but very few of them cultivated corn and oats for animals.¹³⁴ On April 1, 1913, the Bank of Tontitown opened to the public. The Bandinis were among the stockholders. A little over a year later it moved to Elm Springs.¹³⁵ In that year, parcel post was introduced. Dr. Thomas Fletcher, father of Bishop Fletcher, sent the first package.¹³⁶ In 1914 Bandini became interested in establishing a hospital in Tontitown. There is no evidence that he succeeded.¹³⁷

A 1914 article in the *The Southern Guardian*, the diocesan newspaper, used the occasion of a visit to Tontitown in August by a delegation from the Catholic Knights of America to paint a very flattering picture of the colony and Bandini's role in it. After Sunday

¹³³ Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 72; Anita Moore, "A Safe Way to Get on the Soil: The Work of Father Bandini at Tontitown - A New Hope for Our Newest Citizens and for the Small Seekers for Land," *World's Work* XXIV (June 1912): 215-19; Hewes, "Tontitown, 129. See Moquin with Van Doren, *A Documentary History*, 131-35.

¹³⁴ "Dati circa I raccolti del 1912 e le condizioni dei nostri agricoltori nel distretto consolare di New Orleans," *Boll. Emig.* 7 (1913): 103.

¹³⁵ Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 103-05.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 101; SMOH, RF, Franco and Ceola, "Tontitown," 4.

¹³⁷ ADLR, TSJC, Young to Bandini, Little Rock, Ark., January 1, 1914. See Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 106.

Mass celebrated by Dr. Bandini, the delegation was treated to a “splendid concert” by the Tontitown band. There they were joined by Fr. Bandini, who had celebrated Mass at Fayetteville that morning. The delegates were impressed by the town’s orchards and vineyards:

Interesting beyond description was our walk through the fruit laden orchards and vineyards. Ripe, luscious peaches, grapes and big red apples were every where in evidence. The crop this year, with exception of peaches which is only a half crop, is abundant and the growers are finding ready market and good prices for their products. The new Kansas City and Memphis railroad that passes Tontitown has revolutionized and greatly improved shipping facilities for the fruit growers.

At dinner, the delegates were the guests of Fr. Bandini at the Golden Lion hotel. In the afternoon at 3 o’clock, there was a meeting of members of the parish in the church where they were urged to form a branch of the order in Tontitown. Enough parishioners signed up to make that possible. Bandini became their spiritual director. The delegates also visited the parochial school, where they were met by the Ursuline sisters who had recently come from St. Louis. There they had the opportunity to see “the many rare and handsome vestments that have been given to Father Bandini by friends in the Old World.”¹³⁸ *The Springdale News* reported on April 23, 1915, that Bandini had been sent by Bishop Morris to Washington, New York, and Philadelphia on a business trip in the interest of Catholic organizations.¹³⁹

On July 15, 1916, the diocesan newspaper, *The Guardian*,

¹³⁸ V. L. Spalding, “Tontitown is to Have C. K. of A. Branch,” *The Southern Guardian*, August 29, 1914, 1; “Passes to His Eternal Reward After a Brief Illness,” *The Guardian*, January 6, 1917, 1. See Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 106, 108.

¹³⁹ Lamb, “Tontitown,” *SN*, April 23, 1915; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 108. See ADLR, PBF, Morris to Bandini, November 28, 1914.

printed a story under the headline "A Bit of Italy in the Ozark Mountains," originally published in the *Kansas City Star*. Like many similar stories that mixed fact with fiction, it gave an account of the Italians at Sunnyside and later at Tontitown. Its mostly accurate description of Fr. Bandini, who as always was at the center of the story, showed a contented and satisfied man in the twilight of his life:

Father Bandini sits at his desk in the parish house, an autographed picture of the late Pope Pius and a gold medal awarded him by the colonization department of the Italian government, above his head and smiles a smile of work well done. He had not expected to spend his life here. Once there had been ambition and high promises of a career.

"Now," he says, "I am but a village priest, but I am content. My heart is here. I could not leave."

Turning to immigration, Bandini bemoaned the fact that many Italians who came to America lost their "natural inheritance, which is love of the soil, love of their fellows, honesty and respect for law." He was especially critical of the negative influence of urban life. "We want no Italians here save those who come direct from Italy. A year in the cities will ruin them for us. They bring dissatisfaction, greed and bad habits. We can do them no good and they can do us much harm." On the other hand, "take the Italian as he lands at Ellis Island and give him land of his own and you will have gone far to solve the problem. For such as these the name of America has not lost its magic."¹⁴⁰ Thomas Jefferson would have smiled and seconded the thought, even as the country was rapidly and inexorably industrializing and urbanizing, with most immigrants, including Italians, opting for that new world.

In 1916 Tito Bandini, who had substituted at the annual picnic for his uncle who was away for health reasons, left Tontitown for

¹⁴⁰ "A Bit of Italy in the Ozark Mountains," *The Guardian*, July 15, 1916, 8. See Lewellen, "'Sheep Amidst the Wolves'," 24-25.

Orchard Lake, Michigan, where he took a position teaching theology at SS. Cyrillus and Methodius Seminary.¹⁴¹ He remained there for one year. He tried unsuccessfully to find a position in a small parish in New York.¹⁴² The *Official Catholic Directory* listed him as rector at St. Peter's Church in Cloverdale, Sonoma County, California, in 1918 and 1919. From 1921 to 1923 he was listed as rector at St. John the Baptist Church, Healdsburg, also in Sonoma County. He wrote many articles in San Francisco Italian papers under the pseudonym "Trifoglio."¹⁴³ He died in Healdsburg on September 30, 1923, at age 50 and was buried next to his uncle in Tontitown. In his will, he left his possessions, with some exceptions, to Zelinda and Mary Bastianelli in consideration of the assistance they had given for over twenty years to him and his uncle.¹⁴⁴

On December 9, 1916, Bandini had an apoplectic stroke in his rectory. He seemed to be improving in the Fayetteville city hospital until December 29 when his condition worsened and he suffered a second stroke. He was moved to St. Vincent's Infirmary in Little

¹⁴¹ "Celebration in Tontitown Grape Day Festival," *The Guardian*, August 19, 1916, 1; ADLR, TBF, T. Bandini to Morris, Detroit, Michigan, August 29, 1916, Morris to T. Bandini, September 2, 1916 (includes letter with same date); *OCD*, 1917 (Kenedy), 360. See Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 110.

¹⁴² ACMS, 078A, box 1, T. Bandini to Demo, Orchard Lake, Mich., February 19 and May 23, 1917, Ferrante to Demo, New York, May 29, 1917.

¹⁴³ *OCD*, 1918 to 1919, 1921 to 1923 (Kenedy), 209, 211, 188, 191, 199; "Rev. Father Titus Matthew Bandini to Celebrate Twenty Fifth Year as Priest May 1," *Santa Rosa Republican*, April 8, 1921, n.p.; Mambelli, *I Forlivesi*, 21-22 and *Uomini e Famiglie*, 31. See AASF, Polloni to Eccellenza Rma (Hanna), Bertinoro (Forli), September 7, 1917 (includes testimonial), De Lai, S. Congregatio Consistorialis, October 25, 1917, De Lai to Rme Pater, Rome, May 12, 1919 (includes Polloni testimony), Hanna to My Dear Dr. Bandini, San Francisco, July 8, 1919, T. Bandini to Cantwell, n.d. and Cesenatico, Italy, September 2, 1922, Walsh to Dear Vicar (Cantwell), Healdsburg, California, June 24, 1924.

¹⁴⁴ "Father Titus Bandini Dies at Healdsburg," *The Guardian*, November 10, 1923, 1; ALE, HR, Birth, Marriage & Death, California, Death Index, 1905-1939, "Titus M. Bandini" (accessed 10/17/2013); WCA, CR, Abstract of Title No. 13,166, 33-42, L&R, Abstract of Title No. 2130, 11-12 (copies at SMOH).

Rock.¹⁴⁵ He died Tuesday, January 2, 1917, at 9:00 a.m., at the age of 64, surrounded by his nephew Tito Bandini, two orphans under his care, most likely the Bastianelli sisters, some clergy and sisters.¹⁴⁶ His passing was widely covered in newspapers and magazines.¹⁴⁷ The diocesan paper described the hospital scene: "Those present were edified by the beautiful, happy death of this venerable and zealous priest of God, who breathed his last while those gathered about the deathbed reciting the prayers for the dying." His body lay in state in the St. Vincent's Infirmary chapel that night, with the Knights of Columbus acting as guards of honor, and the following afternoon at St. Andrew's Cathedral. The funeral was held in Little Rock on January 3, 1917, attended by a large number of clergy. In his eulogy Bishop Morris, setting aside past differences, said:

We are here to pay a last tribute of respect to an old priest who had done faithful work in this diocese. Father Bandini loved his people and his love for them was so great that he lived with them, sharing their trials and tribulations and rejoicing with them in their

¹⁴⁵ Young, "*So Big, This Little Place*," 111; ADLR, TSJC, telegrams and letter, Tynin to Morris, Fayetteville, Ark., December 10 and 11, 1916, telegram, Byrnes to Morris, Fayetteville, Ark., December 10, 1916, Morris to Tynin, December 11, 1916, Secretary (H. H. Wernke) to Tynin, December 30, 1916. See ACMS, 078A, box 1, T. Bandini to Demo, Orchard Lake, Mich., December 29, 1916.

¹⁴⁶ "Passes to His Eternal Reward After a Brief Illness," *The Guardian*, January 6, 1917, 1. See ADLR, PBF, telegram, Aretz to attached list, Little Rock, Ark., January 2, 1917; ALE, HR, Birth, Marriage & Death, Arkansas Death Index, 1914-1950, "Peter R. Bandini," (accessed 10/17/2013); Young, "*So Big, This Little Place*," 131.

¹⁴⁷ "Rev. Peter Bandini is Called by Death," *Arkansas Democrat*, January 2, 1917; "Priest Famous as a Colonizer Dies," *The Arkansas Gazette*, January 3, 1917; "Father Bandini Died at Little Rock," *The Rogers Democrat*, January 4, 1917; "Father Bandini Dies in Hospital," *SN*, January 5, 1917; Italamericus, "Tontitown, Ark.," March 9, 1917; ACMS, 078A, box 1, newspaper clipping, "Nel Trigesimo della Morte del P. Pietro Bandini," *L'Italiano in America*, February 4, 1917, 2; Antonio Marinoni, "L'Uomo e l'Opera," *Il Carroccio* V (Febbraio 1917): 105-08; Agostino De Biasi, "La Morte di Padre Bandini," *Il Carroccio* V (Febbraio 1917): 103-04.

moments of happiness and cheer...

Now that Father Bandini has gone his people will mourn him long because he lived for them, he struggled for them, and never complained of them, but often praised them...

He was a good faithful soul and the best known Italian priest in the United States. May he rest in peace.



Father Bandini's grave, St. Joseph's Cemetery in Tontitown (detail); Bastianelli Collection/
Tontitown Historical Museum

After the funeral, Bandini's body was taken to the Union Station and sent to Tontitown for burial Thursday Morning, January 5, at 11 o'clock. It was accompanied by his nephew and several parishioners from Tontitown and friends from Fayetteville.¹⁴⁸ The 1925 diocesan history states that after Bandini's death, "Father Edward P. Garrity took temporary charge and was followed in July, 1917, by Father Mercurio Fiorella, who came from St. Louis, Mo." to replace Bandini at the Tontitown parish.¹⁴⁹ In November 1933, a memorial to Fr. Bandini was dedicated in Tontitown's cemetery. Members of the town's parish and friends contributed to a fund for its purchase. The memorial represents "a crucifixion group set on a cement foundation in altar-like design." Included in the group are the Corpus Christi and wooden cross, the Virgin Mary, St. John, and Mary Magdalene. The statues were made in Italy of terra cotta.¹⁵⁰ On the centenary of Fr. Bandini's birth in 1952, Tontitown held a solemn ceremony in his memory at his tomb. It was attended by the area's Italian population and the civil authorities, with the local diocesan bishop presiding. To mark the occasion, the mayor of Tontitown sent an album of photographs relating to the event to the mayor of Forli, who promised that the "album will be religiously preserved in the Civic Library" in memory of Bandini and the ties between the two cities. A search in the

¹⁴⁸ "Passes To His Eternal Reward After A Brief Illness," *The Guardian*, January 6, 1917, 1. See "Requiem Mass for Tontitown Priest," *The Arkansas Gazette*, January 4, 1917; "Father Bandini of Tontitown," *The Rogers Democrat*, January 11, 1917, 2; BCF, Filippo Guarini, *Diario Forlivese*, Volume Decimoquarto Dal 3 Giugno 1915 al 23 Gennaio 1919, pp. 186-87; ALE, HR, Birth, Marriage & Death, Web: Arkansas, Find A Grave Index, 1809-2012, "Father. Pietro Bandini" (accessed 10/17/2013).

¹⁴⁹ Diocesan Historical Commission, *The History of Catholicity*, 128. See *OCD*, 1918 (Kenedy), 493; Lemke, *The Story of Tontitown, Arkansas*, 19; ADLR, TSJC, Morris to Spigardi, March 14 and 20, 1917, Spigardi to Right Rev. Bishop (Morris), St. Louis, Mo., March 16, 1917, MFF, Morris to Fiorella, March 20, 1917, Personal Visitation (Fr. Mercurio Fiorella), Tontitown, Ark., February 25, 1919; Italamericus, "Tontitown," *SN*, August 3, 1917.

¹⁵⁰ May C. Downer, "Memorial to Father Bandini is Dedicated," *The Guardian*, February 24, 1934, 1.

Civic Library failed to locate it.¹⁵¹

As previously noted, Bandini was born in a “wealthy and respectable” family and could have lived comfortably like his brothers Vincenzo and Antonio as a landowner (possidente) and been included in the general roster of administrative voters in Forlì.¹⁵² Yet, he spent much of his life begging for money for the Indians at St. Francis Xavier Mission in Montana, for arriving immigrants in New York, and for Italian colonists in Arkansas. Bandini died intestate and the probate court appointed his friend A. M. Byrnes as administrator of his estate. His debts, including funeral and burial expenses, bank notes, etc., amounted to \$700. He left a mere \$34 on deposit at the First National Bank of Springdale. To pay off the rest of his debt, his sole surviving heir, Titus Bandini, agreed to the sale of his uncle’s real estate, appraised at \$889 and sold to Fr. Mercurio Fiorella for \$666. In 1919, the latter sold the property to Bishop Morris for \$1.00.¹⁵³ Despite charges against him documented in this study, his all-too-human shortcomings, and his penchant for publicity, it seems fair to conclude that Bandini’s life as a priest was primarily motivated by his sense of mission and his passion for aiding those entrusted to his care and not by any ambition for personal advancement or material gain, as demonstrated by the lack of ecclesiastical promotion and the meagerness of the worldly possessions he left behind.

¹⁵¹ “In memoria di un illustre concittadino. Padre Pietro Bandini solennemente celebrato nella città americana che egli fondò,” *Il Nuovo Momento*, December 12, 1953, 2; “In memoria di D. Pietro Bandini,” *Il Nuovo Momento*, January 9, 1954, 2.

¹⁵² AGS, DH 02, Giudice to Revmo Signore (Rolleri), Chieri, Italy, February 21, 1891.

¹⁵³ See WCA, CR, Abstract of Title No. 13,166, 21-30, 32. On Bandini’s estate, see *ibid.*, Probate Court Inventory Record, Book E, 1, Account Current, Executor’s or Administrator’s Inventory (2 copies), Administrator’s Bond Record, Book D, 35, Administrator’s Bond, Washington County Probate Record, Book 0, 455,474, 485, 488, 500, 537, 577, 602, Letters of Administration, Book D, 333, Demands vs. Deceased, Book 2, 5, Ambrose & Son, Publishers, *Fayetteville Republic*, receipt for payment, November 23, 1917 (copies at SMOH); ADLR, PBF, I. Donnelly Church Goods Co. to Aretz, Kansas City, Mo., January 27, 1917, Chancellor (Aretz) to I. Donnelly Church Goods Co., February 3, 1917.



1953 photo of 1933 memorial to Fr. Bandini in Tontitown's cemetery; Archives of the Diocese of Little Rock, AR.

Chapter VII

National and International Colonizer

Immigration and Urban Congestion

The mass migration of Italians to other parts of the world, especially to the Americas, in the period following national unification in 1861 is one of the great events in that country's modern history. The push was primarily the lack of economic opportunities at home while the pull was the immense potential in the still developing economies of the New World. From 1876 to 1885 the highest number of Italian emigrants went to European countries, especially neighboring France, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, and Germany. After 1886 the highest number of Italian emigrants went to the Americas. The American countries that attracted most of the Italian emigrants were Argentina, Brazil and the United States. Argentina was the destination for the largest number of Italian emigrants during the years 1876 to 1890, after which it shared the position with Brazil. From 1898 to 1914 more Italians emigrated to the United States than to either Argentina or Brazil.¹

American government statistics show that during the period of mass Italian emigration from 1880 to 1924, 4,492,456 Italians entered the United States, for an average of about 100,000 immigrants a year. Most came from southern Italy, chiefly Sicily, Campania, the Abruzzi, and Calabria. A majority of them were male peasants attracted by the economic possibilities of an expanding and industrializing America. These immigrants settled for the most part in the large urban centers of the industrial Northeast and Midwest. Thus in 1910, 58.6% of Italians were in the Middle Atlantic states, 13.2% in New England, 10.8% in the East North Central states, and the rest scattered in other parts of the country.²

¹ Robert F. Foerster, *The Italian Emigration of Our Times* (1919; repr., New York: Russell & Russell, 1968), 7-9; Anna Maria Ratti, "Italian Migration Movements, 1876 To 1926," in *Interpretations*, vol. II of *International Migrations*, ed. Walter F. Willcox (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc., 1931), 449-50. See Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 4-5.

² U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970, Bicentennial Edition, Part 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), 105-06; Ratti, "Italian Migration Movements," 444-57; Foerster, *Italian*

As early as 1901, the U.S. Industrial Commission reported on the tendency of the foreign-born to settle in cities: "It is a familiar fact that a large proportion of those who come to our shores remain in the great cities. The crowding together, often in colonies composed almost exclusively of persons of a single nationality, of large numbers of poor and ignorant immigrants, is considered a serious economic, social, and political menace to our municipalities." It cited New York and San Francisco as having the largest proportion of the foreign-born, followed by Chicago, St. Paul, Detroit, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Minneapolis, and Buffalo. On the distribution of certain nationalities, the Industrial Commission noted: "The ever-increasing Italian immigration to this country presents this striking feature, that, although 80 percent of it is composed of the peasantry of Italy, it does not come to till the American soil, but settles itself in the American cities, where it meets with and causes endless evil." It gave the following reasons for this striking feature: poverty, indebtedness, the desire to eventually return to Italy, and the fact that most migrants from central and southern Italy, who formed the bulk of Italian immigration and were known as "cafoni," were not a rural population but resided in towns and labored in nearby fields. It also pointed to the peasants' ignorance of the possibilities of American agriculture, the stranglehold of the bosses or padrones on jobs, and the attraction of existing urban colonies as a form of chain migration. Despite these odds, the report concluded that the proper remedy was to induce "the Italian cafone of the American towns, by any means and at all sacrifices, to establish himself in the country."³

The concentration of the foreign-born in the large urban centers of the industrial Northeast and Midwest put immense pressure on the housing market, driving up rents and forcing working-class

Emigration, 38-40, 328-29. See Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 5-6.

³ U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:LXVII-LXIX, 278-80, 495-99. See U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 1:36-37, 40, 139-45, 430-38, 727-72; Giovanni Preziosi, *Gl'Italiani negli Stati Uniti del Nord* (Milano: Libreria Editrice Milanese, 1909), 83-91.

families to take in lodgers to help pay for it. Types of housing varied from city to city as did the levels of crowding. Philadelphia had its small row houses, New England had its three-deckers, Chicago and St. Louis had their three-story buildings separated by narrow walkways, and Detroit, Milwaukee, Memphis, and Seattle had their converted warehouses and single-family houses split up for multiple-family occupancy. Most immigrants found cheap living accommodations in this type of housing located in ethnic enclaves. New York City, with its huge immigrant population, had the most crowded living spaces. After 1879 dumbbell tenements, named so because of their shape, spread across the city. The five or six stories building had four apartments on each floor and an indentation on each side to allow for windows, giving it its dumbbell shape. When these buildings were set next to each other, the indentations created an air shaft five feet wide. These indentations, meant to provide fresh air, were often used to dump garbage, creating unhealthy and smelly conditions. Moreover they were ducts for fire and noise.⁴

Concerned about conditions in New York's tenements, the state appointed a committee in 1894 to look into the question and submit a report. Known as the Tenement House Committee, it was made up of seven members with R. W. Gilder as chairman and Edward Marshall as secretary. Bandini was among those who testified before the committee. In his testimony on December 7, 1894, he said that

⁴ Howard P. Chudacoff, Judith E. Smith, and Peter C. Baldwin, *The Evolution of American Urban Society*, 7th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2010), 114-16. See Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York*, ed. David Leviatin (1890; repr., Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011); Tyler Anbinder, *Five Points: The 19th-Century New York City Neighborhood That Invented Tap Dance, Stole Elections, and Became the World's Most Notorious Slum* (New York: Penguin Group, 2001), 72-105, 346-52, 424-33; June G. Alexander, *Daily Life in Immigrant America, 1870-1920: How the Second Great Wave of Immigrants Made Their Way in America*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), 150-88; Leonard Dinnerstein, Roger L. Nichols, and David M. Reimers, *Natives and Strangers: A History of Ethnic Americans*, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 139-41.

he had seen the tenement houses in which Italians lived and found that “many of them are not decent.” Asked in what way they were not decent, he replied: “Morally and materially; it was very hard for me to go upstairs in the flats; sometimes I could not stand it at all - I had to go down in the street and get some fresh air.” On whether this was partly the fault of the people themselves, he replied: “Yes, sir; and also on account of the building; because they have so many people crowded in; but some of them are not fit, it seems to me - there is no air, the yard is too small and there is not light enough.” On the moral effects of crowded tenement life, he noted: “I think it is not so bad as one would think it would be among these surroundings; in fact, their morals are better than you would think; even in those families where they are so crowded, where it looks very immoral, by the knowledge I have of the people, I would say they are moral, as a rule, generally speaking; but lately, within a few years, there is something you would say was immorality beginning to spread among them.” On whether the Italians availed themselves of schools, he observed: “I think they do better now than they used to do,” adding that in Italy the government found it hard to get the parents to send their children to school, especially in the case of families that live in the mountains “where there are not very good accommodations for schools.” Asked if he had any suggestion for the committee, he answered: “I don’t think of anything at present.”⁵

⁵ *Report of the Tenement House Committee*, 5, 524-27; “For Better Tenements,” *NYT*, January 18, 1895, 1. See ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 113, fasc. 2207, Bandini Tenement house committee testimony, New York, December 7, 1894, Oldrini to Fava, New York, January 22 and 25, 1895, rough draft, Regio Ambasci. (Fava) to Oldrini, Washington, January 23, 1895, Gilder to Fava, New York, January 29 and February 11, 1895. See appendix IV for Bandini’s testimony.

REPORT

OF THE

TENEMENT HOUSE COMMITTEE

AS AUTHORIZED BY

CHAPTER 479 OF THE LAWS OF 1894.

TRANSMITTED TO THE LEGISLATURE JANUARY 17, 1895.

Report of the Tenement House Committee, 1895; <http://books.google.com>.

To highlight the increasing congestion in New York City, a committee representing city departments and private organizations arranged an *Exhibit on Congestion of Population* in New York's American Museum of Natural History at 77th St. and Columbus Avenue from March 9 to 22, 1908. The *Exhibit* included maps, diagrams, photographs, and even "a full size two-room apartment, showing conditions by night and day of persons living in the congested districts of the city." A conference was scheduled from March 9 to 12 in conjunction with the *Exhibit* to analyze the causes for the congestion and suggest some remedies. Congestion was especially great in city neighborhoods made up of immigrant colonies. According to an article in a local newspaper, nearly 500,000 of the city's population of 4,500,000 was crowded in just 864 of the city's 209,218 acres.⁶

⁶ "Exhibits Planned to Bring Home to New Yorkers the Rate at Which Congestion Is Increasing, in Order That Remedies May Be Found," *NYT*, February 9, 1908; "Exhibit

The *Bollettino dell' Emigrazione* published a lengthy report on the conference, including the presentations made by the royal consul general of Italy Count Annibale Raybaudi-Massiglia, Amy Bernardy of Smith College, Gino C. Speranza of the Investigation Bureau for Italians in New York, and Dr. Antonio Stella. The royal consul general called for a greater balance between industrial and agricultural production as a way of dealing with urban congestion. Bernardy argued that it was natural for the Italian immigrants to settle in the great American cities, where they found it easy to get work and establish themselves among relatives and friends. The problem of congestion was due more to American industrial conditions than to the immigrants. They must be treated honestly and conditions need to be created so that they will not feel alone and abandoned outside the congested cities. Speranza claimed that the effect of congestion on the Italians was more psychological than physical. By that he meant "that the suggestion of the worst or of the weakest is spread easily over the congested mass, whereas it would be sterile of results in a freer environment." He observed that Italian women have suffered the most through congestion, since it led them to industrial work which "tends to destroy one of the finest of the Italian traditions, the unity of family life, and leads to the destruction of the Italian ideal of the home." He was especially critical of Italian bankers, padrones, and criminal elements or Black Hand in the tightly-knit Italian colonies who exploited their congested and, to the outsider, secretive nature. "These aliens," he concluded, "must learn that they do not merely live their physical existence in New York, but constitute jointly with others the life of the city; that they must and can aid to make New York, not a bad copy of some ancient little Italian feudalism, but a great cosmopolitan city." A major way of integrating these immigrants into the broader urban community was to build in their neighborhoods public schools, which he viewed as effective tools for their americanization. In his presentation on the effects of urban congestion on Italian women and will Tell All About New York," *NYT*, March 1, 1908.

children, Dr. Stella described the immigrants' overcrowded living conditions in tenement houses, leading to higher than average rates of diseases such as rickets, anemia, scrofula, tuberculosis, gonorrhea, syphilis, and mortality. "In the case of the Italian children," he noted, "we are as nearly correct as one can be, when we assume that *the lack of fresh air and the congestion of bedrooms*, as it exists in the tenement houses of New York, are at the base of all their ills." On the other hand, Italian children brought up in the country tended to be taller and heavier. He concluded by recommending a better distribution of immigrants before they leave their homeland by informing them of opportunities beyond the large cities, by educating them in the principles of hygiene and life when they are settled here, and by building model low rent tenements.⁷

On the evening of July 23, 1909, Dr. G. E. di Palma Castiglione, director of the Labor Information Office for Italians at 59 Lafayette St. in New York City (Ufficio di Informazioni e di Collocamento per gli Immigrati Italiani) presented a paper at a conference sponsored by the Committee on Congestion of Population. In the paper, titled

⁷ "Sull'addensamento della popolazione in New York (Discorsi tenuti alla *Exhibit on Congestion of Population* in New York - Marzo 1908)," *Boll. Emig.* 17 (1908): 3-59. See Amy A. Bernardy, "Perchè gl'Italiani si addensano nelle città Americane," in Cordasco, *Italians in the United States*; Gino C. Speranza, "The Italians in Congested Districts," in Cordasco and Bucchioni, *The Italians*, 139-142 and L. Tomasi, *The Italian in America*, 2nd ed., 237-40; Antonio Stella, "The Effects of Urban Congestion on Italian Women and Children," in Cordasco, *Italians in the City*. See also Rocco Brindisi, "The Italian and Public Health," in L. Tomasi, *The Italian in America* 2nd ed., 163-68; Antonio Stella, "Condizioni Igieniche e Sanitarie degli Italiani nelle Città del Nord-America. Il Deperimento della Stirpe," in *Gli Italiani negli Stati Uniti d'America*, 105-25, "Tuberculosis and the Italians in the United States," in L. Tomasi, *The Italian in America*, 2nd ed., 169-73 and "La diffusione della tubercolosi fra gli italiani negli Stati Uniti," *Boll. Emig.* 17 (1909): 24-57; La Gumina et al., *The Italian American Experience: An Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Health Menace and the Italian Immigrant," by Alan M. Kraut; Cordasco, *Dictionary of American Immigration History*, s.vv. "Bernardy, Amy A[llemand]," by Remigio U. Pane, "Speranza, Gino Charles," by Francesco Cordasco, "Stella, Antonio," by Francesco Cordasco.

“Where can the Italian immigrants go in the United States,” he stated that the only truly independent worker is the one who works on land that he owns. He strongly urged his fellow Italians to leave the cities with all their problems and locate on still uncultivated and available American land, transforming themselves into independent farmers. He acknowledged that such a transformation would be impossible for immigrants from the cities, used to the charming attractions that they offer, but could only be accomplished by immigrants from Italy’s agricultural centers, used to long hours of hard work. Some of the still available public land was to be found in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, suitable for the cultivation of cotton, sugar cane, corn, and pig farming. Public land was also available in Michigan, Minnesota, the Dakotas, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri, suitable for the cultivation of wheat, sugar beet, and the rearing of livestock. The greatest amount of public land was located in the West, in Arizona, California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Colorado, Nevada, and Wyoming, suitable for the cultivation of fruits and vegetables, agriculture, and the rearing of livestock. Di Palma Castiglione also pointed to privately-owned uncultivated land in states close to the key ports of entry, such as New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. He called special attention to Virginia and the Carolinas, well-suited for colonization since they were not far from major centers of Italian immigration, have a temperate climate, and the land was available at a good price and was suitable for the cultivation of vegetables. Moreover they were protected by the Allegheny and Appalachian mountains from the cold wind pushing south from Canada. He concluded by listing the agricultural colonies already established in the United States, including Tontitown.⁸

⁸ G. E. di Palma Castiglione, “Dove possono andare gli Italiani immigrati negli Stati Uniti (Conferenza),” *Boll. Emig.* 18 (1909): 3-26.

Agricultural Colonies a Solution to Urban Congestion

Joseph Velikonja has pointed out that immigrants arriving in New York, Boston, or New Orleans, the major ports of entry, had two principal opportunities if they wanted to avoid the dismal conditions in those or other cities. One was to go to the mining or industrial centers of the interior. The other was to settle in the agricultural regions of the interior and California.⁹ Addressing a similar topic, Eliot Norton, the president of the Society for the Protection of Italian Immigrants, called in 1904 for a "General Plan for Settling Immigrants Outside the Great Cities." He believed that many immigrants with no definite plans or associations would "be willing to settle in the country if they were sure of meeting others from their country, if they were provided with the means of getting to the place deemed advisable and agreeable to settle in, and if they could be secured a livelihood until the land which would be their means of livelihood became productive."¹⁰ Two years later, Gino C. Speranza interviewed Adolfo Rossi, inspector for the Royal Emigration Department in Italy, on the question of colonization or the distribution of farm laborers to agricultural sections with the goal of eventually becoming farm owners. Rossi insisted on two conditions for the success of such a plan. First, utmost care must be used in the selection of families that are used to farming. Second, colonization must start with small nuclei which, if successful, could then attract families, friends, and *paesani* from the pioneers' villages. "Experiments with more than fifty families," Rossi contended, "will almost invariably result in failure; for large groups are subject to divisions and dissensions through the spirit of 'regionalismo', or the disintegrating influence of some malcontent who may join the *contadini*."¹¹

⁹ Velikonja, "Contributo Italiano," 425. For a study of Italian agricultural migration in the Americas, see Frediani, *Pionieri italiani*.

¹⁰ Eliot Norton, "The Need of a General Plan for Settling Immigrants Outside the Great Cities," in L. Tomasi, *The Italian in America*, 2nd ed., 53-55.

¹¹ Gino C. Speranza, "Italian Farmers in the South: An Interview with Adolfo Rossi," in *ibid.*, 251-54.

This chapter will focus on the second opportunity as a solution to urban congestion and its attendant problems, using Tontitown, Arkansas, as an example of a successful Italian agricultural colony. But the success of Tontitown and other similar colonies came at the price of overcoming the many obstacles that confronted the formation of such colonies. Professor A. Ravaoli, commercial attaché in Washington, submitted a report in 1903 on agricultural colonization in the United States as it related to Italian immigration. The first section of his report dealt with agricultural colonization as a remedy for curbing the concentration of Italian immigrants in the cities. He noted that Italian immigrants concentrated in the most squalid parts of the cities, forming self-contained colonies and becoming easy prey to politicians and demagogues. Most immigrants found jobs in construction and factories or sweat shops. Very few opted for agriculture, the only industry that could improve their condition and be beneficial for them. The most important reason for such concentration was the great demand for workers in construction and industries, especially in the eastern states where most Italians landed. A second reason was that the possibilities that existed in the past for immigrants who wanted to dedicate themselves to agriculture had greatly diminished. Much of the still available public land was located in mostly arid zones, requiring very expensive irrigation. Land ready to be cultivated was in mostly private hands, requiring a modest amount of capital, which immigrants did not have. Other reasons included the attraction of existing Italian urban colonies and the bad experience immigrants had working the land in Italy. One solution was to form colonization societies that would provide the necessary resources to transform at least some of the immigrants into land owners. Ravaoli went on to give a detailed analysis of the potential for colonization in various parts of the country, citing existing Italian settlements with brief references to Sunnyside and Tontitown.¹²

¹² A. Ravaoli, "La Colonizzazione Agricola negli Stati Uniti in rapporto all'immigrazione italiana," *Boll. Emig.* 4 (1904): 3-49. See "Iniziativa per migliorare

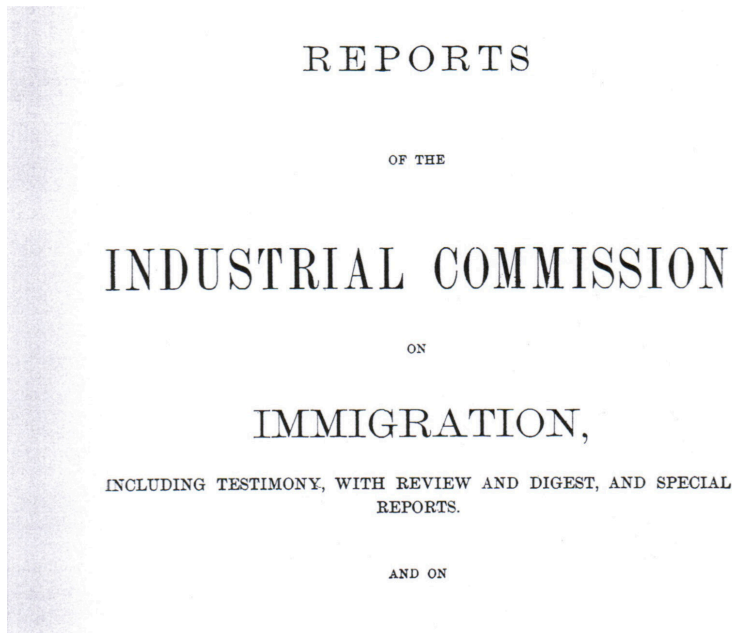
Alberto Pecorini, a professor at American International College in Springfield, Mass., pointed out in an article published in 1909 that while 67% of working Italians in the United States were engaged in agriculture back home, only 6.60% were engaged in agriculture here. The reason for that was that migrants responded to the available economic opportunities and not their personal preferences. Nonetheless, Italians here have been successful in three areas of agriculture: truck farming, primarily in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the Carolinas; extensive agriculture, primarily in North Carolina, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas; and fruit raising, by far the most successful of the three areas, chiefly in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, North Carolina, and most importantly California and in the future Texas. "To sum up, the Italians as agricultural laborers have given remarkably good results in almost every locality, especially where the climate is mild and where they can soon become land owners. The Italian seems destined to become the truck farmer of the East and more and more to develop fruit raising in California and Texas. Excellent results will also be obtained with him in the sugar cane and cotton fields of the South, especially in healthy localities."¹³

Despite the fact that most Italian immigrants to the United States settled in the large urban centers of the industrial Northeast and Midwest, there were a significant number of Italian agricultural

le condizioni di vita nelle campagne e favorire l'avviamento degli immigranti all'agricoltura negli Stati Uniti dell' America del Nord," *ibid*, 8 (1909): 3-11; "L'avvenire dell'emigrazione Italiana negli Stati Uniti secondo la R. ambasciata Italiana," *Rivista di Emigrazione* III (Marzo-Aprile 1910): 52-57; Luigi Villari, *Gli Stati Uniti d'America e l'Emigrazione italiana* (1912; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1975), 255-56; Gianfausto Rosoli, "La Colonizzazione Italiana delle Americhe tra Mito e Realtà (1880-1914)," *Studi Emigrazione* IX (Ottobre 1972): 343-46; Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 134.

¹³ Alberto Pecorini, "The Italian as an Agricultural Laborer," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 33 (March 1909): 380-90. See La Gumina et al., *The Italian American Experience: An Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Agriculture," by Vincenza Scarpaci.

colonies. In its 1901 *Reports*, the U.S. Industrial Commission published the first extensive federal government report on the agricultural distribution of immigrants by nationalities and by separate states. The chapter on Italian agricultural colonies on pages 495-507 of volume XV, contributed by Alessandro Maestro-Valerio, editor of Chicago's *La Tribuna Italiana*, listed colonies in Vineland, N.J., Bryan, Brazos County, Tex., Asti, Sonoma County, Cal., Italians in other parts of California and the Far West, Italians of Louisiana and Mississippi, the Italian truck farmers of Memphis, Tenn., Italian agricultural colonies of Daphne, Baldwin County, and of Lambert, Mobile County, in Ala., the colony of Sunnyside, Ark., and its derivative colonies of Tontitown, Ark., Montebello and Vendella, in Mo.¹⁴



U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*; Government Printing Office, 1901.

¹⁴ U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:XLVIII-LVII, 492-646. See Rossati, "Gl'Italiani nell'Agricoltura," 27-48; Rosoli, "La Colonizzazione Italiana," 348-49.

Ten years later, the U.S. Immigration Commission, chaired by Senator William P. Dillingham, published its comprehensive 41-volume report on immigration. Volume 21, part 24 of Immigrants in Industries, included a general survey on recent immigrants in agriculture in part I, pages 1-31, and a report on Italians in agriculture in part II, pages 32-435. It was by far the most extensive federal government report to that date on Italians in agriculture. The report on Italians was divided into 26 chapters, with the first one giving a general survey of the topic. It noted that more than 40 Italian communities in 13 states were visited by agents of the commission. The other chapters, 2 to 26, gave reports on the following colonies, listed here by name, Italian population, and principal crop: Vineland, N.J., about 5,000, North and South Italian truckers and fruit growers; Hammonton, N.J., 1,233, South Italian berry farmers; Canastota, N.Y., at least 500, South Italian onion growers; Lyons and Clyde, N.Y., about 60 Italian families, South Italian truck farmers; Port Byron, N.Y., between 250 and 300, South Italian small farmers; South Glastonbury, Conn., 250, North Italian fruit growers; Johnston Township, R.I., 104 farmers and 529 farm laborers and assistants of Italian lineage, 529 for state as a whole, South Italian small farmers; Valdese, N.C., from 250 to 300, North Italian general farmers; St. Helena, N.C., 180, North Italian truck growers; Independence, La., 1,000 to 1,200, South Italian strawberry growers; Kenner, La., 150 Italian families, South Italian truck gardeners; Daphne, Ala. and scattered settlements, South Italian truck farmers; Sunnyside, Ark., 600, North Italian cotton growers; Gracie, Ark., 19 Italian families, North Italian cotton growers; Millikens Bend, La., 28, North Italian diversified farmers; Shreveport, La., 32, South Italian cotton growers; Montague, Tex., nearly 250, North Italian cotton growers; League City, Hitchcock, near San Antonio, and Victoria, Tex., about 65 families, North Italian diversified farmers and cotton growers; Bryan, Tex., 1,700 to 1,850, South Italian cotton growers; Dickinson, Tex., 125 families, South Italian strawberry growers; Tontitown, Ark., 400, North Italian fruit growers and general

farmers; Marshfield, Mo., 10 Italian families from Tyrol, Austria, corn, hay and wheat growers; Knobview, Mo., nearly 220, North Italian fruit growers; Paradise Ridge, Tenn., 15 Italian families, North Italian truck farmers; Genoa, Wis., 44 Italian families, North Italian general farmers; Cumberland, Wis., 250 families, South Italian hay, potatoes, and dairy growers; M'Williams and New Palermo, Ala., were listed as "extinct or partially extinct Italian agricultural colonies."

61st CONGRESS }
2d Session }

SENATE

{ DOCUMENT
{ No. 633

REPORTS OF THE IMMIGRATION COMMISSION

IMMIGRANTS IN INDUSTRIES

(IN TWENTY-FIVE PARTS)

PART 24: RECENT IMMIGRANTS IN AGRICULTURE

(IN TWO VOLUMES: VOL. I)



The report of the U.S. Immigration Commission showed that Italian agricultural colonies were to be found in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, North Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, Arkansas, Texas, Missouri, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. For some reason, California was left out, even though the 1901 U.S. Industrial Commission had listed Italians in Asti, Sonoma County, California, as well as other parts of that state. These agricultural colonies ranged in Italian population from about 5,000 in Vineland, N.J. to just 28 in Millikens Bend, La. The total number of Italians in these colonies, however, was a small fraction of the total Italian immigrant population at this time. The colonists engaged in a range of agricultural occupations, including growing fruit, onion, corn, hay, wheat, potatoes, dairy and cotton.¹⁵

Role of Government in Colonization

The Italian government's attitude and policy, as well as that of leading Italian thinkers, toward mass migration during the period from national unification in 1861 to the First World War went through various distinct, if overlapping, phases. Robert F. Foerster, referring to the period 1868 to 1919, has discerned three broad periods: from national unification to about 1895, from about 1895 to 1908, and from about 1908 to the end of the Great War. He has described these three stages in this way:

In the first, men deplored emigration; in the second they deemed it necessary and, upon some grounds, positively advantageous; in the third, regarding it as not the less necessary, they accumulated concrete evidence of gains at home and discerned it

¹⁵ U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:1-435. For an abstract of the report, see *ibid.*, *Reports*, 1:39-40, 543-615. See also Alexander E. Cance, "Immigrant Rural Communities," in L. Tomasi, *The Italian in America*, 65-77; Leo Gabrici, *Gli Italiani nell'agricoltura degli Stati Uniti* (Roma: Tipografia dell'Unione Editrice, 1917).

to be a manageable instrument to expansion abroad. In the first period they sought to curb it, in the second to protect and encourage - without stimulating - it, in the third to cherish it and give it direction.¹⁶

The establishment of the Italian Bureau, which opened at Ellis Island on July 23, 1894, with the purpose of aiding Italians arriving there, the assistance given by the Italian government to both Sunnyside and Tontitown, and the 1901 comprehensive emigration law occurred during the second period, from about 1895 to 1908, when immigration was deemed necessary and even positively advantageous and in need of protection and encouragement. The 1901 emigration law for the first time provided protection at home, on board ships and in the areas of settlement. It also created a central office, the Commissariat of Emigration, headed by a commissioner-general of emigration, dependent on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose task would be to coordinate efforts relating to emigration. Among other things, the commissariat published the *Bollettino dell'Emigrazione*, to provide information on its activities relating to immigrants and their protection. An emigration fund was also established to subsidize the various protective agencies, including private ones.¹⁷

Italian officials familiar with the condition of Italian immigrants in congested urban area strongly advocated encouraging them to settle in agricultural parts of the country. Saverio Fava, long-time Italian ambassador to Washington, tried unsuccessfully to get permission to open in the Barge Office at the port of New York a labor

¹⁶ Foerster, *Italian Emigration*, 474. See Rosoli, "La Colonizzazione Italiana," 296-376; Angelo Olivieri, "L'Italia ufficiale e la realtà dell'emigrazione in USA (1886-1914)," *Studi Emigrazione* XI (Marzo 1974): 5-48; Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 43-46, 53-57.

¹⁷ Bodio, "Dell'Emigrazione Italiana," *Boll. Emig.* 8 (1902): 3-21. The *Bollettino dell'Emigrazione*, published from 1902 to 1927, contains much valuable material on Italian immigration during that period. The Italian legislation of January 31, 1901, was modeled after that of Germany. For an English translation of the Italian law, see U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:699-708.

bureau supported by the Italian government that would complement the limited work of the Italian Bureau. A major objective of the bureau was to make possible the transformation of some Italian immigrants into land-owners.¹⁸ Gustavo Tosti, the acting consul-general of Italy in New York City, argued that the “almost mechanical gravitation of the newcomers of all nationalities toward the cities in general, and toward New York in particular, constitutes the most serious aspect of the problem of immigration in this country.” He blamed the resulting “concentration of alien colonies in the large cities of this country,” where there is great competition for jobs and vices abound, for “the evils resulting from the unwholesome promiscuousness of tenement life.” The solution was to distribute immigrants to areas where they could “find needed and useful employment and supply equally useful labor,” i.e., sparsely settled southern and western states. The key to success was not to offer them seasonal farm work, but “to transform them into farmers and small land-owners.”¹⁹

Adolfo Rossi was sent by the Commissariat of Emigration in 1904 to study and report, among other things, on the assistance given to Italian immigrants in the United States by the various protective agencies and on their coordination for the purpose of colonization. One of his conclusions was the need for free labor bureaus to encourage a better distribution of immigrants looking for work across the country.²⁰ Speranza pointed out that Rossi, “appreciating the importance of relieving urban congestion and the benefits to be derived by settling Italians in rural places, gave the larger part of his six months’ stay to this very question. He visited most of the past failures and successes in Italian colonization or farming - Vineland, Tontiville [sic], Greenville, Sunnyside, Asti.” Rossi

¹⁸ Fava, “Le Colonie Agricole Italiane,” 462-63.

¹⁹ Gustavo Tosti, “The Agricultural Possibilities of Italian Immigration,” in L. Tomasi, *The Italian in America*, 2nd ed., 147-51. See Ravaoli, “La Colonizzazione Agricola,” 3-49.

²⁰ “Per la tutela degli italiani,” *Boll. Emig.* 16 (1904): 3-5, 15. See Mark I. Choate, *Emigrant Nation: The Making of Italy Abroad* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 99.

viewed “Texas as the most promising State for Italian Immigration, with Mississippi and the Indian Territory following.”²¹

The American federal government, on the other hand, played a very limited role regarding immigration. In 1862 Congress passed the Homestead Act to encourage migration to the undeveloped lands in the western part of the country. Beyond that, the federal government made no effort to promote immigration. The U.S. Immigration Commission reported in 1911 that “Unlike Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Australia, and other immigrant-receiving countries, the United States makes no effort to induce immigration.” It limited itself to the regulation of immigration and provided no protection once the immigrants left the immigrant station at the port of entry. It left that function to private agencies. The first federal law relating to immigration, passed in 1819, regulated the carriage of steerage passengers at sea and provided for the compilation and collection of statistics on immigration. Control of immigration was left to the states. The general federal immigration law of 1882 required a head tax of 50¢ on all immigrants, to be collected on arrival, and excluded lunatics, idiots, those likely to become public charges, and convicts. In 1885 a law prohibiting the importation of contract labor was passed. In 1891 a law was passed that added polygamists and sufferers from dangerous and loathsome diseases to the list of those to be excluded. The law also provided the federal officials needed to enforce federal regulations and bring about federal control of immigration. In 1907 Congress created a Division of Information, in the Bureau of Immigration, designed to help immigrants find jobs. In 1917 a literacy test was added as a requirement for entry. Finally in 1921 and 1924 Congress established a strict quota system, based on national origin, that limited the total immigration in any one year to 150,000.²²

²¹ Gino C. Speranza, “A Mission of Peace,” *The Outlook*, September 10, 1904, 130.

²² U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 1:25, 2:557-84; Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America. The Saga of the Immigrant*, rev. ed. (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1967), 521-29. See U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports* XV: XV-XVIII, LVII-XLI, 647-93; Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 133;

Unlike the federal government, state governments were very active in encouraging immigration in an age of massive industrialization, which explains why most immigrants settled in the large urban centers of the industrial Northeast and Midwest. In testimony before the U.S. Industrial Commission, Dr. Joseph H. Senner, formerly commissioner of immigration at the Port of New York, declared that Michigan, Wisconsin, and other states “have permanent colonization bureaus in Europe, but their effect is very small. Comparatively few colonies are established in this country by immigrants.”²³

The southern states, being primarily agricultural with a large supply of black labor, had historically attracted a small percentage of immigrants. The 1900 census showed that the entire South had only 6% of the foreign-born population of the United States.²⁴ After the Civil War, the South had to adapt to the change from slave to free labor and the shift from extensive cultivation of staple crops such as cotton, rice, and tobacco to diversified and intensive farming for which European farmers were better prepared than black farm workers. “There has been for some time,” the U.S. Industrial Commission noted in 1901, “a decided call for a class of foreign immigrants with capital enough to make initial payments on land and set up as independent farmers. State boards of immigration and private corporations have been, and are now, engaged in trying to attract settlers of this class.” It added that “There is little express demand for foreigners as farm laborers in comparison. It is as yet generally felt that the negro laborer holds the field, and that the foreign immigrant can not compete with him. But

ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 89, fasc. 1486, rough draft, Fava to Signor Ministro (Crispi), Washington, March 20 and 28, 1889.

²³ U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:XC, 182.

²⁴ Walter L. Fleming, “Immigration to the Southern States,” *Political Science Quarterly* 20 (June 1905): 277. See *Dictionary of American Immigration History*, 1990 ed., s.v. “Immigrants in the Old South,” by Randall M. Miller; La Gumina et al., *The Italian American Experience: An Encyclopedia*, 2000, s.v. “South, The,” by Gary R. Mormino; U.S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, 21:235-244.

the same qualities that make the foreigner desirable as a farmer make him desirable as a laborer - his industry, his continuous application to his work, his intelligence and skill." It concluded that "The growing dissatisfaction with the negro laborer is already taking shape in some calls for foreign laborers...Where foreign farmers have settled it is natural to suppose that foreign laborers will find a place, in some cases as a stepping-stone to farming on their own account."²⁵

To promote immigration to the South, southern states formed in 1884 the Southern Immigration Association of America, which had limited success.²⁶ Ambassador Fava, in an effort to encourage migration to the South so as to limit congestion in the large urban centers of the industrial Northeast and Midwest, contacted the association but apparently with little success.²⁷

Catholic Colonization²⁸

Starting in the middle of the 19th century, the American Catholic Church was becoming primarily an immigrant church. However, the

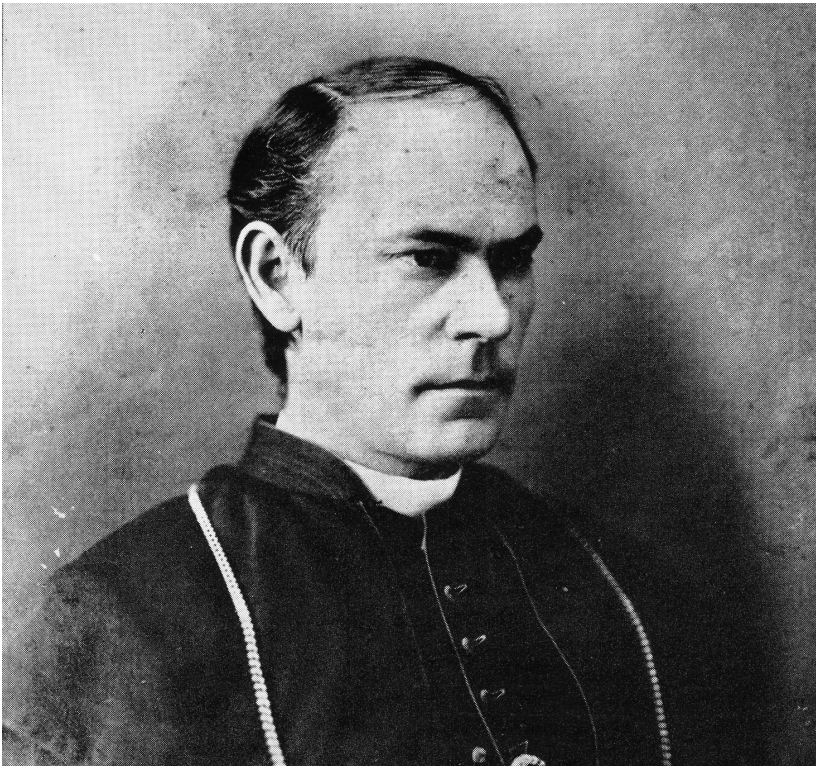
²⁵ U.S. Industrial Commission, *Reports*, XV:550-53. See Rowland T. Berthoff, "Southern Attitudes Toward Immigration, 1865-1914," *The Journal of Southern History* XVII (August 1951): 328-60; Fleming, "Immigration to the Southern States," 283.

²⁶ See Jason H. and Susan R. Silverman, *Immigration in the American South, 1864-1895: A Documentary History of the Southern Immigration Conventions* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006).

²⁷ Pilotti, *L'Ufficio di Informazioni e Protezione*, 136-40. See ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2191, rough draft, R. Amb. (Fava) to Signor Ministro (Blanc), Washington, June 2, 10, and July 10, 1894, rough draft, Ambassador for Italy (Fava) to Signor Governatore/Sir, Washington, June 6, 1894, rough draft, Ambassador for Italy (Fava) to Jackson, Washington, June 8, 1894, Bigongiari to Fava, New York, June 26, 1894, Blanc to Fava, Rome, June 26 and August 18, 1894, rough draft, Circolare ai R.R. Consolati, Washington, July 10, 1894, Marazzi to Signor Barone (Fava), Chicago, July 23, 1894, rough draft, Ro. Amb. (Fava) to Signor Agente (Oldrini), Washington, August 16 and 22, 1894, Oldrini to Fava, New York, August 16, 21 and 31, 1894, Papini to Fava, New Orleans, September 3, 1894, Dossi to Signor Ambasciatore (Fava), Rome, September 26, 1894.

²⁸ A version of this section first appeared in Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 21-23, 31-32, 34-36.

American bishops as a group did not take any formal action on matters relating to the care of immigrants prior to the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884. The major Catholic immigrant groups, the Irish and the Germans, came with their own priests and were cared for by their own societies. The Irish had the Hibernian Society of New York, founded in 1790, and the Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary, founded in New York in 1881 for the protection of Irish immigrant girls. The Germans had the St. Raphael Society, founded in Germany in 1871 for the protection of German immigrants, which established the Leo House as a hospice for immigrants in New York in 1889.²⁹



Bishop John Lancaster Spalding; John J. Cosgrove book, p 84.

²⁹ Guilday, *A History of the Councils of Baltimore*, 277.

In 1883, Bishop John L. Spalding of Peoria, Illinois, sent a long letter to Propaganda Fide giving his views on the present state and needs of the church in the United States. The letter, written in anticipation of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore the following year, included a section on Italian emigration to the United States. Spalding noted that Italian migration to the United States, which was unlike any other, was growing and that most Italians settled in the dirtiest sections of American cities, “where the good ones are inevitably corrupted by the depraved.” “The result,” he added, “is that they lose the faith and become a scandal to the Catholic name. The observation is often made in America, even by Catholics, that ‘the Italians have no religion’.” He suggested that Italians be urged to establish agricultural colonies in the South and West as the Germans, the Irish, the Poles and others had done. He concluded that “from the religious point of view there is little doubt that such colonies are almost the only means by which the faith of the Italian migrants can be preserved.” He ended his section on Italians by pointing out that this matter was especially important since the head of the church resided in Italy, which might encourage critics to argue that their condition was due to the influence of the church itself.³⁰

In October 1883, the cardinals of Propaganda Fide held a series of meetings in which they dealt with various topics relating to the church in the United States, including the problem of Italian immigration. That issue was raised in a report presented by Cardinal Giovanni Battista Franzelin and which included the letter sent to Propaganda Fide by Bishop Spalding. Franzelin noted that Spalding had proposed that the plenary council to be held in the United States address the question of Italian immigration. He suggested that the council might address

³⁰ APF, SOCG, 1883, vol. 1018, J. L. Spalding, “Considerazione sul stato presente e le esigenze della Chiesa negli Stati Uniti d’America,” ff1076r-1091r. See *ibid.*, Acta, 1883, vol. 252, “Relazione con Sommario e nota di Archivio Circa la presente condizione della Chiesa Cattolica negli Stati Uniti di America,” Rome, October 1, 6, 8, 1883, ff1237v-1241r; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, I:33 (#93).

immigration in general, but added that “there is no doubt that the Italian emigrants find themselves in worse condition than the others.”³¹ From November 13 to December 13, 1883, representative members of the American hierarchy met in Rome with officials of Propaganda Fide at the latter’s request to prepare for the projected plenary council to be held at Baltimore in November 1884. The Americans objected to the eight-page document, the *Capita praecipua*, prepared by officials of Propaganda Fide, replacing it with a new 12 page draft, the *Capita proposita*, which became the working document of the American hierarchy as it prepared for the Baltimore meeting.³²

After returning to the United States, Baltimore’s Archbishop James Gibbons assigned particular chapters of the *Capita proposita* to twelve committees, made up of metropolitans with their suffragans, to offer “detailed analysis and further suggestions” on the assigned topics. The committee assigned to prepare the chapter “De Colonis Italianis” was made up of Archbishop William H. Elder of Cincinnati and Bishops Casper H. Borgess of Detroit, Richard Gilmour of Cleveland, John Ireland of St. Paul, John Vertin of Marquette, and Winand M. Wigger of Newark. Elder, thinking that bishops from the seaport cities would be better qualified to discuss this topic, tried to get Gibbons to assign the chapter to another group. But Gibbons told Elder that it was too

³¹ APF, Acta, 1883, vol. 252, “Relazione con Sommario,” ff1081r-1255v. See Maria L. Vannicelli, “L’Opera della Congregazione di Propaganda Fide per gli emigrati italiani negli Stati Uniti: 1883-1887,” in *L’Emigrazione Calabrese dall’Unità ad Oggi*, ed. Pietro Borzomati (Roma: Centro Studi Emigrazione, 1982), 135-51; Perotti, *Scal. mig.*, I:34-35 (#94), II:236-38 (#10).

³² “Minutes of the Roman Meeting,” 121, 546; Francis P. Cassidy, “Catholic Education in the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. I,” *The Catholic Historical Review* XXXIV (October 1948): 262-63. The complete titles of these documents are: *Capita praecipua quae Emi Cardinales S. C. de Propaganda Fide censuerunt a Rmis Archiepiscopis et Episcopis Foederatorum Statuum A. S. Romae congregatis praeparanda esse pro futuro Concilio* and *Capita proposita et examinata in collationibus, quas coram nonnulli Emis Cardinalibus Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide ad praeparandum futurum Concilium plenarium habuerunt Rmi Archiepiscopi et Episcopi Foederatorum Statuum Americae Septemtrionalis Romae congregati*.

late to change, since some of the provinces had already started to meet. "Besides," he wrote the same prelate, "there is very little to be said about it, & its study involves very little labor. I will make all the suggestions that occur to me on the subject." Gibbons' suggestions included the establishment of immigrant societies and the providing of Italian priests. He did not think, however, that it would be practical to establish colonies for Italians, since most of them settled in the cities. Apparently, Elder's committee did not make any extensive change on the topic assigned to it, so that the chapter on immigration was presented to the council in the form agreed upon at the Roman meeting.³³

The council opened in Baltimore on November 9, and lasted until December 7, 1884. The chapter "De Colonis Italianis" came up for discussion on December 1, 1884, in the twenty-first private congregation. Bishop Joseph Dwenger of Fort Wayne moved the adoption of the original chapter of the schema. Archbishop Corrigan opposed this and asked for the rejection of the entire chapter, since "there are many things in it which are far from true." Bishop Bernard McQuaid of Rochester "thought that the whole chapter should be expunged, as he saw no reason why they should be so solicitous of the Italians alone, and care must be taken of all immigrants." Bishop Spalding of Peoria spoke in favor of retaining the chapter since he

³³ Cassidy, "Catholic Education, 262-63; Henry J. Browne, "The 'Italian Problem' in the Catholic Church of the United States, 1880-1900," United States Catholic Historical Society, *Historical Records and Studies* XXXV (1946): 56-57; John T. Ellis, *The Life of James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, 1834-1921* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1952), I:232. *Acta et Decreta Concilii Plenarii Baltimorensis Tertii: A.D. MDCCCLXXXIV* (Baltimore: John Murphy, 1886), lists the twelve committees and their members on pp. xxv-xxxiv and gives the full text of the decrees as approved by Rome. The reports of the discussions of the individual metropolitans with their suffragans were printed in a document titled *Relationes eorum quae disceptata fuerunt ab Illmis ac Revmis Metropolis cum suis suffraganeis in suis provinciis super schema futuri Concilii praesertim vero super capita cuique commissa* (Baltimore, 1884). The document containing, in canonical form, the tentative decrees to be discussed at the council was prepared by a group of theologians and was titled *Schema decretorum concilii plenarii Baltimorensis tertii* (Baltimore, 1884).

believed that the condition of the Italians was not so hopeless. He recommended that they be settled in agricultural colonies, repeating the suggestion he had made in his 1883 letter to Propaganda Fide.

Bishop Francis Silas Chatard of Vincennes, seconded by Bishop Stephen V. Ryan of Buffalo, moved that the entire chapter be suppressed and rewritten by a special episcopal committee appointed by Gibbons, the delegate apostolic. The motion received almost unanimous approval and Gibbons appointed Archbishops Corrigan and Patrick W. Riordan of San Francisco, and the bishops of Rochester, Peoria, and New Orleans to this committee. Three days later the prelates on the committee "firmly declared that they could only speak despairingly of Italian colonists." The committee concluded their "only hope was to help them through societies established in Italy itself, to whom was pledged earnest support in this country." Therefore, the prelates recommended that a statement describing the actual situation of the Italians should be sent to the pope and that the chapter should be suppressed. The chapter was completely re-written and re-titled "De Colonis et Advenis." The Italians were not mentioned by name, and the work done by the Irish and the German societies was given special commendation. The care of immigrants in the seaboard cities by priests speaking their language was recommended. Special emphasis was placed on the protection of young women and girls in homes cared for by sisters, until they should find suitable work. And finally, efforts should be made, with the aid of wealthy Catholics, to direct immigrants from the cities to the country.³⁴

In 1887 Propaganda Fide put together a report, based on its correspondence, on "the various conditions in which the Italians find

³⁴ Frederick J. Zwierlein, *The Life and Letters of Bishop Mc Quaid, Prefaced with the History of Catholic Rochester Before His Episcopate*, 3 vols. (Rochester, New York: The Art Print Shop, 1925-27), II:333-35. *Acta et Decreta*, 130-32, has the chapter finally accepted at the Third Plenary Council. See Guilday, *A History of the Council of Baltimore*, 221-49; David F. Sweeney, *The Life of John Lancaster Spalding, First Bishop of Peoria, 1840-1916* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), 157-71.

themselves in the places of greater emigration.” This report also summarized the various attempts made to meet the moral and material needs of these immigrants. The report stated that the conditions of Italians in the United States were worse than those of their compatriots in South America. Not only did the immigrants in the United States lack an adequate supply of Italian priests, but the work of these priests bore minimal results. This was due to the poor economic position of the immigrants and to their religious indifference. Other obstacles included the ignorance of the English language and the dispersion of the immigrants throughout the United States. Nonetheless, this part of the report ended on a hopeful note:

It could be concluded, then, that in the United States the Italians are in very sad conditions, in part because of their fault, in part because of their poverty, in part because of the lack of priests who can specifically dedicate themselves to their compatriots. The same documents that contain such painful statements, confirm that if it were possible to have someone who could take care of them from the moment they reach Castle Garden, New Orleans, San Francisco, and the other principal ports of the Union, would look over them, by regulating their dispersion, holding them as much as possible united in the cities or in colonies, by providing them with capable and zealous priests who could speak their language, and if it were possible to have in New York, Boston, Baltimore, Charleston, St. Louis, San Francisco, Chicago, the principal centers, committees that would promote the erection of churches, schools, hospitals and also some institutions for material aids, so much zeal and so much perseverance could succeed in greatly paralyzing the causes which bring

about the dissolution of the Italian Catholic element
in that huge territory.³⁵

Despite the fact that both the Vatican and the American bishops supported the formation of agricultural colonies to safeguard the material and spiritual needs of Catholic immigrants, the actual formation of such colonies was left in the hands of individual bishops and ethnic groups or entrepreneurs like Corbin and Bandini. Both Sunnyside and Tontitown were good examples of that.³⁶ It was not until 1920 that the American bishops would organize within the National Catholic Welfare Council Social Action Department a bureau of immigration to coordinate immigrant assistance on a national level. But by that time, agricultural colonization had seen its best days.³⁷

³⁵ APF, Acta, 1887, vol. 257, "Rapporto," f507r-529r.

³⁶ David S. Bovée, *The Church and the Land: The National Catholic Rural Life Conference and American Society, 1923-2007* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 1-31. See John L. Spalding, *The Religious Mission of the Irish People and Catholic Colonization* (1880; repr., New York: Arno, 1978); Mary E. Henthorne, *The Irish Catholic Colonization Association of the United States: Its Origin and Development under the Leadership of the Rt. Rev. John Lancaster Spalding, Bishop of Peoria, President of the Association, 1879-1892* (Champaign, IL: Twin City, 1932); Mary G. Kelly, *Catholic Immigrant Colonization Projects in the United States, 1815-1860* (New York: United States Catholic Historical Society, 1939); Henry J. Browne, "Archbishop Hughes and Western Colonization," *The Catholic Historical Review* XXXVI (October 1950): 257-285; James P. Shannon, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957); Leonard R. Riforgiato, "Bishop John Timon, Archbishop John Hughes, and Irish Colonization: A Clash of Episcopal Views on the Future of the Irish and the Catholic Church in America," in *Immigration to New York*, ed. William Pencak, Selma Berrol, and Randall M. Miller (Philadelphia: The Balch Institute Press, 1991), 27-55.

³⁷ Douglas J. Slawson, *The Foundation and First Decade of the National Catholic Welfare Council* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992), 74-75, 235-38; John B. Sheerin, *Never Look Back: The Career and Concerns of John J Burke* (New York: Paulist Press, 1975), 198-201. See Stibili, *What Can Be Done*, 265.

National Colonizer

From its beginnings in the late 1890's, Tontitown has always been a very small settlement, statistically insignificant relative to the number of Italians who migrated and settled in the United States during the period of Italian mass emigration. Yet, despite Tontitown's statistical insignificance and its location in a part of the country that attracted very few Italian immigrants, it received in its early years a significant amount of national attention as an outstanding example of a successful Italian colony in rural America. Several factors may explain the interest in this small settlement on the part of government officials, religious and private sector leaders, and the press. One was its location in Arkansas, which, like most of the South, attracted few immigrants. Moreover, its success, especially in light of the dismal failure of Sunnyside on the Arkansas side of the Mississippi River, was noteworthy and could be used as an argument for colonization in that part of the country. Another was the interest, described above, of Italian government and Catholic officials, both in the United States and Rome, in steering the mostly Catholic Italian immigrants toward rural colonies. Italian government officials viewed colonization as a way of expanding Italy's influence abroad. The Vatican took a strong interest in the fate of Italian immigrants in what it viewed as a mostly Protestant country. The American Catholic bishops, partly nudged by the Vatican, supported colonization efforts as a way of keeping Italians from congested cities and within the ecclesiastical fold.

Government officials, religious and private sector leaders, and the press could point to Tontitown as an example of a colony that had met many of the conditions for successful colonization. As noted above, Adolfo Rossi, inspector for the Royal Emigration Department in Italy, had insisted on two conditions for the success of any colonization plan. First, utmost care must be used in the selection of families that are used to farming. Second, colonization must start with small nuclei which, if successful, could then attract families, friends, and *paesani* from

the pioneers' villages. He contended that experiments with more than fifty families will very likely result in failure, since large groups are subject to divisions and dissensions through the spirit of regionalism or the disintegrating influence of some malcontent who may join the *contadini*. At the 1908 *Exhibit on Congestion of Population* in New York, described above, Amy Bernardy of Smith College, Gino C. Speranza of the Investigation Bureau for Italians in New York, and Dr. Antonio Stella gave their views on colonization. Bernardy argued that colonists must be treated honestly and conditions need to be created so that they will not feel alone and abandoned outside the congested cities. Speranza observed that Italian women have suffered the most through urban congestion, since it led them to industrial work which tended to destroy one of the finest of the Italian traditions, the unity of family life, and led to the destruction of the Italian ideal of the home. Dr. Stella concluded that overcrowded living conditions in tenement houses led to higher than average rates of diseases and mortality and recommended informing immigrants of opportunities beyond the large cities. As already noted, the following year Dr. G. E. di Palma Castiglione, director of the Labor Information Office for Italians in New York City, strongly urged his fellow Italians to leave the cities with all their problems and locate on still uncultivated and available American land, transforming themselves into independent farmers. He acknowledged that such a transformation would be impossible for immigrants from the cities, used to the charming attractions that they offer, but could only be accomplished by immigrants from Italy's agricultural centers, used to long hours of hard work.

Comparing the above conditions for successful colonization to both Sunnyside and Tontitown, certain facts stand out that may explain the former's failure and the latter's success. Sunnyside began as a large-scale experiment involving initially close to two hundreds families. Moreover, as Bandini pointed out, some of the families were not from the countryside but day laborers, accustomed to noise and demonstrations, and suspicious by nature. Even the Sunnyside

Company agreed that the complaints made against it were due to misunderstandings and the influence of some of the colonists who were not farmers, but mechanics, shopkeepers, etc., who did not understand agricultural work, and, consequently, had meager success. But the misunderstandings were also due to the fact that, as Ernesto Milani has noted, the Sunnyside managers did not speak Italian and would not be able to understand the immigrants' concerns and needs. The Sunnyside Company's failure to dig artesian wells and drain the ponds, resulting in widespread disease and death, proved short-sighted. Finally, Corbin's unexpected death on June 4, 1896, six months after the colony had been started, and his heirs' failure to follow up on his plans for it, compounded the problem caused by the fever and proved disastrous for a colony that had started with so much promise. It doomed the colony to failure. Tontitown, on the other hand, began as a small settlements of some 43 families that Bandini claimed he had led from Sunnyside. That was just under the fifty families that Rossi had insisted as one of two conditions for the success of any colonization plan. At some point early on, as he informed Guido Rossati in a previously cited letter dated June 5, 1899, "the colony has expurgated itself of a number of families that had not decided to settle permanently and put all in a bad mood due to the constant letters and incitements that they received from Sunny Side and other cotton places." In other words, it got rid of the malcontents that Rossi had warned about and that had caused problems at Sunnyside. Moreover, as Bandini wrote in his "Brief account," "This place is known for its healthy climate and is rich in very good waters and living springs. Fruit of every quality grows well and will constitute the wealth of the land." Just as important, the colonists had in just three or four years paid off the cost of the land and become landowners. The contrast between Sunnyside and Tontitown could not have been more stark.

A final factor that may explain the interest in this small settlement, and probably the most important one, was Tontitown's savvy founder, leader, and booster Fr. Pietro Bandini, who had

apparently become fascinated by rural America and colonization from the days of his missionary work among the Indians of Montana in the 1880's and his social work on behalf of arriving Italian immigrants in New York in the first half of the 1890's. He was able to get the attention of leaders in both the public and private sectors, some of whom visited the small colony while Bandini was its acknowledged leader from 1898 to 1916 and brought it and his work to the attention of the local and national press. Such coverage was also instrumental in helping call attention to agricultural colonization in general and demonstrate how it could be done successfully.



Father Pietro Bandini; Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, Roma.

In March 1905, Dr. Greve, connected with the immigration office of the Frisco Lines at St. Louis, visited Tontitown to conduct business and was a guest of Fr. Bandini. The Frisco Railroad Company had aided in the purchase of land for the original colonists and promoted the colony in its publicity.³⁸ Several government officials interested in investigating successful colonization and its potential for other parts of the country visited Tontitown. In the Fall of 1904, Count Giacomo Fara Forni, the Italian consul in New Orleans from December 13, 1903 to April 19, 1906, traveled on behalf of the Commissariat of Immigration across his consular district to render an account of the Italians there. He reported that there were now in Tontitown 35 families, all landowners who cultivated fruit, corn, and grapes. He noted that “under the paternal direction of Father Bandini the colony prospers and grows every year with the arrival of relatives and friends, who reach the colonists settled there.”³⁹ Two years later Dr. Luigi Villari, sent on a similar mission, reported that by late 1906 or early 1907 Tontitown had some one hundred families.⁴⁰ In February 1906 Fara Forni, visited Washington and Benton counties in northwest Arkansas with Bandini. The following month, it was announced that Italian immigrants would arrive in April and establish a colony in Benton County.⁴¹ In March 1907 C. B. Schmidt, an immigration agent for the Rock Island Railroad, brought a delegation of Italian dignitaries to Tontitown to explore the possibilities of placing Italian immigrants in the United States. He later wrote Bandini: “our visit to Tontitown has been the brightest and most satisfactory experience during our entire trip. It has plainly shown me how much can be accomplished in the way of colonization with such disinterested and intelligent guidance as you have bestowed upon

³⁸ Demetrious, “Tontitown,” *SN*, March 3, 1905, 1. See Frisco Lines, “Colonia Italiana.”

³⁹ Fara Forni, “Gli Italiani,” *Boll. Emig.* 17 (1905): 3, 11 and in *Emig. e Col.* (1909), 211. See Catani and Zuccolini, *I Fondi Archivistici*, 281.

⁴⁰ “Gli Italiani,” *Boll. Emig.* 20 (1907): 11.

⁴¹ Papilio, “Tontitown,” *SN*, March 2, 1906; “An Arkansas Pioneer,” *SN*, March 9, 1906.

your flock, and only wish we had more such examples.”⁴² In August 1908 the Italian vice consul in New Orleans, Count Giacomo Moroni, visited Tontitown.⁴³ Finally, in May 1915, it was announced that the U.S. commissioner general of emigration would visit the small town.⁴⁴

Besides attracting distinguished visitors, the small colony received both local and national press attention. The brief May 16, 1905, visit to Tontitown by the Italian ambassador, Baron Edmundo Mayor des Planches, described in the previous chapter, generated much favorable publicity for the small colony. The following articles on the colony, published after that visit and describing it as a success, have already been cited in the previous chapter: the lengthy May 21, 1905, article titled “The Italian Colony of Tontitown, Arkansas” in the *St. Louis Republic*, A. W. Hadley’s article on Tontitown in the October 1905 issue of *Maxwell’s Talisman* that referred to Tontitown as a “successful Italian colony” and listed many of its achievements in the seven years since its founding, the November 30, 1905, article titled “Immigration to the South,” in the *Manufacturers’ Record*, cited S. A. Hughes of the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad Co. who pointed “with pride to Father Bandini’s colony of 300 people located at Tontitown, Washington county, Arkansas, a happy and contented people, made possible by the able management of Father Bandini,” the September 1906 article titled “A Model Italian Colony in Arkansas,” in *The American Monthly Review of Reviews*, the article in *The Arkansas Gazette* of January 14, 1907, which had nothing but praise for Tontitown, John L. Mathews’ article titled “Tontitown. A Story of the Conservation of Men,” in the January 1909 issue of *Everybody’s Magazine* was mentioned in the same month in the national Catholic publication *The Ave Maria*, which noted for

⁴² Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 71.

⁴³ Luna, “Tontitown,” *SN*, August 21, 1908; Young, “*So Big, This Little Place*,” 72. See “L’emigrazione italiana nel distretto consolare di Nuova Orleans. (Relazione del R. Viceconsole onorario e addetto per l’emigrazione in Nuova Orleans, conte Giacomo Moroni,” *Boll. Emig.* 16 (1908): 17-25.

⁴⁴ Lamb, “Tontitown,” *SN*, May 7, 1915.

its national Catholic audience the article's "glowing tribute to Father Bandini" and how it "describes at length and in detail what he has done to solve the problem of the migration of Italians into America, - a more important problem than is generally realized either here or in Italy," and finally, Anita Moore, who had given a lecture on Tontitown in April 1908, published an article on it in June 1912.⁴⁵

In August 1913 Floyd B. Nichols published "Making an Immigrants' Paradise" in *Technical World Magazine* in which he recounted the story of Flippalo Datialo, who had arrived at Tontitown with his family eight years before from Chicago, where he had worked hard for little money in a packing house, with only twenty-four dollars to his name. Now he had sixty acres all paid for and some money in the bank. "For at this little town in northwestern Arkansas," Nichols argued, "the real solution of the problem of the immigration of the people from southern Europe into the United States has been worked out." While Italians find it difficult to raise strong families in the cities, at Tontitown they can go back to farming and prosper. "Much of the success of the colony," he wrote, "has been due to the leadership of Father P. Bandini, a Catholic priest who is its spiritual adviser and general manager."⁴⁶ The narrative that Tontitown was a great success and its leader a role model, first suggested in Bandini's letter to Bishop Scalabrini on March 27, 1905, short of two months prior to the ambassador's landmark visit, was by now well established and in full play. It provided the template for successful colonization efforts at the national level. Yet, despite all the visits, favorable publicity and narrative, as well as efforts to promote Italian colonization in the South, few migrated there. The *Bollettino dell'Emigrazione* reported in 1916 that "Despite the efforts of American

⁴⁵ See SMOH, RF "The Italian Colony of Tontitown, Arkansas," Hadley, "The Tontitown Settlement," 14-16; "Immigration to the South," 515; "A Model Italian Colony," 361-62; "The Italian in the South," *The Arkansas Gazette*; Mathews, "Tontitown," 3-13; "Notes and Remarks," *The Ave Maria*, January 9, 1909, 55; Moore, "A Safe Way," 215-19.

⁴⁶ Floyd B. Nichols, "Making an Immigrants' Paradise," *Technical World Magazine* XIX (August 1913): 894-97.

authorities to direct workers from the great industrial cities of the Atlantic coast to the eminently agricultural regions of the South, few of our [immigrants] came to locate here either directly from Italy, or from the other states of the federation, even before the war that has greatly thinned out the ranks of our immigration to the United States."⁴⁷ Not that the efforts were pointless, but the future of the United States was to be found primarily not in the agricultural but in the urban-industrial sector of the national economy. That's where the pull factor was strongest.

Because of his successful work in Italian colonization, Bandini was drawn into similar efforts beyond Tontitown. Archbishop John J. Glennon of St. Louis, who had personally experienced the difficulties involved in placing immigrants on farms in his archdiocese, organized in January 1905 the Colonization Realty Company to provide advice, direction, and act as a purchasing agent for Catholic land seekers. In his last letter to Scalabrini in March 1905, a little over two months before the bishop's death, Bandini mentioned a circular by Glennon that he had advised him to send to the Italian bishop. He informed him that he will receive other documents regarding the colonization of Catholic immigrants, being translated into Italian for the purpose of forwarding them to all the bishops of Italy. The circular and other documents most likely dealt with Glennon's interest in colonization and his Colonization Realty Company. "For this purpose," he told the bishop, "I have been called various times to St. Louis and they would want me to remain there some time to provide a little help in accomplishing the plan," referring to colonization. "But this is difficult in my present circumstances. The fever that now exists in all the great railroad companies to open colonies for Italians on their lands is incredible." While Bandini believed that much good would come from this, he advised caution so as to avoid the exploitation of the immigrants. The railroad companies' rush to open colonies for Italians made it urgent for Catholic leaders like Glennon

⁴⁷ "Condizioni del lavoro nella circoscrizione consolare di Nuova Orleans," *Boll. Emig.* 7 (1916): 87-89.

and Bandini to get involved so as to protect not only the immigrants' economic interests but also their Catholic faith. Alluding to the Italian ambassador's forthcoming visit to Tontitown, he was delighted to tell the bishop that "the good success of Tontitown has greatly helped in firing up those interested in sending our immigrants to the country." He then mentioned an article on the colony in a St. Louis newspaper to emphasize his point.⁴⁸

Bandini was also drawn into the controversy over the mistreatment of Italian immigrants in the states of the South, finding it necessary to defend Italian migration there. The Italian consuls in New Orleans and other officials submitted reports published in the *Bollettino dell'Emigrazione* during this period that provided information on the nature and extent of this problem. In the first such report in 1903, Giuseppe Saint-Martin, New Orleans consul from October 14, 1900, to December 13, 1903, noted that because of the scarce emigration at New Orleans, there was no need for a committee of protection, "all the more so in that up to now the difficulties lamented elsewhere have not happened here."⁴⁹ A year later, Guido Rossati pointed to complaints by colonists at Sunnyside of their incomplete freedom in disposing of their cotton and in the purchase of food and household items, for which it seemed they were practically forced to depend on the plantation store where they had to pay more. The colony's isolation and distance from large inhabited centers was the key factor for these difficulties.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Nicholas Schneider, *The Life of John Cardinal Glennon, Archbishop of St. Louis* (Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 1971), 96-97; AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Eccellenza Revma (Scalabrini), Detroit, March 27, 1905. See John Rothensteiner, *History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis*, 2 vols. (St. Louis, MO: Blackwell Wielandy Co., 1928), II:654-55; William B. Faherty, *Dream by the River: Two Centuries of St. Louis Catholicism, 1766-1967* (Saint Louis: Piraeus Publishers, 1973), 145-46.

⁴⁹ Saint-Martin, "Gli Italiani," *Boll Emig.* 1 (1903): 9. See Catani and Zuccolini, *I Fondi Archivistici*, 281.

⁵⁰ Guido Rossati, "La colonizzazione negli Stati di Mississippi, Louisiana, ed Alabama," *Boll. Emig.* 14 (1904): 16-17.

Adolfo Rossi, inspector for the Royal Emigration Department in Italy, traveled in 1904 to various parts of the United States to study and report on the condition of Italian colonists there. In his visits to several states in the South, he was accompanied by Guido Rossati, an agronomist and government wine-making expert residing in New York. In early May they visited Sunnyside where O. B. Crittenden of Greenville showed them the cotton fields, which he had sublet to some ninety Italian families mostly from the Marches, who, with one exception, "are doing very well." Fr. Giacchino Galloni, the parish priest, told them that since the families worked very hard and economized, they made "discreet profits." But one of the colonists added that "the climate is not one of the best and the American overseers are rather overbearing." Umberto Pierini agreed that the "overseers always want to be right and pretend that the Italians are docile and submissive as many slaves. For several years I have worked also suffering many abuses; but, as soon as I could, I bought some land and now work for myself." Another colonist claimed that Italian sharecropping under American planters was "a continuation of slavery." Moreover, the bosses and their agents "generally do not keep fixed agreements and do not allow objections." Other colonists agreed and said they would not advise additional families to come to these plantations under present conditions. Rossi observed that "in some plantations of the southern United States the same difficulties, though in relatively small proportions, occur that existed in the Brazilian coffee plantations: planters used to slaves, the obligation to buy everything in the owner's store, demanding and overbearing overseers." Despite these problems, he concluded that "the Italians in these cotton states are doing well, they own the lands on which they work."⁵¹

Fara Forni, royal consul in New Orleans, traveled in the fall of 1904 through his district, which included Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Tennessee, and Arkansas, to make an account of the condition of Italians there. The some 15,000 Italians in New Orleans

⁵¹ "Per la tutela degli italiani," *Boll. Emig.* 16 (1904): 69, 72-73.

were engaged in a variety of occupations. The majority of the 15,000 Italians in the rest of the state were mostly engaged in sugar and cotton plantations. In Texas, the some 10,500 Italians were spread across the state in a variety of colonies, including Galveston, Houston, Bryan, and San Antonio. Arkansas, with about 1,500 Italians, had colonies in Little Rock, Tontitown, and Sunnyside, where he found that the administration of the colony “leaves a lot to be desired.” The 110 families residing there, mostly from Senigallia, were able to earn and save in recent years anywhere from 600 to 1500 dollars, despite the malarial fevers, the high cost of goods in the company store, and the inferior price the company paid for their cotton. But the company, which rented the land from the proprietors, was only interested in maximizing profits and not the well-being of the colonists. In Mississippi, with a total of about 3,500 Italians, there were settlements in Greenville, Vicksburg, Natchez, and elsewhere. Tennessee had some 3,000 Italians, most of them in and around Memphis. Alabama had 3,000 Italians, many of them steel and mine workers in the Birmingham area. There were also two prosperous small agricultural colonies in that state, Daphne in Baldwin County and Lambert in Mobile County. Fara Forni, who did not visit Florida where about 4,000 Italians resided, reported that Tampa, with more than 3,500 Italians, was the most important colony there. Most worked in cigar factories. The royal consul concluded that “in general, the economic conditions of our emigrants in these states of the South can be said to be not only satisfying but good and at times very good.” Apparently, conditions at Sunnyside were an exception to the rule.⁵²

From September 18, 1906, to May 6, 1907, excepting February 1 to March 8, 1907, when he was briefly assigned to the Philadelphia consulate, Dr. Luigi Villari was temporarily assigned to the New Orleans consulate to study labor conditions for Italian immigrants in that vast consular district that included Louisiana, Mississippi,

⁵² Fara Forni, “Gli Italiani,” *Boll. Emig.* 17 (1905): 3-17 and in *Emig. e Col.* (1909), 202-21. For a detailed description of Sunnyside at this time, see Mayor des Planches, *Attraverso gli Stati Uniti*, 137-45.

Arkansas, Alabama, Tennessee, Florida, and Texas. In his lengthy report, he described the abuses perpetrated against the immigrants by the recruiting agents, malarial conditions in the Mississippi Delta, poor housing, brutal treatment by managers, and the equating of Italians with negroes. He concluded that "The idea of diverting a part of the migratory stream that now throngs in the great population centers of the Northeast toward the agricultural works of the South is then, from my point of view, a mere utopia." On the issue of peonage, or laborers bound in servitude due to debt, he wrote:

Instances of true and proper *peonage* against Italians in the region of the Mississippi basin have not yet been verified, but the condition of many colonists, who, up to their neck in debt, do not dare to depart from the plantations, is not much different from *peonage*. Many Italians abandon the plantations so as to escape from debt; in a lot of cases the planter had them arrested not precisely for the debt, which would be prohibited by federal and state laws, but for some other pretext. Often the colonists themselves act dishonestly and escape only to avoid the debt; on the other hand in other cases they escape because the place is unhealthy and the treatment is brutal, or because they do not see any probability of freeing themselves from a debt unjustly made worse and that always increases.⁵³

As noted above, in February and March 1907, Villari traveled in the states of West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee to verify various accidents at work and sequestration or peonage, of which a number of Italians in the consular district of Philadelphia had been victims. He found several instances of fatal mining accidents due to administrative negligence and minimal safety features and of peonage, as well as other abusive practices by the often brutal bosses or foremen.

⁵³ "Gli Italiani," *Boll. Emig.* 20 (1907): 3-46. See Villari, *Gli Stati Uniti d'America*, 258-63.

But he noted that not all companies practiced peonage. He recommended providing the Philadelphia consulate with an emigration attaché who could frequently travel across the consular district as well as funds to the consuls for retaining lawyers, which had been provided since 1906.⁵⁴

Lionello Scelsi, the Italian consul in New Orleans from October 14, 1906, to October 17, 1907, asked Villari to make an inquiry which showed that Italian immigration in states like Arkansas and Mississippi was almost completely artificial, originating from illicit and often criminal methods. Scelsi imposed strict limits on migration to unhealthy locations and plantations that treated its workers inhumanely, almost ending “clandestine emigration” in Mississippi and Arkansas, the two worst states for abuses. Moreover he requested, through the Italian embassy, that the federal authorities order an inquiry into cases of peonage in Mississippi and Arkansas.⁵⁵ Mary G. Quackenbos, special assistant in the federal Department of Justice, was assigned to that task. On September 28, 1907, she submitted a report on Sunnyside Plantation, Ark. in which she documented the systematic mistreatment of the colonists there and the violation of various laws. The Italian colonists whose homes she had visited declared that they were “treated like slaves.” She argued that the colonists were wronged from the historical, legal, sanitary, and economic standpoints. She noted that:

During the five days I actually lived upon the plantation I arose at 5.30 in the morning in order that I might the more carefully and conscientiously probe into the long buried facts. The methods I have suggested for improvement in the treatment of these Italian families I feel are quite simple and sane; and they are those that

⁵⁴ “Gli Italiani nel Sud degli Stati Uniti (Relazione del R. Vice Console in Nuova Orleans),” *Boll. Emig.* 10 (1907): 39-49.

⁵⁵ “Rendiconti sommari delle adunanze del Consiglio dell’emigrazione (2 dicembre 1907 - 10 aprile 1908),” *Boll. Emig.* 8 (1908), 38-44. Preziosi, *Gl’Italiani negli Stati Uniti*, 91-103, reprints Scelsi’s report. See Catani and Zuccolini, *I Fondi Archivistici*, 282.

could be adopted with little trouble and expense. I regret to add, however, that those Italians who before their employers and in my presence, stated their grievances, asking for no favors but for their right to free sale of cotton, their right to kind and considerate supervisors, smaller doctor's fees, and juster regulations, have been denied supplies by the commissary "bosses;" it was specially mentioned to these, in the presence of a large number of their countrymen, that those who had "told of their complaints" and especially "those who told that lady" would receive no advances and when the cotton crop was gathered "could take the road."⁵⁶

Department of Justice.

Miss. _____ Dated **Sep. 28**, 1907.

Current No. 121643	Rec'd _____, 1907
File No. 100937	Ent'd M 858

From **Mary Grace Quackenbos,**
Special Asst.

SUBJECT: **W**

Mary Grace Quackenbos, Report on Sunnyside Plantation, 1907; National Archives.

⁵⁶ National Archives, Department of Justice Records, Record Group 60, 100937, Mary G. Quackenbos, "Report on Sunnyside Plantation," September 28, 1907. See "Appendix 2: Documents" in Whayne, *Shadows Over Sunnyside*, 114-35; Borgognoni, *Italians of Sunnyside, 1895-1995*, 16-18; Canonici, *The Delta Italians*, 10-20.

Quackenbos reported eleven instances of peonage to the federal government and the accused were brought before a grand jury in Vicksburg, Mississippi, on January 6, 1908. Despite the efforts of the judge, the assistant U.S. attorney general and the district attorney, the accused, including O. B. Crittenden, were acquitted for lack of evidence. In each instance of peonage, the defense successfully argued that the immigrants were arrested by the police for attempting to escape paying their debts and for breaching their contracts, both illegal in Louisiana and Mississippi. Moreover, the jury for the most part favored the accused.⁵⁷

Between August 1907 and March 1908, Count Gerolamo Moroni, royal attaché for Italian emigration in New Orleans, visited various cotton plantations in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas, where immigrants were most abused. He insisted that contracts be improved and put in writing. He tried to get better housing, a reduction of medical costs, and other improvements with mixed results. On the question of peonage, he cited Quackenbos' investigation which found eleven instances of peonage. The accused, as already noted, were brought before a grand jury but were acquitted for lack of evidence.⁵⁸

The controversy over the mistreatment of Italian immigrants in some of the states of the South reached Italy, where both government officials and those interested in Italian immigration took note. Bandini, a staunch defender of Italian agricultural colonization in the South,

⁵⁷ "L'emigrazione italiana nel distretto consolare di Nuova Orleans," *Boll. Emig.* 16 (1908): 22-23. See Milani, "Peonage at Sunnyside"; Randolph H. Boehm, "Mary Grace Quackenbos and the Federal Campaign Against Peonage: The Case of Sunnyside Plantation," Bertram Wyatt-Brown, "Leroy Percy and Sunnyside: Planter Mentality and Italian Peonage in the Mississippi Delta," and Pete Daniel, "Commentary," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* L (Spring 1991): 30-93; John C. Willis, *Forgotten Time: The Yazoo-Mississippi Delta after the Civil War* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 162. The Milani, Boehm, Wyatt-Brown, and Daniel articles have been reprinted in Whayne, *Shadows Over Sunnyside*, 39-94 and 103-10.

⁵⁸ "L'emigrazione italiana," *Boll. Emig.* 16 (1908): 17-19, 22-23.

expressed his views on the issue in two available letters. In a reply to an inquiry by Fr. Domenico Vicentini, Scalabrinian superior general, on January 28, 1908, he noted that the courts had absolved all the individuals who had been charged with such mistreatment, "since not a single case could be proven against them." He added that the "confidential and secret reason for such a stir against emigration to the South is no other than that it prevents the many so-called bankers, agents and so on to continue to get rich on the back of our poor immigrants newly arrived in New York."⁵⁹ A month later, an article titled "The New Slavery in America," was published in *L'Emigrato Italiano in America*. The title referred to an article by Rev. Giovanni Preziosi published in *Avvenire d'Italia*, in which, based on his experience and the descriptions of a certain Miss. Mary Church Terrell, he gave a disgusting picture of the oppressions used on Italian colonists in the South of the United States, most likely instances of debt peonage. Asked to give his opinion on Preziosi's article, Bandini obliged with a letter dated September 28, 1907. In it, he made the claim that he would later make in his letter to Vicentini cited above that in the North East, especially New York, there were many individuals who made a living off the immigrants, such as bankers, agencies, labor bureaus, hotels, etc. Such individuals would be hurt financially if immigration were directed to the South. They were aided by a press opposed to colonization in the South and Southwest. He accused Preziosi of having gotten his information from those, including the press, who were opposed to migration to the South. He said that it was true that in such a vast area there have been abuses and deceptions and that there were unhealthy places. "Our Italians," he said, should not go there." But it was also true, he added, that the abuses were not "of the degree (entità) nor as common (generalità) as some newspapers would make you believe." He blamed bankers and Italian agents in New York for advising skilled workers such as artists, carpenters, masons, and barbers, to go to agricultural areas where they could not make a living

⁵⁹ AGS, DH 02, Bandini to Vicentini, Tontitown, Ark., January 28, 1908.

with their craft. He also blamed the Italian interpreters, rarely good ones, who often caused misunderstandings between colonists and proprietors. "It seems that it was in their personal interest to maintain mistrust between them." He pointed out that the aim of immigration to the South was not primarily to provide laborers for others' lands but for the immigrants to become land owners. There were many Italian colonies in Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Alabama that offered such opportunities. Preziosi has not seen any of them and has not said anything good about them.⁶⁰



Father Domenico Vicentini; Francesco Gregori book, p. 508.

⁶⁰ "La nuova schiavitù in America," *L'Emigrato Italiano in America* (Febbraio 1908): 12-15. See Preziosi, *Gli Italiani negli Stati Uniti*, 75. Some of these colonies had been listed in a 1901 Industrial Commission report.

In 1909 Preziosi published a book on Italians in the United States in which he wrote extensively about Italians in the South. He distinguished between three groups of Italians there, *viz*, urban colonies, nomadic workers, and agricultural colonies, a distinction made earlier by Villari in his lengthy 1907 report. There were some 200,000 Italians in the states of the South, about 100,000 in Louisiana and 40,000 in Mississippi. There were urban colonies in all the states of the South, but the biggest one was in New Orleans. Their condition could be classified as good. There was great demand in all the states of the South for workers, especially in the mines, railroads, and wood work. A clandestine recruiting system of labor bureaus, banks, bosses, etc. profited from both the companies which paid commissions and the workers, who were charged with travel costs. In order to recruit a considerable number of workers, they often deceived them regarding their destination, travel costs, and other matters. As a result, the workers became disillusioned and were reduced to peonage for failure to pay their debts. The problem was compounded by the workers' ignorance and their willingness to sign contracts they barely understood. Preziosi claimed that since 1906 he had raised his voice in Italy and beyond against what he called the "*new slavery* - worse than the first - of which our fellow countrymen were victims in the states of Virginia, W. Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas and even Louisiana." He criticized Ambassador Mayor des Planches, whose mostly positive account of his tour across the South of the United States was published in the Italian journal *Nuova Antologia* in 1906, for not having taken into account the "disastrously inferior" condition of Italians there. He mentioned Church Terrel's article in the *Nineteenth Century* of London, without detailing its contents. He also cited the above-mentioned 1907 and 1908 Villari, Scelsi and Moroni reports, all published in the *Bollettino dell' Emigrazione*.

On agricultural colonies, Preziosi noted that many were scattered along the Mississippi River in Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana. He repeated the familiar charges of induced or artificial

immigration, false promises, and a host of other abuses. He mentioned the failed Sunnyside colony and the one at Tontitown, "due to the energy and will of the excellent Fr. Bandini, who has been able to achieve and give us a type of agricultural colony." He added: "Fr. Bandini finds today a way of being enthusiastic about the South and of disagreeing with us, but we do not wish him ill; his colony is one of the few oases in the desert." Tontitown, he argued, has gone through a long *via crucis* (way of the Cross), an experience he hoped Bandini would not advise to others.⁶¹

A report on peonage in the South submitted by Count Gerolamo Moroni, royal attaché for Italian emigration in New Orleans, and published in the *Bollettino dell' Emigrazione* in 1910, supported Bandini's position that the abuses were not "of the degree (entità) nor as common (generalità) as some newspapers would make you believe." In it, he gave detailed accounts of cases of peonage in Florida and Mississippi. The Florida case involved the East Coast Florida R.R. Co. charged with building a 153 mile long railway section from Miami to the island of Key West. Hundreds of Italians were sent to work there by the agency of Frank Sabbia in New York in collaboration with agent Triai of Jacksonville, Florida. They were enticed to go there by the false promise that the place "was a type of earthly paradise, rich in fruit, splendid tropical vegetation and mild and ideal climate; and they were not advised of the opposite, the intense heat that lasted annually for nine months, the many mosquitoes that infested the place, the scarcity of water and the hard labor to which they would have been obliged." As a result, the migrants were subjected to inhuman treatment, exploited by both the hard labor and the very high cost of supplies furnished by the company. And since the labor camps were located on small islands, they could not escape and were therefore forced to work against their will. Some who managed to escape were arrested and forced to return and work in the Keys.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 68-83. See "Gli Italiani," *Boll. Emig.* 20 (1907): 41.

In Mississippi, there were instances of peonage in the cotton plantations of the Delta region. Italian emigration agents in Greenville and Vicksburg recruited many Italian families from the Marche and Mantovano with false promises, transporting them to these plantations in violation of federal and Italian laws. Cases of peonage involved plantations at Sunnyside, where in three instances migrants attempted to escape because of debts, high prices, and fevers and in two instances were forced to return, Rosedale, where five Italians who had escaped were arrested and imprisoned but later freed due to the intervention of the royal attaché for Italian emigration Luigi Villari, Longwood, Marathon, Deeson, and Heathmann. According to this report, the Mississippi Delta had the highest number of cases of abuse or debt peonage. However, the grand jury failed to indict in all of these cases, “citing the lack of evidence and also the fact that it was not shown how each arrest put [the emigrants] in a true state of *peonage*.” But even though the 1908 Vicksburg grand jury had failed to indict, it “surely brought about a general improvement in the treatment of our emigrants; and in fact for two years such crimes have not been repeated, and our colonists acknowledge that their conditions are much better, especially regarding treatment.” Credit for this must go to Quackenbos, Charles Russell, the assistant U.S. attorney general, New Orleans Consul Scelsi, and the royal attaché for Italian emigration Villari.

Moroni gave the conflict between state and federal laws as a principal cause of peonage in some states of the South. While federal laws and the constitution guaranteed full personal liberty, some states allowed arrest and conviction for breach of contract and some allowed arrest for debt. Other causes of peonage included the notorious Italian agents of artificial emigration, who made false promises as in the Aschaffenburg case in Henderson, Louisiana, and the employment agents in New York, who sent immigrants to unhealthy places in Florida or directed immigrants to agricultural places not suited to their skills such as turners, butchers, etc. These misplaced workers “were a source of discord,” as Bandini had noted in the case of Sunnyside

during his tenure there.⁶² A 1913 report by Moroni and one in 1916 by consular agents did not mention peonage.⁶³

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Bandini attended the first American Catholic Missionary Congress, sponsored by the Catholic Church Extension Society of the United States of America, held in Chicago from November 15-18, 1908. The society was founded in 1905 to assist needy Catholic churches in the United States. He had been personally urged to be present at the Congress by Fr. Francis C. Kelley, the president of the society. Bandini saw it as a good opportunity of finding some assistance for his church. There is no evidence that he also attended the second American Catholic Missionary Congress held in Boston from October 19-22, 1913. At the first Congress, Archbishop Sebastian G. Messmer of Milwaukee introduced Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago Paul P. Rhode who gave a paper on colonization. Messmer would later be instrumental in establishing and promoting the Catholic Colonization Society. Rhode pointed out that among Catholics there had been many attempts at colonization with varying degrees of success, "but whatever has been done has been in the nature of a private or corporate enterprise, confined to a class or nationality, limited to some diocese or district. It seems to have been impossible hitherto to organize a permanent and general work of colonization within the church." He believed "that with the providential organization of the Catholic Church Extension Society it is possible to carry a project of this magnitude into effect with every assurance of success." He called for the establishment of a bureau of colonization within the Extension Society, whose aim would not be to purchase land or act as an aggressive colonizing agent but to provide information, direction, and protection to prospective Catholic settlers.⁶⁴

⁶² "Il peonage nel Sud degli Stati Uniti (da un rapporto del R. Addetto all'emigrazione italiana in Nuova Orleans, conte Gerolamo Moroni," *Boll. Emig.* 5 (1910): 3-20.

⁶³ "Dati circa i raccolti del 1912," *Boll. Emig.* 7 (1913): 97-104; "Condizioni del lavoro," *Boll. Emig.* 7 (1916): 87-89.

⁶⁴ Kelley, *Two Great American Missionary Congresses*, I-II, X, 172, 403-10. At the second congress, P. J. Muldoon and Andrew Shipman delivered papers on immigration.

In a paper read before the 14th annual convention of the American Federation of Catholic Societies, held in Toledo, Ohio, on August 17, 1915, Kelley proposed: "Why not encourage the Church Extension Society to establish an immigrant department, and for its support, let all of us rally around the 'missionary quarter.' By quarter, I mean a quarter of a dollar, twenty-five cents." In his paper, he had divided immigrants into two groups. "The Self-Supporting Group," which included the Irish, the Germans, French-Canadians, Poles and other Slavs, "usually settled together in towns or cities and took care of themselves. Even in rural districts they built their churches and schools, educated their own priests, organized their teaching sisterhoods and built up the Church for their own protection and their own blessing." The "Missionary Group," which included Italians, Mexicans, and "some of the minor Slavic elements," is composed of people who "have not been trained to help themselves, or do not do so for other reasons."⁶⁵ The standard references don't indicate that such a colonization bureau or department was ever established within the Extension Society.⁶⁶

According to his biographer, in the spring of 1910 Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis called a meeting of priests interested in colonization. As a result, the Catholic Colonization Society of the United States of America was formed along the lines outlined by Bishop Rhode in his paper on colonization presented at the first American Catholic Missionary Congress in Chicago in November 1908. Glennon was named chancellor and Fr. Julius De Vos, pastor at St. John Berchman's church in Chicago, was appointed president and director. The aim of the society was to sponsor colonization in the

See pp. 132-47 and 154 -71.

⁶⁵ Francis C. Kelley, "The Church and the Immigrant," *The Catholic Mind*, September 8, 1915, 471-84.

⁶⁶ See Kelley, *Story of Extension*, 149-58; Gaffey, *Francis Clement Kelley*, 1:98-99.

South and West.⁶⁷ Bandini was both familiar with and very supportive of this new organization. During his visit to Italy in 1911, *Italica Gens* published an article written by him in which he recommended sending the Italian immigrants to the countryside, with which they were familiar and where they will retain their moral qualities. He brushed off those who were critical of establishing agricultural colonies in the American South and Southwest because of the unhealthy climate or other factors, pointing to the example of thriving colonies there. He emphasized the need for immigrants to know where they were going and in what occupation they will engage before leaving Italy so as not to fall victim to those looking to exploit them. They will be assisted by the Catholic Colonization Society U. S. A., composed of men of integrity and experienced in colonization. That society, he emphasized, was not involved in the purchase or sale of land. Its only aim was to help immigrants in choosing lands that have been examined and found satisfactory by the society, protect them in the fulfilment of their contracts, and see to it that they were quickly provided with a school and church. He concluded by noting the long-term benefits of immigration to the mother country.⁶⁸

In 1911, Fr. De Vos published an article in *Italica Gens* titled "What can be done for the Italians?" In that article he recalled that in

⁶⁷ Schneider, *The Life of John Cardinal Glennon*, 96. See "Plan to Organize Catholic Colonies," *The New World*, April 23, 1910, 1; Julius E. Devos, "Organized Catholic Colonization," *The New World*, April 30, 1910, 2; Sebastian G. Messmer, "The Catholic Colonization Society, U.S.A.," *The Salesianum* 7 (April 1912): 36-44; Colman J. Barry, *The Catholic Church and German Americans* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1953), 255-58; Benjamin J. Blied, *Three Archbishops of Milwaukee* (Milwaukee: 1955), 100; Richard M. Linkh, *American Catholicism and European Immigrants (1900-1924)* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1975), 75-86; Bovée, *The Church and the Land*, 13. Some material relating to the Catholic Colonization Society is available in the Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, the Archdiocese of Chicago Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center's Madaj Collection, and the Archives of the University of Notre Dame.

⁶⁸ Pietro Bandini, "Il Ritorno ai Campi. Per la Salvezza dei Nostri Emigranti," *Italica Gens* II (Giugno-Luglio 1911): 258-79.

July 1910, at the invitation of Bishop John B. Morris of Little Rock, the Catholic Colonization Society investigated conditions in the South and primarily Arkansas to assess the feasibility of establishing colonies in that state and their potential for success. The investigating committee, which included De Vos, Rev. Vandenelsen, and J. M. Anderson, arrived at Little Rock July 6. It met with the bishop, who soon after established a diocesan colonization committee composed of Rev. Matthew Saelte of Lake Village, Dr. Patrick F. Horan of Fort Smith, Fr. Bandini of Tontitown, Fr. A. P. Gallagher of Mena, and Fr. Lawrence Hoyt of Clarksville. After visiting cities and the surrounding countryside, the delegates concluded that much uncultivated land was available at the low price of \$10 to \$25 an acre, good for immigrants of limited means. Work was also available in nearby sawmills, mines, and factories. Aware of the difficulty of attracting Italians to agricultural colonies, De Vos was eager to visit Tontitown. Bandini, he noted, was “also the vice president of our Society and is known all over America as the founder of an Italian colony that prospers in the Ozark mountains.” At Tontitown, he found men, women, and even children busy at work. With few exceptions, all the land was under cultivation growing a variety of fruit, especially vineyards. All the houses were built with brick. There was a school, a convent, a rectory, and a beautiful church. The more than 80 families that lived there provided for their needs by working the land and were perfectly happy in their homes. The same could be said for other small Italian colonies in Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, which De Vos had not visited but about which he had heard good things. He added:

But Father Bandini, who was sent to visit Texas, for the same reasons for which I visited Arkansas, returned from those lands very much satisfied, assuring me that, beyond the lands that he had personally visited with competent individuals and that he found very fit for the purpose of establishing there agricultural colonies, there already exist in those regions, besides

very flourishing colonies of other nationalities, also some Italian colonies that do very well. And this success is a very valid argument that proves that those lands are fit for colonization, as is desired by the Catholic Colonization Society.

I myself have been easily convinced that the Italians possess religious, civil and domestic virtues that make them excellent and desirable citizens in our country and especially suitable for the formation of agricultural colonies. This has been clearly shown by the results that they have achieved in that endeavor every time that they have been appropriately directed and aided.⁶⁹

International Colonizer

Bandini participated in international expositions to showcase his work on behalf of the Italian immigrants as well as Tontitown and its accomplishments. In 1891, Bishop Scalabrini's association of assistance was invited to be represented at the National Exposition of Palermo in the section on charitable and benevolent societies, to open in November of that year. Volpe Landi gladly accepted the invitation, seeing it as an opportunity for publicizing the association in Sicily and southern Italy. He prepared and sent a report on the development and work of the association titled *On Assistance to National Emigration and on the Institutions that Provide It: A Report to the Palermo Exhibition*. The report was signed by Scalabrini. The exposition awarded a prize of 500 lire to the association and diplomas to Scalabrini and Fr. Pietro

⁶⁹ Julius E. Devos, "Che cosa si può fare per gli Italiani?" *Italica Gens* II (Giugno-Luglio 1911): 279-85. See Rosoli, "La Colonizzazione," who states on page 367 that Bandini was named Vice President of the society; Silvano M. Tomasi, "Fede e patria: 'Italica Gens' in the United States and Canada, 1908-1936. Notes for the history of an emigration association," *Studi Emigrazione* XXVIII (Settembre 1991): 336-37, who states that Bandini was a member of the Board of Trustees of the society.

Bandini, founder of the St. Raphael Society in New York. This was the first time, though not the last, that Bandini was given public recognition for his work on behalf of Italian immigrants by an Italian national exposition.⁷⁰ As already noted, Bandini's work at Sunnyside was recognized in early 1897 with the gift of a chasuble (pianeta) by the Queen of Italy. It was presented to him while passing through New York. He thanked the queen on his behalf and that of the Sunnyside colonists "for the very rich gift and for the memory that Her Majesty deigns to harbor for subjects so far away."⁷¹

In 1906 an Exhibition of Italians Abroad (Mostra degli Italiani all'estero), was held in conjunction with the International Exhibition of Milan. Both Sunnyside and Tontitown were mentioned in the report on the exhibition by Professor B. Frescura.⁷² In the same year, a book titled *Gli Italiani negli Stati Uniti d'America*, prepared for the Milan Exhibition, included an article by Guido Rossati on Italians in American agriculture, with brief sketches of the Sunny Side and Tontitown colonies. The sketch on Tontitown included photographs of Fr. Bandini, the colony's band and its main street with a view of the church and rectory.⁷³

During his six month visit to Italy from March to mid-

⁷⁰ See AGS, RC 02, Volpe Landi to Mio Revdo Padre (Bandini), Piacenza, June 26 and September 21, 1891, June 15, 1892; ACMS, 005, box 1, Mangot to Ottimo e Carissimo Padre (Bandini), Piacenza, June 17, 1892. For the text of the report sent to Palermo, see Tomasi, *For the Love of Immigrants*, 71-80. See also Angelo Scalabrini, ed., *Mons. Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, Vescovo di Piacenza, Trent'Anni di Apostolato. Memorie e Documenti* (Roma: Tip. Manuzio, 1909), 418-21; Perotti, *Scal. Mig.* II:333 (#474), 347-48 (#515), 362 (573-75).

⁷¹ ASDMAE, LSRD, busta 110, fasc. 2193, rough draft, Fava to Signor Min. (Visconti Venosta), Washington, March 12, 1897. See AANY, G-13, Allen to Corrigan, Sunny Side, Ark., February 17, 1897.

⁷² "La Mostra degli Italiani all'estero, all'Esposizione internazionale di Milano nel 1906 (Relazione del professore B. Frescura, Segretario generale della Giuria." *Boll. Emig.* 18 (1907): 41-42. See Choate, *Emigrant Nation*, 120-21.

⁷³ Rossati, "Gl'Italiani nell'Agricoltura," 38-41. See Choate, *Emigrant Nation*, 157.

September 1911, Bandini had the opportunity of making personal contact with officials of the Italica Gens, an international federation of individuals and societies working for the protection of Italian emigrants and the defense of *italianità* in countries across the ocean.⁷⁴ It had a strong interest in colonization and its bulletin, *Italica Gens*, published several article on that topic.⁷⁵ In 1909 Carlo Bassi, the president of the National Association to Assist Italian Catholic Missionaries (ANSMI), had issued a circular letter announcing the formation of that society. It apparently attempted to establish the sort of international assistential network that had been attempted, with limited success, by Scalabrini's association of assistance.⁷⁶ Bassi had published an article on Tontitown in the *Rassegna Nazionale* on October 16, 1900, and was familiar with Bandini and his colony.⁷⁷ Moreover, in late 1909 Pietro Pisani, an expert on Italian migration, had visited Tontitown and published an article in *Italica Gens*, describing Bandini as a pioneer in Italian colonization in the United States.⁷⁸ The Italica Gens established a

⁷⁴ "L'Italica Gens," *Italica Gens* I (Febbraio 1910): 3-16; Choate, *Emigrant Nation*, 141-43. See "Cronaca Sociale," *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali e Discipline Ausiliarie*, LII (Marzo 1910), 475-76, LIII (Luglio 1910), 474-75; Ugo Guida, "Le associazioni e opere cristiane in Italia per l'assistenza degli emigranti," *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali e Discipline Ausiliarie* XCVII (Settembre 1923): 34-40; Gianfausto Rosoli, "La Federazione 'Italica Gens' e l'emigrazione italiana oltreoceano, 1909-1920," *Il Veltro* XXXIV (Gennaio-Aprile 1990): 87-100; Battistella, *Migrazioni: Dizionario Socio-Pastorale* (2010), s.v. "Italica Gens," by Gianfausto Rosoli.

⁷⁵ See R.V.P., "La colonizzazione e l'avvenire dell'emigrazione italiana in America," *Italica Gens* I (Aprile 1910): 97-110; Giuseppe Capra, "La colonizzazione agraria negli Stati Uniti d'America," *Italica Gens* VI (Ottobre-Dicembre 1915): 221-37.

⁷⁶ ACMS, 005, box 17, circular, Bassi, Agli aderenti all'Italica Gens, Turin, July 1, 1909, article, "L'Italica Gens. Federazione per l'assistenza degli emigranti italiani in paesi transoceanici," *Le Missioni Italiane* XIII (December 1909): 55-59, ITALICA GENS, Federazione per l'assistenza degli italiani oltre oceano e nel Levante. n.d. See G. Toniolo, "'Italica Gens,'" *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali e Discipline Ausiliarie* LII (Marzo 1910): 372-89.

⁷⁷ Carlo Bassi, "Tontitown (Arkansas)," *Rassegna Nazionale*, Ottobre 16, 1900, 3-10 (abstract).

⁷⁸ "Prominent Italian Visitor," *The Rogers Democrat*, December 2, 1909, 1. See Pietro

central secretariat in Turin and invited individuals and groups working with the immigrants to federate with it and establish local secretariats which, assisted by the central secretariat, would provide assistance to the immigrants. Its bulletin was able to announce in February 1910 that secretariats had been established in Canada, the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, and in Cape Town, Africa. Tontitown was not listed until the May 1910 issue of the bulletin.⁷⁹

In October 1910, the *Italica Gens* established a central office at #35 Broadway in New York. Rev. Giuseppe Grivetti, who was very much interested in colonization and published an article on that topic in May 1912, was appointed director for the United States and Canada. According to *The Catholic News* of New York, it had an extensive program, but it did not mention how it would be funded:

It proposes to direct the immigrants to places where work is more likely to be found; to have those unable to earn their living sent back to Italy; to procure certificates and records from the ecclesiastical and civil authorities; to send money to the immigrants' families and trace lost money-orders; to have orphans placed in educational institutions, and protect the immigrants in labor casualties; in general to give all kinds of information in regard to the laws and customs of this country.⁸⁰

Pisani, "Un Pioniere della Colonizzazione Italiana negli Stati Uniti d'America," *Italica Gens* I (Febbraio 1910): 31-37 and "L'Italia all'Estero," *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali e Discipline Ausiliarie* XLIV (Maggio 1907): 27-57.

⁷⁹ ACMS, 005, box 17, circular, Bassi, Agli aderenti; "L' *Italica Gens*, 8; "I Segretariati dell' ITALICA GENS nei paesi transoceanici," *Italica Gens* I (Febbraio 1910): 16-22; "Elenco dei Segretariati dell' *Italica Gens* nei paesi transoceanici," *ibid.* I (Maggio 1910), 188.

⁸⁰ "La 'Italica Gens'," *Italica Gens* I (Dicembre 1910): 402-03; "Organized to Aid Italian Immigrants," *The Catholic News*, November 5, 1910, 8; "Assisting Italian Immigrants," *The Catholic News*, December 31, 1910, 20; Giuseppe Grivetti, "La

Bandini apparently reached an agreement with Italica Gens regarding colonization in the American Southwest. Filippo Guarini, Forlì's chronicler, recorded on June 9, 1911, that the purpose of Bandini's trip to Italy was to arrange the colonization of Italian emigrants in Texas and Arkansas.⁸¹ After returning to Tontitown with his nephew, Bandini kept up his correspondence with Fr. Grivetti of Italica Gens. Given the very limited material available on Bandini's involvement with this organization, it's not possible to document whether his efforts resulted in additional colonization initiatives.⁸²

In 1906 an Italian Colonial Institute (Istituto Coloniale Italiano) was created to promote all Italian colonies around the world, both those under the direct control of the Italian state and those in other sovereign states. To draw attention to Italian expatriates, the Institute sponsored two congresses of Italians abroad, one in 1908 and one in 1911, both in Rome.⁸³ The First Congress of Italians Abroad met in October 1908, with the participation of as many as 250 delegates from Italian colonies all over the world. It made various recommendations

colonizzazione italiana negli Stati Uniti del Nord America," *Italica Gens* III (Maggio 1912): 121-32. See Tomasi, "Fede e patria, 327-28; ACMS, 005, box 15, newspaper clipping, J. Gambera, "Our Italian Immigrants," *The New World* (Chicago), February 25, 1911, 2 and, "Il Clero Italiano in America e l'Assistenza degli Emigrati Italiani," *Italica Gens* II (Maggio 1911): 217-25.

⁸¹ BCF, Filippo Guarini, *Diario Forlivese*, Volume Duodecimo Dal giorno 25 Marzo 1909 al giorno 5 Agosto 1912, 334.

⁸² See AGS, RP 01, Bandini to Grivetti, Tontitown, Ark., November 26, 1910 to June 11, 1913, Barbato to M. Rev. Padre, New Haven, Conn., March 21, 1911, postal card, Albert to Grivetti, Torino, September 17, 1911, T. Bandini to Carissimo collega in venatione (Grivetti), Tontitown, Ark., December 13, 1911 to June 11, 1913, Bandini to Cresci, Tontitown, Ark., October 9, 1912, telegram, Bandini to Stigardi [Spigardi], Tontitown, Ark., October 22, 1912, Turrone to T. Bandini, Bertinoro, April 21, 1913.

⁸³ Choate, *Emigrant Nation*, 54-55. See Matteo Pierotti, *L'Istituto coloniale italiano: Sue origini, suo sviluppo (Istituto coloniale italiano. Sezione studi e propaganda)* (Roma: Grafia, 1922).

related to Italians abroad.⁸⁴ The Second Congress of Italians Abroad met from June 11-20, 1911, in conjunction with the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Italy's unification. No less than 860 delegates attended, 354 of them from abroad. Bandini was listed as a delegate of the National Association to Assist Italian Catholic Missionaries, which had formed *Italica Gens*, and of the colony of Tontitown in Arkansas, U.S.A. The delegates were divided into six groups, one of them for North America.⁸⁵ One of the important topics discussed was agricultural colonization, especially in the Americas, a topic of great interest to Bandini and one in which he would have been able to make a valuable contribution in the appropriate session.⁸⁶

At the conclusion of the Second Congress of Italians Abroad, some of the delegates went to Turin to visit the International Exposition of Industry and Labor (*Esposizione Internazionale delle Industrie e del Lavoro*), which had opened on April 29 and closed on November 19, 1911.⁸⁷ Italy's celebration of the 50th anniversary of its unification

⁸⁴ Preziosi, *Gl'Italiani negli Stati Uniti*, 221-39; Pierotti, *L'Istituto coloniale italiano*, 10.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 11-13; Istituto Coloniale Italiano, *Atti del Secondo Congresso degli Italiani all'Estero* (11-20 Giugno 1911), 2 vols. in 4 parts (Roma: Tipografia Editrice Nazionale, 1912), II:13. See "Notizie Varie: Il secondo Congresso degli Italiani all'estero," *Boll. Emigr.* 17 (1910): 59-64; "Il secondo Congresso degli Italiani all'estero," *La Stampa*, June 12, 1911, 1.

⁸⁶ R. Venerosi, "Il Secondo Congresso degli Italiani all'Estero," *Italica Gens* II (Giugno-Luglio 1911): 242. See Istituto Coloniale Italiano, *Atti del Secondo Congresso*, I, parte I:239-45, for the presentation by Antonio Franceschini on the problems regarding agricultural colonization, especially in the Americas, and "La colonizzazione agricola nelle Americhe," *La Stampa*, June 13, 1911, 2. For other topics discussed, see "Le Colonie dell'Eritrea e della Somalia al Congresso degli Italiani all'estero," *La Stampa*, June 14, 1911, 4; "Gli italiani all'estero," *La Stampa*, June 15, 1911, 1; "Il Congresso degli italiani all'estero," *La Stampa*, June 18, 1911, 5; "Emigrazione ed istruzione al Congresso degli Italiani all'estero," *La Stampa*, June 20, 1911, 1; "Il Congresso degli Italiani all'estero," *La Stampa*, June 21, 1911, 2. See also "Notizie Italiane. Il secondo Congresso degli Italiani all'estero," *Italica Gens* II (Marzo 1911): 142-43; Rip, "Il Congresso degli Italiani all'estero," *Minerva*, Giugno 25, 1911, 618.

⁸⁷ "La solenne inaugurazione della nostra Esposizione Internazionale," *La Stampa*, April

received extensive coverage in *The New York Times*, especially the expositions in Rome and Turin.⁸⁸ One of the exhibits was titled “The labor of Italians abroad” (Mostra “Il lavoro degli italiani all’estero”) and included a whole range of enterprises, including agricultural colonies.⁸⁹ One of the displays was made up of photographs depicting the life of Italians in the countries of emigration, “from happy Tontitown, in the center of Arkansas, so called because the Italian Tonti was the first to explore this region, and where Father Bandini has founded his thriving agricultural colony, to the sad ‘fazendas’ in the north of Brasil.”⁹⁰ A postcard sent by Bandini to Josephine and Leo Maestri showed a picture of the square in front of the exhibit

30,1911; “Gl’Italiani all’estero congressisti,” *La Stampa*, June 25,1911, 6; “La visita degli italiani all’estero,” *La Stampa*, June 26, 1911, 6.; “La chiusura dell’Esposizione,” *La Stampa*, November 20,1911, 5. See “Great Fair at Turin,” *NYT*, January 30, 1911, 3; “Turin Exhibition Opened,” *NYT*, April 30, 1911, part III, 1; “Our Turin Pavilion Opens,” *NYT*, June 18, 1911, part III, 4; “To Entertain Our Sailors,” *NYT*, July 16, 1911, part III, 2. “King Victor at Turin,” *NYT*, October 6, 1911, 2; “Giolitti at Turin,” *NYT*, October 7, 1911, 2.

⁸⁸ See “Morgan’s Aid Sought for Rome Exhibition,” *NYT*, March 12, 1911, part III, 14; “Americans Gather for Fair in Rome,” *NYT*, March 19, 1911, 14; “Territory Demanded by Irredentists,” *NYT*, March 19, 1911, 15; “Italy is Absorbed in Jubilee Fetes,” *NYT*, March 26, 1911, part III, 2; “Making Ready for Expositions at Rome and Turin,” *NYT*, March 26, 1911, part III, 2; “King Victor Opens Rome Exhibition,” *NYT*, March 28, 1911, 7; “Morgan Guides King Over Art Exhibition,” *NYT*, March 30, 1911, 4; “Royalties Open Exhibit,” *NYT*, April 9, 1911, part III, 3; “Fireworks in Rome Set Fire to Woods,” *NYT*, April 22, 1911, 4; “Italy Plans Fetes for Our Sailors,” *NYT*, April 23, 1911, part III, 2; “Our Pavilion Opened at Rome Exhibition,” *NYT*, April 23, 1911, part III, 4; “Delay in Opening American Pavilion,” *NYT*, April 24, 1911, 4; “Queen Margherita Sees Our Exhibit,” *NYT*, May 2, 1911, 4; “Offer by Rome to US,” *NYT*, May 4, 1911, 6; “Dedication of the American Exhibit at the International Exhibition in Rome,” *NYT*, May 14, 1911, picture section, part I, 2; “American Artist’s Group is Admired,” *NYT*, May 14, 1911, part III, 4; “Art Pavilions for Rome,” *NYT*, May 28, 1911, part III, 1; “Italian Welcome Awaits Our Ships,” *NYT*, June 25, 1911, part III, 3; “Row at Rome Exposition,” *NYT*, November 12, 1911, part 3, 3.

⁸⁹ See “Notizie varie: Esposizione internazionale delle industrie e dal lavoro (Nostra ‘Il lavoro degli italiani all’estero’), Torino, 1911,” *Boll. Emig.* 10 (1910): 58-75, for details of the program.

⁹⁰ Mario Bassi, “Gl’Italiani all’estero,” *La Stampa*, June 25,1911, 6.

hall. It included his comment: "Under that immense dome the name of Tontitown did and will resound more than once: There I am talking on Colonization and Emigration topics."⁹¹ On October 19 the prize-giving ceremony was held.⁹² The Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce (Ministero dell'Agricoltura, Industria e Commercio) awarded Bandini the gold medal, "given to the Italian outside the country who has contributed in a major way to the rescue of his fellow countrymen from foreign speculation, provided for their material and moral needs, and supported the acquisition of land entrusted to them for cultivation." It was a fitting recognition of his efforts as a social worker in New York and a colonizer in Arkansas.⁹³



1911 Turin International Exposition (detail); Bastianelli Collection/Tontitown Historical Museum.

⁹¹ Young, "So Big, This Little Place," 95.

⁹² See "La solenne cerimonia della premiazione," *La Stampa*, October 20, 1911, 5; *Esposizione Internazionale dell'Industria e del lavoro, Torino, 1911: Relazione della giuria* (Torino: Soc. Tip. Ed. Nazionale, 1915).

⁹³ Mambelli, "Forlivesi Illustri," *Il Momento*, September 29, 1934, 3.

On July 10, 1911, Turin's *La Stampa* ran the following article sent from Rome:

The correspondent of the *Tribuna* of Florence has interviewed Fr. Pietro Bandini who, as is known, went to America 22 years ago as a missionary to aid the emigrants, founded a labor bureau, a home to shelter the young and a refuge for the old, and finally founded a city in Arkansas, which is called Tontitown and in which seventy percent of the citizens are Italians. Bandini has said that he has been received by the Pope, who has welcomed him very cordially, two times, and that Queen Margaret has given him a very beautiful chasuble for the parish church of his city.

The interviewee expects to be received in Turin also by the King.

I - Bandini has said - am Italian, and have not forgotten my duties as an Italian.⁹⁴

The outbreak of war in Europe in 1914 brought immigration almost to a standstill. Bandini would not survive the end of the Great War. In 1921 and 1924 Congress established a strict quota system, based on national origin, that by 1927 would limit the total immigration in any one year to 150,000. As a result, the need for agricultural colonies declined significantly.⁹⁵ In his lifetime, Bandini was involved with two colonization projects. The first one, Sunnyside, failed for reasons that were beyond his control. The second, Tontitown, succeeded probably beyond his own expectations, despite initial hardships. That success is the basis for his claim to some historical fame. Combined with his defense of Italian migration to the South and his involvement with the

⁹⁴ "Simpatia dichiarazione d'italianità d'un sacerdote missionario," *La Stampa*, July 10, 1911, 2. See Luigi Rasi, "Padre Pietro Bandini. Un prete forlivese fondatore di città in America, compie laggiù il migliore nazionalismo," *La Difesa*, July 15, 1911, 3.

⁹⁵ Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 529.

Catholic Colonization Society and the *Italica Gens*, it is also the basis for viewing him as a champion of agricultural colonization at home and abroad, a national and international colonizer.

ITALICA GENS 31

**UN PIONIERE DELLA COLONIZZAZIONE ITALIANA
NEGLI STATI UNITI D'AMERICA**

Il tipo *prete colonizzatore* si può considerare come una specialità delle provincie agricole canadesi, dove le migliori colonie sono sorte

R. P. Bandini

per opera di un prete o di un monaco ed oggi ancora prosperano all'ombra della Chiesa. Sfogliando il *Directory* o Annuario ecclesiastico di quel paese non è raro incontrare il nome d'un sacerdote contrassegnato col titolo di *prêtre colonisateur*, come d'un ufficio — sia pure secondario — annesso sulla cura pastorale.

Sacerdoti belgi e tedeschi ne hanno seguito l'esempio anche negli Stati Uniti, ed è nota l'esistenza d'una Società nazionale cat-

Bandini, a pioneer in Italian colonization in the United States; *Italica Gens*, February 1910, p. 31.

Appendix I

PETER BANDINI TO JOSEPH M. CATALDO¹

St. Ignatius Mission (Montana) July 20, 1885

Reverend in Christ and Dear Father,

Dear Father.

I do not know how many times I have started writing the letter your Reverency had requested; not once was I able to write more than one page for each time I was interrupted either by calls that came from far away or by some other pressing work. Each time I got back to my letter I could not even remember where I was in my narration. I will start again, this time determined to finish. My past experience tells me that once again I will often have certain interruptions. I will not, therefore, establish any sort of set order to this letter, instead I will write spontaneously.

We spent last year's Christmas holidays with much solemnity and concourses which were much better than those of the past years. I might add that this extraordinary occurrence [sic] was not only due to the devotion and faith of the Indians, but also to the rumor that in the very near future they would be paid for the ground they had given to the railroad; this good news attracted even those Indians of our reserve who live far away in the English possessions. They say that the cold had never been so intense in Montana as it was last December. All the same, the cold did not hold the Indians back or retard their journeys. A blind old Indian man who came tied astride his horse in a caravan consisting of his friends and relatives told me that when a sudden, tremendous wind and snow storm arose (which just about froze the blood in one's veins) he realized that because of him the others had to slow down. Calling to his companions he said: "Let me down, my children, you

¹ Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, The Pacific Northwest Tribes Missions Collection, roll #4, frames 408-35. Translated from the Italian by Eliodoro Rodoni and Beatrice Steinmann.

run and save yourselves. I am old and do not have much longer to live. You are young; escape and save yourselves.” The days of the Novena were spent in preparing the people to solemnity, and the best part of the daytime was spent in the confessional. On Christmas Eve we were in the confessional until after eleven at night. We finally had to close the doors in order to be able to prepare for the Midnight Mass. Despite the most intense Montana cold that one could stand -- being midnight and outdoors -- the square upon which our church was built was packed with people who were anxiously awaiting the sound of the bells indicating the opening of the church doors and the beginning of the ceremonies. The much awaited signal finally came and one heard at the same time gunshots. Our students came and entered the church, the women and young girls entered singing hymns to the Baby Jesus. Then the prayers and the solemn Mass began with the singing of the Indian girls, students of the Sisters, accompanied by the music of our band. At the Midnight Mass we distributed around a thousand communions, then we said a low Mass during which there was singing and music. When the Mass was over everyone left just as they had come -- that is singing and playing instruments and shooting guns. After about a quarter of an hour there was a perfect silence which reigned among all those people. I think everyone quietly went to sleep, with the exception of myself who, being tired but having various things yet to do, was not able to close an eye. So I thought it would be better to finish what I had to do. -- The following morning one of the Fathers went to see an old fellow who, because of his illness, was not able to go to church and take part in the festivities. This old man said to him: “You know Blackrobe, I wept last night thinking of everyone who was lucky enough to be able to go to church to celebrate Christmas while I had to stay here closed up. Oh how I cried! Just as I was crying a beautiful white woman entered, but really beautiful, and she came and sat next to me. ‘Anthony,’ she said to me, ‘Why are you crying?’ Ah, everyone is in church to see the newborn Christ and I cannot even go see him. ‘Be calm, Anthony, this is the will

of God that you be sick and closed up in your tent; yield to the disposition of God.' I watched," added the old man. "I looked closely at the woman and realized that she had such a beautiful child in her arms; oh how beautiful he was! But when I tried to look more closely I could not see anything anymore, but I did not cry anymore either, from that moment on I felt a great consolation."

During those days I had various meetings with different tribes. At one of the conferences with the Kootenai there assisted a Blackfoot chief who happened to be at St. Ignatius. A few of those present began talking about the education of their children; one of the Indians suggested that it would be a good idea to start sending the children to the schools at St. Ignatius. To be truthful, the Kootenai tribe is the most reluctant to accept civilization among those who depend on our Mission. They are the poorest and the wildest. They live either in the woods or near lakes and live off of hunting and fishing. They live far away from the Mission and have contact with the whites to whom they sell fish and furs and from whom they do not learn anything good. Having opened the discussion about the education of the children, Painted Red, the Blackfoot chief, asked for permission to speak and spoke in his native language saying the following: "I am a stranger among you and yet you have received me well thanks to the Blackrobe who has come and told us that we are all sons of the same Father, sons of God. We do not hate each other any more. We no longer have wars with one another, instead we love each other as brothers. It is the Blackrobe who has changed our hearts and who is our only true friend; only he is concerned about our souls and our bodies. For this very reason I come from far away. I have covered many miles bringing along with me my sons so that they may be educated by the priests for only they know how to educate good Christians and teach them how they should live. You see how so many whites have come, all of whom are envious of our lands, and push us always farther away. We are, at the present, like a herd of

buffalo surrounded by hunters; for the buffalo there remains only a small bit of space; if the hunters make one more advance, their [the buffalo's] only alternative is to jump off the cliff and die. We are this herd of buffalo, the whitemen are the hunters. They have hunted us from all of the land, and now all we have left is a strip of land here and there. The whiteman even wants the little we have left and they surround us from every part and lead us to our ruin. In the midst of all of this the Blackrobe comes and shouts out to us: 'My sons, cultivate the land, put up fences, learn the whiteman's language, teach your children how to read and write so that they can face the whitemen and be able to keep their land.' I have seen that this is true, that this is the only way to save our land. I have realized that the Blackrobe is our friend; for this reason I have come and brought my sons, they will learn how to read books, they will learn how to work the land and then the whiteman will respect them and they will be able to live happily. -- Kootenais your land is beautiful and good, but there is not much of it left. The whitemen want it for themselves. Look how the whitemen advance more and more each day; Kootenais, if you love your land, if you love your sons, send them to school. When they finish school they will know how to work and speak like the whitemen and the whitemen ought to leave them in peace. I have finished."

Painted Red's speech made a great impression on the Kootenais; their chief said to me: "I am very sorry our heart is broken today because of the death of two of our dear ones; moreover our elders and sick are far away from here, and without them I would not like to make any important decisions. You come first to our land and then my people will give you their children." Thus the meeting was closed.

In the midst of all of this, two things worried me. One was the typhus that was spreading especially among the Kootenais and which was taking many lives, the other was the money that each Indian receives from the agency. This money, even though it was only 14 dollars a head,

was enough to arouse the youth to take up drinking and gambling. I had only heard talk of this. One day while I was returning on horseback from a run of some 20 miles to administer the Sacraments to a sick person, I thought I heard a strange noise as I proceeded into a small wooded area. I turned this way and that to find out which way to take, when all of a sudden I found myself in front of more than twelve young Indians accompanied by only one mature person. They were lined up in two separate lines and those in each line beat on a long pole with a stick. The young Indians were on their knees or lying down. In the middle, between the two poles and the two lines of players were two or three small piles of silver coins. Along with the beating together of the sticks there was an accompaniment of a sort of chant while the players passed among them one of the sticks with great speed. In a moment the stick would disappear. I think that the bet on the game consisted of saying who had the stick. Surprised by my improvisory arrival, they did not have enough time to break up the game. They turned pale and looked only downward; their chant quickly faded away, and yet with certain movements of guilt they continued to beat the poles with their sticks. I looked up and down at them and felt like having a word with them, but fearing that one of them might be drunk I thought it would be more prudent to continue. I had hardly passed the group of players and their lodgings when I heard one of them running behind me. It was an Indian who had left the group, he approached me and said: "Good day, Father," and then he held out his hand. I leaned on the pommel of the saddle and said to him in a sad voice: "Isaac, you are here again?" "Oh!" he answered me, "do not you see, Blackrobe, everyone is playing and I play too." "You call a dozen young Indians, 'everyone'; and you, a grown up who should serve as a good example to the young people, you mislead and corrupt them with your bad example. Isaac, how many times have you told me that you would give up gambling? It is always the same, you never change, you gamble away your money, maybe even the money which was given to you for the care of your wife and children. You still play. I pass in front of you and you continue playing,

you want me to witness your sin.” Having said that, I turned and continued on my way. In the meanwhile there reigned a great silence around the teepees. I went over the hills and headed home. On the way I thought to myself how I could have broken up that group of players. Among the many ideas that came to my mind I upheld the following. I sent to call together the allotted for Communion, men and women. I spoke to them in such a way as to show them how they had hurt me for having continued to gamble even after all of my preaching to them and also after having promised not to do so. All the same, I knew that they continued to gamble. Among these people were a few players who were real hard core sinners. To convert them would take extraordinary grace which could be obtained from Jesus if they would only fervently pray to him. After I spoke a few from the crowd spoke out and said they would pray with fervor and that they would take Communion for those sinners. A few days later I noticed a band of young people and one grown up who were waiting for me near the confessional. They say that from that time on Isaac, who beforehand could not pull himself away from the games, had never again been seen gambling. He made a fence around a nice piece of ground, he worked for himself, and when he does not have enough to do for himself he finds something to do for others.

This association for the Communion of Reparation rendered even another service. If you remember, your Reverency once said to me that I should begin, little by little, making the Indians understand the Christian’s duty of helping the church with their alms, so that one day, when the[y] should have a better understanding with the whitemen and when they be more civilized, they would succeed in their own way. Your Reverency added that I should have tried to buy the pulpit with the collected alms from the people. This came to my mind precisely during the Christmas holidays even though many of the Indians had already left with the money they received from the railroad. How do you make the Indians come to terms concerning the cost of the pulpit, and that which is even more difficult, what word does one use to express the meaning of pulpit in their language. Fortunately I had a catalog of church objects

among which were a few drawings of pulpits. I called a few women who belonged to the Society for the Communion of Reparation and showed them the drawings: "You see this thing, carved out of wood? The Blackrobe goes up this little staircase, and from there, he preaches and his voice can be heard in the whole church. I would like to have one made or order one at your expense. I would like you to go around with this card, show it to people and explain to them what it is, and if you bring back some money, we will get this beautiful pulpit which will be yours and will be something that you yourselves will offer to the Lord. The priest, when he preaches will be able to stand on it." The women were most happy; they took the card and upon leaving they said to me: "We only regret that you have not said something to us about it before, for many of the people have already left." Throughout the day many people brought their offerings either to me or to the Father Procurator. The women, having returned towards evening, brought a bit more than 60 dollars along with them and told me all about how they collected the money. I remember in particular the one about the young child that these women encountered in a teepee with his parents. The child heard that the women were taking a collection for the church; having seen that the others were offering something and realizing that he himself had nothing to offer, he drew closer to his mother's neck, and kissing her, he said: "Give me some money too. I want to make an offering to the church." With the five cents he got from his mother he ran over to the women, and in great joy, said to them: "I give this money to the church."

All the while, typhus began to infect wildly especially the Kootenais. During their return from the Mission to their favorite forests and waters many died. One day a messenger arrived and said to me: "Blackrobe, do you have much to eat? Do you have some good blankets so that you can protect yourself from the cold? Take along with you much food and some heavy blankets to cover yourself for people are sick in the Ignatius camp and even farther away so you will have a long way to travel and work." I immediately got ready to leave, but without all of the things the messenger thought I should take. When I go to

visit the Indians knowing that I have plenty of time, I take along with me three horses, one for me, one for my companion (a young Indian fellow), and another to carry the tent, provisions and all the necessary things for cooking. But when I am called up to visit the sick people -- regardless of how far away they are -- I take only one horse and try to go as fast as I possibly can. I left the following day with all of the blessings from heaven and earth, and with a terrible wind storm which made a whirlwind of snow as if it were sand and which found a way to go down my neck, blow in my face, or go up my arms regardless of how well I tried to cover myself. Along the way I realized that something had happened to my horse making it most difficult for me to ride him and direct his way. One minute he would dash ahead and try to throw me off the saddle; the next minute he would slow down. As I got off to see what was the matter I noticed that his shoe on his right hind foot was pushed too far ahead and as he ran it would cut the left foot which was already bleeding by that time. This made it impossible for me to go on; I had to pry the shoe from his hind foot with a pocket knife and a rock and had to work with much difficulty standing on the snow and ice. I finally freed the horse of his shoe, which was a very dangerous job. The gusting wind did not let up one bit, so I began to think that what I was doing went beyond the limits of prudence for I still had another 30 miles to go before arriving at a place where I could be sheltered from the cold which, at this point, was freezing me. All in all, I arrived safe and sound at the lake. As I dismounted my horse I noticed that my pants were in shreds because of the unusual way my horse had acted along the way. Fortunately at the place where I had arrived there was a small store. I immediately went there determined to buy myself another pair regardless of the color or style. However, I could not find any whatsoever so the proprietor of the store lent me a pair of his own, which I took with much gratitude. We finally arrived at the mouth of the lake where the Pend Oreille River begins, and at that point it was a matter of having to cross the river. My Indian companion proposed to cross the frozen lake on horseback. Since I had heard that there had

been a couple of accidents there before and that in some places the lake was not so solid, I did not take the risk. So we had to cross the river in a small boat at a place where there were rapids and fast moving water and thus not frozen. Once on the other side we had traveled a distance of two or three miles when I realized that my horse was very likely to fall since he had no shoes on his hind feet and we now had to make a steep climb on ice and snow. Just as I had thought, the horse fell suddenly on his hind legs. Since the place where we were was steep on two sides -- below and to the left was the lake and behind the steep slope we had just climbed -- I immediately pulled my feet out of the stirrups. Having no other alternative, I raised my legs, lowered my head and rolled off of the horse and part way down the hill. Since the horse was struggling on his own he could not prevent me from rolling off. Everything ended up alright, but we had to walk nearly the entire remainder of the way. I finally got to the top of that high mountain, tired and sweating like crazy. At the top of the mountain I could not see anything, for all that was in front of us was an immensely dense forest. Nor could I stop there to rest because it was simply too cold. All I could do was go ahead and go down the other side. Being that the decline did not seem so steep to me, I remounted my horse. Once again I was in for a surprise, my horse stumbled on a fallen log which was frozen to the ground and buried under the snow; he fell this time on his front legs. One would guess that I should fly off the horse head first. I would have, had I not held on with all my force as a good horseman would have. I immediately tried to dismount, but this time the horse did not give me enough time; he quickly got back up on his feet, and I remained in the saddle. I decided to go a little way on foot. For a few steps the hardened snow would support my weight, and then all of a sudden I would sink into the snow up to my thighs; other times, when I would start sliding, my horse was of great help and support to me. I led the horse with the rope so that when I started to slip and slide the slack was soon taken up, and when the horse, wanting to descend slowly, felt himself being pulled by the rope, he would stiffen his legs and refuse to go on. I finally reached the

end of the forest but I was still on very high mountains. Below me in the distance I saw beautiful plains and rolling hills which were lightly covered with snow and brightened by a brilliant sun. I saw the lake that I had crossed the day before which, from this other side, was once again very close to me for it is a lake that extends for 40 miles. I saw something else too, which actually is not at all visible, and that is that I found myself to be most hungry. I decided to look in the saddle bag where I found God's providings, so at that very spot I prepared a lunch or supper for I had not yet been able to have either one. Since I did not have anything to drink with me I had to eat snow. My horse looked at me rather pitifully because he could only see snow around him. I started again on my way and after a couple of hours I reached Ignatius' camp.

I was surprised by a huge trophy that I encountered at a short distance from the camp. It was made of very long poles which were tied together at the top and arranged in such a way as to form a huge round pyramid; at the top there was a heap of rags all in bundles. These were the clothes of those who died during the epidemic. One pole, much higher than all the rest, had bits and pieces of cloth tied to it that waved in the wind; they seemed to be flags of all different colors. Below or in the inside of this so called pyramid, two thick poles were planted into the ground. On top of them was a pile of wood and fine straw which touched the top of the pyramid.

Upon my arrival at the camp, those who were not sick plus those who could just make it to drag themselves along all came up to me to shake my hand, to bid me a good day (*kissuk-kiúkiit*), and to thank me for having compassion for them. They all looked thoughtful and sad, yet quite submissive. Such was the effect of the pain that oppressed each one of them in addition to the thought of all of their beloved who had died during the preceding days. And partially their state of mind was the effect of a vision and a prophecy of one of their tribesmen who, taken by surprise, was killed by the disease as I shall explain below. At the time of my arrival, I found no one who

was in immediate danger, although all were sick. So, thinking first to see to my horse, I proceeded for another two miles to a place where I knew my horse would be well taken care of and be ready for the long journey back. Two miles away there lived a mixedblood family. The mother is a niece of Chief Ignatius; the father is a Savoyard who ended up here not even he knows how and who bound himself by this nice marriage. He is a man who is all heart and no brains; he knows no English, has nearly forgotten his French and knows only a few words of Kootenai, he speaks the French of the mixedbloods and one can distinguish him from the Indians only because of his beard. His dwelling is no better, perhaps even worse, than those of other Indians (at least of those who have a home). It is made out of logs still covered with bark which are notched together. The space between the logs has not yet been filled with mud. His wife is mentally ill, and since there are no mental hospitals here to shelter her, he keeps her at home and loves her tenderly. They have a number of children, all of whom are somewhat retarded with the exception of one little one who seems to be normal. In the many years that he has lived on the reservation, he could have become quite rich and have large herds of horses and stock, but since he has no brains he has never made a fortune. However, he has an excellent heart! He is the one who took care of my horse. I asked him once how he happened to end up in these parts, and he did not know. He remembers though, as a young boy of 12 or 13 years, that his father threatened and beat him. So, either out of shame or pain he ran away from home, mixed in with a group of chimneysweeps, travelled around France and then arrived at a port city where he was put on a ship and taken to America. Not knowing how to do anything here in the midst of whitemen, he little by little got involved with the Indians. Since the Indians realized that he was a good man, they never bothered him. In any case, this honest fellow gave me a horse that I was to bring back to him in the evening of the following day. So I immediately returned to the camp of the Kootenai where I began by listening first to the confessions of those who were on their feet and

then of those who were sick. Afterwards we recited a few prayers together, I gave them a little sermon and then sent them off in peace. I then was able to sit down and have some supper which had been prepared for me by the wife of the Chief. The supper consisted of a few boiled potatoes with no salt and no bread. I slept better, or at least just as well, in a small hut that was reserved for me as I would have in some beautiful room. Even though my bed was only the ground, my rest was not at all impeded. I got up early the following morning, listened to a few confessions and prepared the altar for the Mass. That is to say I put four sticks in the ground, joined them at the top with two other sticks and tied them all together with a string. On top of these I placed other sticks lengthwise and then covered and recovered the whole thing with my blanket: here sat the holy stone, three small table clothes, and all else necessary to say the Mass. A nice potato, cut in half, served the purpose of a nice pair of candlesticks each having a candle-end in it. At the sound of the bell the people came running to the improvised cathedral. I said the Holy Mass and then the prayers began. I gave a sermon and, when the time came, I gave the Communion. After the Mass we went in procession (in the manner I had indicated) to bring the Holy Communion to those who were sick. At the head of the procession was a cross painted red which had been made by the Indians; then came the women followed by the men. At my sides were two small Indians who carried the candles and the so-called candlesticks, and I came along with the vestments of the Mass. A few warriors followed at the tail of the procession. We all went along singing with devotion so as to call upon the heavens to have pity on these poor people who have been attacked by a sickness totally unknown to them before and for which they knew no cure. All of a sudden I was struck and distracted by something that seemed strange to me: An old man who was marching seriously just a few steps in front of me wrapped in a red blanket which resembled the capes worn by the canons in some places in Italy. The Chief, somewhat stooped, with his aquiline nose and with his eyes fixed in a book which he

majestically held in front of him, read and sang in the voice of a devoted sacristan. Was this Indian really reading? What was this book? -- We shall see below.

I combined sacerdotal function with that of nurse and doctor. Accompanied by the Chief who brought me the specifics -- castor oil and quinine sulphate -- I again made the rounds of the entire camp. I dissolved this quinine sulphate and put it into vials and then showed the Chief how it should be administered to the sick. On the spot we gave everyone a good-sized spoonful of castor oil. Rather than putting up a fuss about having to swallow the castor oil, they licked their lips out of appreciation, but before taking it they wanted to know its effects and had to be convinced of its safety. The medication having been administered, I listened pro tribunali coram populo to everyone which meant: adjusting questions of matrimony, clarifying certain doubts and giving them practical instructions on how to take care of themselves during the raging of the typhus. Naturally, though, they reserved their major problems for a time when they could speak privately with the priest. Being that all of the Kootenai were reunited and approaching the Sacraments, it is to be observed that Chief Ignatius took the occasion to re-establish his council and his warriors, for he wanted to put everything in order. He even wanted a prison for delinquents. Those who feared directly feeling the consequences of these resolutions were stubborn and grumbled to themselves. They did not whisper a word, though, in public conference. As I was all alone a few approached me to speak about various problems they were having. One, among others, said to me: "Blackrobe, it is no good to re-establish a prison among us. God has made a prison, that is, Hell. That is a real prison! All bad people will go down there and will stay in prison for ever. What did our Chief put in his head when he thinks of putting bad people in a prison made of wood for just a few days?"

It was easy to answer him for, having heard his declaration, it was rather obvious that not even he had much faith in his objections.

But another who looked more sure of himself and was even rather arrogant said: "Blackrobe, on Christmas day our Lord was born; on Good Friday he died on the cross; on Easter Sunday he resurrected; on the Sunday of Pentecost the Holy Ghost came down; when has the Lord ever said that one should bother people?" "My dear friend," I replied, "not only did the Lord order heads of families to use the staff to punish those who do wrong; and even more the Lord himself sacrificed himself as an example. Upon seeing many people who were in church and had no respect, who were selling and buying, the Lord made a whip out of a few pieces of cord, and with an angry face he drove away the violators. I tell you he was not doing this for laughs, but instead he turned over tables and threw money. These people were so terrified that they ran away leaving money, goods, and everything." Humiliated and confused, the poor Indian went on his way.

In the meantime night fell. I made one more round, found two who were in serious trouble and gave them the last comforts of the Church. I went on my way on horseback to the hut of the Savoyard to pick up my horse and continue the journey that remained. The distance to this hut was no more than two English miles, but it was so dark I could not see and did not know in which direction to go. To get there I had to cross a marsh and from there I had to go down a steep hill where there was only a narrow path. I lost the path. I absolutely should have been able to see it. When I realized that I was at the marsh, I lit a couple of matches to see where I was, but I still could not see any farther than the length of a hand. I turned in one direction and then the other, and then, having commended myself to the Guardian Angel, I covered my face, especially my eyes. I thought I would let the horse lead the way, for being from those parts, I thought he could get us out of that mess. I left him free to wander wherever he pleased. I held on to the reins for I did not want to run into some branch and poke an eye out in that dark forest. After just about a quarter of an hour of bumping into stumps and limbs, I noticed that the horse found the trail which took us to the Savoyard's house. After a sparing supper I went and

lied [sic] down. In the middle of the night I was suddenly awakened by a scream, crying of children and babies, and a most strange noise. It was the wife of the Savoyard, my host, who, having been taken by one of her usual fits, grabbed a hatchet and beat left and right against the logs that formed the wall of her room. She hacked at whatever came into her way and screamed in a crazy furor: "Take that, and that." Her husband, for some unknown reason, had gone out before and was not there. I was in the corner of a room lying down on some straw. Not desiring to get in her way, I ran out of the hut hollered at the tap of my lungs to the Savoyard who, having heard my screams, came immediately and calmed her down by threatening to hit her. I said to him: "You know, I have to leave at sunrise and I do not want to be of any inconvenience to you and especially to your children, so please let me sleep in the barn." My friend understood the antiphon, yet could not deny that I was right. I went to the barn then and laid down on the ground not far from the horse. There, at least, I was safe from that madwoman.

Early the next morning I was already on the saddle before the Indians had even waken up. I located a guide and we left right away. The road went through woods, over high mountains, and was covered with snow and ice. We saw wolves, deer, and other such nice things. We came to a point where there began a steep and long descent which, from top to bottom, was solid ice. I did not have the courage to start down; had I been alone, I do not know what I would have done. The Indian saw right away that I was afraid so he took it upon himself to lead the horses down the hill. He went down slowly taking short jumps with such a bouncing action that it seemed as if he had springs under his heels. I watched but did not know what to hold on to. After finally realizing that I could not stay on my feet, I squatted down and slid down the hill. As I tried to descend slowly and tried to measure or estimate each moment of the descent, one can imagine what a torture it was to my pants.

After about 16 or 20 miles we were near the lake, close to the part which is called the head of the lake. My guide told me that there was no other way but to cross the lake on the ice. Otherwise we would have had to spend the night in the woods and be exposed to all the dangers of the cold and wild animals. "Okay," I said, "you go ahead and I will follow." So we crossed the lake at guidem on horseback. On the way my guide said out of consolation: "You see, there is much snow on the ice this year so the ice will melt early. Maybe a few people will drown for this reason." Having arrived at the head of the lake, I saw a few Indians who were walking along in the mud. With them were a few children who ran and jumped happily. Not one of them seemed to be bothered by the cold that surrounded them. They had made a hole in the ice and were bathing in the water. Then they would jump out and go into a sort of "oven" made of green wood and a few blankets inside of which there were steaming hot rocks. This was like a medicine for them as are certain patent medicines used by the whitemen which serve against all sickness.

We arrived at the Columbia River where it still retains the name of Flathead. There we encountered a few Indians who were discussing which way they should cross. On our side there was no ice; from the middle of the river to the other side there was ice, in some spots solid and in others not. There the river is quite wide and deep, perhaps 20 feet deep. Since the Indians told me that the sick who were awaiting my arrival were no further than two or three miles from the other side of the river and that the crossing of the river would be easy, I decided to cross immediately. I left my horse with the Indians. I took another Indian with me plus a big stick which had been pointed at one end like an ax. We went into a canoe. The Indian, knowing the tricks of the trade, did not try to cross over to the other side right away; instead he followed the current for more than an hour. He then tried to go towards the middle where the ice was not solid allowing the canoe to pass through it. As we went ahead, the ice got thicker and thicker so we had to break it with our sticks and a lot of force. One

time, as we both leaned to the same side, the canoe nearly overturned. I grabbed onto the ice. I smiled and looked at the Indian as if saying to him: "What in the world are we doing?" He answered me with a smile. Having finally reached a place where the ice seemed solid enough to support us, we got out of the canoe, I walked with much distrust, so that at the first crack I heard I would be ready to extend my arms. Having arrived at the other side of the river, we realized that it was already past midday and that the day would soon be over. My companion did not know exactly how to get to the sick Indians. So I said to him: "Let us turn back, tomorrow morning at sunrise we will go on our way." We got back into our canoe, but to my disappointment I saw that all of our hard work in the making of the canal through the ice was more or less in vain. The ice had built up again and furthermore we now had to row against the current. We did not become discouraged; instead we made another canal and were able to reach the opposite bank. My arms were numb with pain and I was worn out. The following morning we left on time and finally reached our destination.

I listened to confessions, gave communion and preached as I had done in the camp of Ignatius. There were families who were dependents of the Ignatius camp and who were there to hunt. Spread on the ground were at least 500 deer hides. As I was about to leave it started snowing lightly, half rain-half snow. The Indians gave me deer hides so that I could bundle up in them. On my way I saw a hut (made of logs) and went towards it. As I approached a mean dog barked wildly and would not let me go any closer. I kept him away from me with my stick until an old lady appeared at the door and called the dog. She was a white woman and was but a skeleton who, with two children, dared to come to these parts. It was the only family who, at that time, lived on that side of the river. After the usual greetings she said: "These savages" -- the Indians -- "are mean; two days ago as I was outside in front of the cabin, a number of Indian women passed by and came to blows with me." "It was by mistake," I said, "not out of meanness. It was a misunderstanding. The Indians do not know

exactly where the boundaries of their Reservation are. Not having ever seen a white person here, they must have thought that this was their land and that you disregarded their rights.["] After a few other words, I allowed myself to ask whether or not she was one of my sheep. "Of what religion are you?" "Oh, about that Father, I do not know what to say. I may have been baptized in the Methodist Church, but as far as I can remember, I have always been sickly and could never concern myself with religion." "Poor woman!"

I went back to Ignatius' camp and found that two had died and that all the rest were better. All the same, one could see many afflicted people who could only talk about the dead and the cemetery. The Chief wanted to build a fence around the cemetery (which is something that I had recommended many times). He chose those who were to cut the poles, and those, who were to make crosses and had indicated a plot for himself, for his warriors and for the rest of his people. "Since we all must die, let us not delay doing what the Blackrobe has told us to do. Let us make a nice fence and a nice cross so that people who pass by can say: "These were good Christians who will pray for us." "Who told you that you would all die of the disease?" "Marcellino."

Marcellino was a young Kootenai who was one of the better known gamblers of the tribe. He wanted to marry one of the Chief's daughters, but the Chief did not consent because he knew of Marcellino's poor conduct. The two young lovers did not become discouraged, instead they decided to run away together to a distant country. Whether out of remorse or out of homesickness, they returned to their land where I, a few months ago now, settled the affair. From that time up until the death of Marcellino, they lived as good Christians. Marcellino was violently struck by the disease and died. A few months before passing away, he called his relatives and friends and said: "I had a vision, I saw the Lord, he told me that I would die shortly and that all of you too would die after me." Thus the reason for hurrying to put everything in order and to make a nicer cemetery.

They were all sad, but resigned. Their total resignation did them harm, for they no longer took much care in what they ate and what they gave to the sick. Closeby there was a river which had many fish in it, but no one bothered to go fishing anymore. So I tried to get them to go fishing and to hunt wild chickens [grouse] and pheasants to provide food for themselves and the sick who were already getting better. Not wanting to deny the vision of Marcellino, I said to them: "You can be sure that you will not all die of this disease; Marcellino told you that you would all have to die, but he did not tell you when."

Then I recalled that "sacristan," that one who was dressed in a red cape, who sang and read from a book. Having called him, I said: "Martin, would you let me see your book?" He ran to get it and brought it to me. He showed me his catechism, the prayers and songs, all of which were written by his own hand in figures and hieroglyphics. He read it fluently. Whenever Ignatius had any doubts about catechism or prayers, he would call for Martin who could resolve any doubts with his book. Those signs and figures are constantly used to express their ideas. Even I could read them after a bit of explanation and practice.

I had to return to the Kootenai camp many times. To describe all of the deaths I have attended to and all of the incidents that happened to me on the way would make my letter much too long. All the same, I cannot forget the short journey I took between Holy Wednesday and Holy Thursday. I was called upon in the evening of Holy Wednesday. I was told that there were some Indians at the edge of the lake who were unable to go ahead for one of them was dying and asked for a priest. I left all alone just as night began to fall. After having traveled about fourteen or fifteen miles, I found myself in such darkness that I could not even see the horse's head. I stopped and waited two hours, until the moon finally came up, but large, black clouds did not let any light shine through. I continued on my way placing my trust in God. I wanted to avoid having to cross a creek which opened up into a pond and formed a large and muddy marsh. But being pitch dark I went

straight into it. I walked and walked, holding the horse by the reins and trying to find, with each step, a clod more solid than the others. When I finally got out of that mess I was soaked to the skin and full of mud. I got back on my horse and went on. When I arrived at the camp I discovered that these people were not as sick as I thought. I wrapped a large Indian blanket around myself and, as I sat around the fire drying my clothes, I listened to the confessions of those good people. After having administered the sacraments to those who needed them, I left and arrived home shortly after noon.

During the Holy Week there were only two of us priests to attend to all of the confessions and all other functions of the Church. On the very same day we solemnly celebrated the Via Crucis and the preaching of the passion. On Holy Friday we also had a procession at night. Everyone mourned, as is the custom during these days. On top of the catafalque in the presbytery there was a coffin which was covered with a black blanket with white around the edges. There was also a statue of the dead Jesus, the work of Father Ravalli. All around there were candles burning and a few pine trees. After all other functions had been taken care of, everyone was called late in the evening for the procession. First came the cross with the followers all dressed as ecclesiastics. Then came the Sisters' students and Indian women singing funeral hymns on the passion of the Lord. After them, followed the young boys of the school and then came a band playing funeral harmonies among which was the funeral march taken from Saul by Handel. Then came the men, the ecclesiastics, the thurifer and the clergy. Following the clergy there were a few of the Sisters' students dressed in white and who were carrying in basins, nails, a crown of thorns and other such things. And then came four young men wearing shirts who carried the coffin wherein rested the deceased Jesus. Surrounding the coffin were other young men carrying candles and torches. The road on which the procession passed was adorned with pine trees and a number of burning wood piles to add to the funeral scene. Reunited in the church, the chorus and the band said the

last farewell to Jesus. After I said a few words to the crowd they all left in sadness and mourning.

This year we celebrated the feast of Corpus Domini with much solemnity and a beautiful procession. The Indians, however far away they were in search of roots, came to the celebration and left whatever they were doing behind. There was a communion almost like at Easter.

The procession was most solemn. Our students, dressed in uniforms and carrying their flag, along with the students of the Sisters who scattered flowers here and there and who also had their flag, took part in the procession; all were singing at the top of their lungs. Then there was the band, the chorus, the clerics, thurifers, the baldachin with Jesus in sacrament, other Indians and mixedbloods. Everyone carried burning candles. The road was adorned with branches and flowers. Jesus triumphs even among these unsophisticated people who have the heart to love and honor him.

The uniforms worn by our students in the band were not given to us by the States nor were they bought. I designed and cut them out of old material and then gave them to the Indian girls to be sewen [sic]. After the procession and the rest of functions, those who came from far away remounted their horses and returned in search of their roots. Some had to go 40 miles, others 60.

This school year, from November to the present, 99 boys entered our school. Just about the same number of girls entered the Sisters' school. At first they feel the great sacrifice they must make on their liberty by chosing [sic] to go to school. Nevertheless, after just a short time, they become adjusted and learn to love the school and profit from all the sciences and arts that they learn there. The whitemen are always astonished to see that our students can play music on wind instruments and read the notes. Certainly working with the band takes a lot of my time, as anyone might imagine since these are only young boys between nine and fifteen years old (only a few that are as old as fifteen). However, I must say that they show a great

facility and inclination which is not so easy to find, even among the whites of whatever country! The young girls make equal progress both in school and in the feminine arts. Visitors who come and examine the handwriting of our students exclaim: "Is it possible? They write better than many whites."

In both schools there are clerics and congregations which have proven to be fruitful. Our youth are in excellent condition to understand all spiritual usefulness. Who knows, maybe in not too long a time, God may call one of them to his service. Among the boys, three asked if they could study this year. Three of them were admitted immediately and the other three after the feast of St. Ignatius, or the new school year.

At this point I allow myself to end my long letter which has been written in a hurry during whatever short intervals I could find between the first and 20th of this month. I hope that your Reverency will soon come to visit us and bring us good help from the old country, for the work to be done is endless and the workers are few.

Affectionate and obedient servant and son,
Peter Bandini, S. J.

Appendix II

BRIEF ACCOUNT ON THE COLONY OF TONTITOWN, ARK. AND ITS ORIGIN¹

It is six years since about 200 families were transported directly from Italy by New York financial millionaire Mr. Corbin, who together with Prince Ruspoli, Mayor of Rome, had formed a colonization plan. They were settled in Sunny Side, Chicot County, state of Arkansas. It was difficult to choose land more rich and productive and at the same time a more attractive place. On one side rises the majestic Mississippi ploughed by large steamboats and by sailing ships full of goods and travelers. On the other side the plantation is almost entirely surrounded by the very large lake Chicot, 22 miles long, also busy with many small rowing boats and small steamboats. The families were arriving and taking possession of the different and small fields assigned them, when Corbin himself wanted one day to speak to me and interest me so that I would take some part in the foundation of that Colony. It did not take much to persuade me since I myself had understood the absolute necessity of sending our immigrants to the fields if one truly wished to provide for their salvation and I longed and dreamed a thousand plans so as to form a stable and well-off Italian Colony; plans however that I did not see a way of realizing for the lack of material means. I had many invitations and offers before this one, but having studied the conditions of the contracts I found them disadvantageous to the Italians and rejected them. The one by Corbin satisfied me. The St. Raphael, of which I was a part in New York, could do without me. In the 5 years that I worked with it, assisted by the will of good people, much was obtained for the protection and care of our immigrants and for the disappearance of an enormous amount of abuses. However the landing system wonderfully perfected by the new laws of the United

¹ Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, DH 02, Bandini, "Breve cenno sulla Colonia di Tontitown, Ark. e sua origine," Tontitown, Ark., November 10, 1902. Translated from Italian by Edward C. Stibili.

States and the new Italian Office established by the native government reduced a great deal the activity of the society and the reason for my work . . . I could then turn to another no less ample horizon and at the same time give a hand to a work that fully satisfies me and that I had longed for a long time.

In a very brief space of time the new Colony of Sunny Side was organized, divided in districts with school, church, teachers and a small convent of nuns for the care of the girls. Everything was proceeding with universal satisfaction and no one doubted that in a very short time Sunny Side would have become a very thriving Italian Colony of some thousands of families, when the almost sudden death of Corbin, who did not leave any disposition for the Colony, the unwillingness of his heirs to continue the colonization on the plan conceived by him, and the breaking of the malarial fever, which cut down numerous victims, placed such confusion and fear in the colonists that many fled in a disorderly way. A large part, trusting land and transportation agents, were miserably robbed and betrayed by them. A good number of families gathered around me, begging me not only not to want to abandon them but on the contrary to want to escort them to a healthier place, where in some way they could make a living. Besides, the climate of the plantation was not such that it could not in some way be remedied or adapted to, as experience has afterwards been able to demonstrate. If the new administration had been more favorable at that time to the Italians and had followed in Corbin's footsteps, perhaps the Colony of Sunny Side would still subsist and be prosperous. And if we had to move, it could have been done with greater consideration and without the after-effect of victims that the furious and disordered exodus brought about.

But, on the one hand, the new administration appeared always to be more demanding and seemed to seek ways of freeing itself from the Colonists, on the other hand, in the second immigration various families had come that were not actually from the countryside but

rather day laborers, already accustomed to noise and demonstrations, suspicious by nature, who did not know either how to consider or listen to a calm word. Nothing was left then but to bend oneself to events.

For me, already three times seriously ill and, according to the doctors, reduced to extremes, to engage myself in escorting many families to a new land without the financial means to purchase it seemed to me a fabulous undertaking, and the responsibility of providing for so many families an unbearable weight on my shoulders... Yet the thought that these families could have easily fallen in the hands of cruel people who would have completely ruined them mattered for me more than any other consideration. Throwing myself in the arms of Providence, I chose to go with them. And since two Committees chosen from among the colonists, charged with visiting some lands owned by the Frisco Line in the state of Missouri, reported an unfavorable impression about them, we went all together to the Ozark hills in North West Arkansas.

This place is known for its healthy climate and is rich in very good waters and living springs. Fruit of every quality grows well and will constitute the wealth of the land. After long difficulties I succeeded in purchasing about 800 acres of land, in large part woodland to be paid by instalments and at great intervals. The first houses were improvised with tree logs, rough tables and mud and their extreme modesty did not keep some from assuming grand names, such as that of 'roman castles' given to those of more pretentious appearance. A name that then has remained in that location even after better houses replaced those undeveloped ones. With primitive ploughs and other tools, such as could be suggested by necessity, work on the land began and the building of fences to protect the seeds and the harvest. And the bodies already weakened by the fever, worn-out by privations and the hard work, began to recover strength and the yellow color that the fever had painted on them began to disappear from their faces. This occurred in March and April 1898.

Well into the middle of spring a severe cold killed all the fruit in bloom and damaged the seeds. On March 20th a cyclone uprooted trees, knocked down various houses, flung the fences and, that which is more important, killed with one blow one of our bravest youngsters. That year the harvest was almost nothing, both because work began too late and because the season was unfavorable. Moreover our neighbors who from the beginning very much disapproved of us, both as Italians and as Catholics, began with relentless persistence to molest us in a thousand ways with the evident purpose of giving rise to a conflict in which in the long run we would have had the worst. Their nightly stone throwing and gunshots not having achieved their intent and never having succeeded with different accusations to the courts in convicting any colonist of having violated the law, they resorted to violence attacking us in our properties. On a Friday night, having saturated the wooden walls of the school with petroleum and throwing inside bundles of matches and other flammable materials, they set off the fire. That was the only valuable building that we had in the colony at that time. The best that we owned was locked in there, including the organ and all the furnishings of the Church of which we have some beautiful ones, in particular the one given me as a present by H.M. the Queen Mother. The attempt did not have the desired success, since the fire spent itself after having blackened the walls up to the roof and burned two inches under the beams.

The time had come to put ourselves on the defensive, since our position was beginning to be insupportable. I put together a report and sent it to the constable who did not deign to come or reply. I then drafted a report of the facts and sent it through a trusted person to the court. Meanwhile rumor of what had happened and of the fire of the Italian school, which was taken as an accomplished fact, attracted an extraordinary crowd of Americans the following Sunday, who were curious to find out what happened and who were anxious to satisfy their grudge in that accident. Yet to their amazement the school still stood. But that multitude there under my eyes awoke again in me the

resolution of ending the attitude of impossible victim already sustained for as many as six months and to cling to new ways of defense. Having finished the Gospel I preached to the Italians in our language on the theme of the day and then addressing the Americans I began to speak approximately like this: "Brothers, for some months you assiduously and in large number attend our religious service, for you new and mysterious. You should have been able to convince yourselves that our Sunday assemblies have no other purpose than to give homage and adoration to God with those forms and those ceremonies which our Church prescribes for us. You know by examination that the Catholic Priest does not serve himself of the altar or the pulpit to support this or that political party, as not infrequently occurs with your ministers. You are my witnesses that in all the time you have not heard from my lips but the word of God, depending on whether the reading of the day came now from St. John, now from St. Matthew or another evangelist. But this morning I find myself in such exceptional circumstances that, leaving briefly aside the usual way, I find myself constrained to direct to you my own frank and sincere word. Having found in the rich lands in the South of the state many Christian families that were dying from malarial fevers, I brought them in these balsamic hills, fearing nothing from the well renowned cordial American hospitality. If I had brought them among savages perhaps they would not have been victims of many molestations, nor would they be witnesses of so much senselessness, such as was that of setting fire to that school, where they with much love and with much assiduity study to learn your language and become familiar with your customs. Do not certainly delude yourselves that we do not know who the leaders of these uprisings are and we say to them - 'think well about the responsibility that you assume and the consequences of your illegal behavior. Since we have come honestly to the legitimate possession of these lands, so we will protect our rights with all those means that the law places in our hands. Observe this growing colony and you will see that the band of men both young and mature is sufficiently large. All

of these, obeying the law of the native government, were instructed in the use of weapons. Many are good shots, others are very skilled and have earned medals and honors in national target practice. They are the ones who from now on will defend our property. And you know that the law of the state of Arkansas guarantees a generous award to whoever brings before justice an arsonist living or dead. They will make sure to merit the award.” How this unusual talk was received I will leave to the imagination of the reader. But the order was kept by our brave improvised soldiers. The guards changed regularly as is done in military camps and they were removed only when things actually changed, so that this precaution became unnecessary.

The judge came the following Monday from the county capital. Canadian in origin, he is a man of large views and not a partisan. He approved our conduct and insisted that every manner be studied so as to be able to bring before the tribunal any of those scoundrels who had disturbed the peace of the colony and finally it was decided to change some boundaries of the district eliminating some territory to the S. W. that was the den of those most relentless against the colony. They, not having any more interest in the district, it was thought, and not wrongly, that many causes of conflict would likewise be removed. So it happened that the district, with the exception of 4 or 5 American families, remained Italian and our school became at that time, besides the church, our town hall, the hall for elections, meetings, etc. etc. Among the American flags and coats of arms that adorn the walls also waves the Italian flag, and among the portraits of the great men of the American land are also encamped those of Christopher Columbus and Enrico Tonti.

At that time the colony emerged from its first trials, replaced by peace that was the herald of that harmony and brotherhood that unites and now fraternizes the two peoples. The aversion of our neighbors has changed to admiration and they themselves marvel at the change that has taken place in these lands. Admiring now the beautiful fields,

and orchards, and vineyards, they have begun to understand them to be the true wealth of the region. Meanwhile the Italians, besides having improved and enlarged their farms, have built good homes and barns. But that which matters most, they have already entirely paid for their lands, in such a way that they now find themselves on a solid basis. But it is true that to reach this point cost some of them enormous sacrifices and privations. They buried themselves in the coal mines and went to work in the railroads. But they reached their goal. They have accumulated the necessary money and freed themselves from debt. They own and daily improve their possessions. But I will make these improvements and the sources of prosperity of the new town the subject of another article.

Tontitown rises six miles west of Springdale and has the appearance of a pleasant city with its fine post office which issues money orders, telephone even at great distance, stores, offices, school and a very beautiful church. The view from this point is very enchanting. The eye moves all around roaming in the distant horizon and can see a breeding ground of houses, which with their lively colors often break the now clear and now dark green of the blooming countryside. And to think that 4 years ago only a lone roof could be seen!

Climate. These localities are very suited for recovering health and encouraging strength. Since on one side we are protected from the cold winds that rage in the prairies of the North and West and [on the other side] the height of the hilly land, between 1500 and 2500 feet above sea level, protects us from the suffocating heat and malaria that reigns in the lower regions. In the summer the heat is moderated by the gulf breezes and hence sunstrokes are unknown while the nights are invariably cool. Fresh and clear waters are also abundant. This mildness and wholesomeness of climate explains why there are so many renowned summer meeting places and water cures a few miles from where we are. In fact we have in the West Siloam Springs, in the N.W. Sulphur Springs, in the N.E. Eurika Springs and Montene, in the

South Winslow etc.

Products. Vegetables and cereals of every kind grow abundantly, but large and small fruit from these lands is much sought in the markets and is the most profitable source of income. As a matter of fact in any exhibition in which this fruit was displayed it has always received the first prizes, as it received at the Expositions of Chicago and Paris. Above all grapevines grow well and the colonists who have begun to enjoy the first fruit and the first sales rejoice and are preparing ample cellars.

We have called the colony and town Tontitown thus resurrecting from history a glorious Italian name; Tonti, the Piedmontese official who was the lieutenant of La Salle in the Americas, who founded the first colony in Arkansas in 1686 and built the military fort that took the name of Arkansas Post. No county, no town in Arkansas remembered this name. So it has fallen on the Italians to recall the glorious memory of their fellow citizen and bind to his name the fates of a new town risen in those same lands made bright by him and where he planted the first seed of civilized life.

Pietro Bandini

Appendix III

ALEXANDER OLDRINI TO SAVERIO FAVA¹

New York, March 15, 1897.

My dear Baron:

Mr. Austin Corbin in expressing himself upon your request of information concerning the outcome of the first year of Italian Colonization of the Sunny Side Plantation, said to me textually: "Please give the Baron every information he wishes without reserve."

I therefore accomplish the agreeable duty of conveying to you all such information, and these figures that can give you an exact idea of said subject.

HEALTH AND ACCLIMATATION – While it is a known and admitted medical fact that emigration settling in the Mississippi River region must go through a period of acclimation, bearing on between two and three years, and this, whether the people come from abroad or from other regions of the United State; and while in the majority of the hundred families that settled at Sunny Side in December, 1895, one or more members have actually been tried by acclimation last summer, yet the Weekly and Monthly Reports of the physician attending the Italian colonists show that the character of the malarial spell has been lenient, and one that, with the exception of a limited number of cases only temporarily prevented the tried colonists to stand their work in the fields.

The opinion of Dr. Johnson, the physician, voluntarily furnished in 1896 by the Company without an obligation (together

¹ Archivio Storico Diplomatico Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Legazione Sarda e delle Rappresentanze Diplomatiche Italiane negli U.S.A. (1848-1901), busta 110, fasc. 2194 (copy).

with the supply of all medicines) is that, after the second year of residence the colonists will undoubtedly stand the climate as well as the natives of the region.

In his written statement on this important subject, the physician who has been in charge of the plantation since the landing of the families, December 4, '95, upholds "that the cause of most of their malarial cases during the past year resulted from the water which they had used." Therefore, he recommends artesian water as the best.

From the first days of the settlement of the colony and ever since, I constantly pointed to the necessity of solving this water question. An imperative solution now at Sunny Side, that Mr. Corbin is trying and is hopeful to reach without delay, as both the health of the Italian colonists and their interests and the interest of the Sunny Side Company greatly depend upon it as a forgone conclusion.

The following are the figures resulting from the 166 Reports of Dr. Johnson from December 4th, '95, to January 1st, '97, that is for a period of thirteen months.

On the 100 families composed of 544 persons, that arrived December 4th, '95, at Sunny Side, 279 were adults above 16, and 265 were children, between one and sixteen years of age. There has been among them during the last year 25 births and 23 deaths (10 adults and 13 infants and children). The causes of their demise being mostly accidents or ordinary diseases. Two only were attributed to endemic malarial causes, a boy of 12 and a young woman of 28, although both of them were suffering from pulmonary trouble and consumption.

Pump water is the one they now drink and that all colored people drink down at Sunny Side where it is considered healthy; the Colonists have a pump every two houses, but the case is that when in Summer a part of them gets dry, they drink any of water at hand, to their sure disadvantage.

DR. V.M. JOHNSON'S 166 RAPPORTS for 1896.

Winter and Spring. monthly				
1895	December	4 Rapports	47 Visits	1. ½ daily
1896	January	4 “	47 “	1. ½ “
“	February	5 “	64 “	2 “
“	March	4 “	49 “	2. ½ “
“	April	4 “	38 “	1 “

Summer – Acclimation Period.

“	May	20 “	307 “	9 “
“	June	24 “	457 “	15 “
“	July	29 “	447 “	14 “
“	August	23 “	397 “	13 “

Fall Season.

“	September	11 “	154 “	5 “
“	October	21 “	262 “	9 “
“	November	18 “	123 “	4 “
“	December	3 “	61 “	2 “
No. Rappports...		166		

Nota Bene. -- In the Rapports of Dr. Johnson, to explain the high figures especially on the Acclimation Period, he counts as a visit all the distribution of medicines that the colonists themselves came and got at the pharmacy, so that the figures representing those visits do not represent new patients in every instance.

When Mr. Corbin and myself left Sunny Side last month, there were only about half-dozen cases of endemic diseases, although in no case but one they were compelled to lie down, and Dr. Johnson assured us that the whole colony was doing well, and with better water, more care and more method of life, would do better than the first year.

THE ACCOUNTS FOR 1896 WITH THE 100 FAMILIES.

The Colonists cultivated 146 lots of 12.1/2 acres each, otherwise 1825 acres of land in cotton, besides the gardens around their houses for which Mr. Corbin furnished the seed. But in many instances at the time of picking the cotton, they had to ask and be supplied with outside help in order to secure their crop in time. An occurrence, this, that ought not to happen again on a large scale in order that each family may secure the full benefit of their crop.

The accounts opened by the Sunny Side Company with the families were exactly 100. These being the first year, Mr. Corbin went purposely to Sunny Side last February to close each one of them personally, with my assistance, in order to satisfy the colonists and to gain practical experience for the future of this colonic enterprise.

Out of the said 100 accounts. 62, or 2/3 came out on the credit side, and 38 on the debit side. And this including:

- A. The annuity of \$100 due to the company per lot
- B. The provisions bought by the families at the store.
- C. The money furnished to them in cash or spent for them for the following items: Balance due on voyage; Furniture for their dwellings; Help for their crop; Cash to buy cows and for their personal use. - All these advances aggregated have reached the sum of \$22,603,00; that is an average of \$226,00 advance without interest to each family by the Sunny Side Company, during the first year of their settlement.

Besides said amount, the Company has paid to the Colonists the total sum of \$9,775,00 for labor at 80¢ per day, or and average of \$97,000 to each family. Now, 2/3 of this amount, \$6,627,24, having

been paid directly month by month to the colonists, if added to the result of their crop would bring all the accounts of the 38 families in debit, also on the credit side. But this amount has not been calculated in the general accounts, 62 of which come out with a total credit of \$99,10, and the other 38 an average debit of \$59,87. Thus giving a balance to the credit of the families from 1st of Jany, '97, of \$6,096, 81, and a debit of \$2,275,33, that is a general credit balance with the company in favor of the colonists of \$3,821,48.

All these figures representing an average in each instance for the total number of the families, I furnish you separately a list bearing the situation of each family so that you may see, as it appears, that among them some are more economic in their expenses than others, while some have been obliged to secure outside help for their crop, thus bringing forth a peculiar condition in the result of their annual accounts. A point on which, when necessary, I called the attention of the colonists for next year. And in order to give you some information on this economic point, I will say that while the average expense for store provisions has been of about \$100 to each family, a number of families ran it much higher; and one as much as \$187.

The same observation stands for the money advanced to them for helping in picking cotton, which was of an average of \$40 to the family, while some families requested a bigger sum, and one as much as \$170.

With regard to the issue of these annual accounts, it is permitted to foresee a more profitable result for the second year, since the first 100 families will have no more debit on account of voyage, furniture, cows, etc.; especially if guided by experience, the colonists keep a more moderate account for the two items; provisions and outside help for crop.

As you will see in the annexed list, two families working two (2) lots each, come out with a big difference. Alpe with a debit of \$128,00 and Olivari with a credit of \$605,00, everything paid.

This wide difference is to be attributed to tardy cultivation

and a long drought of 120 days without rain; that affected Alpe's lots and several others.

GENERAL INFORMATION.

This year the whole colony is composed of 176 families including about 1,000 people; of which 76 families arrived at Sunny Side January 3rd, '97. They will cultivate lots of 12 ½ acres or 2750 acres.

And at this juncture I convey to you the information that of his last visit to the plantation, October '96, Prince Ruspoli, who is interested in it, as you are aware, suggested, and Mr. Austin Corbin agreed to make a grant of 7.½ acres of woodmand [sic] to each lot-owner in order of thus making for them a lot of more 20 acres that, when cleared, will bring down the original price of \$160 per acre to that of \$100.

Some families having already taken advantage of said grant, have cleared and will cultivate this additional 7.½ acres, together with their lot of 12.½, thus giving them a possibility of securing a larger cotton crop. All the families are expected to clear their own additional land, and there is no doubt but that even if they shall pay something for extra help, all will be able to country in a year or two, on 20 acres each of good land.

Another source of useful information is this, for the future of their crop. As during the operation of settling the accounts recently, some colonists complained that the quality of their land was inferior to that of the majority (6 or 7 lots) Mr. Corbin taking it in consideration announced that he was disposed to have a commission appointed with the object of grading those lands that appeared to be inferior; and that as a conclusion either the price of the lot would be reduced according to the findings of the commission, or, he would grant to the colonists more land as a compensation, or, at their choice, put them on better lands. Meanwhile, as an equitable measure for the first account, he admitted to everyone of said group, a minimum of 5 bales of cotton

to the lot, informing them that the gradation thus proposed to be made would bear also on the first year in the form of an additional credit. And in order to help them for this year, before the gradation, he granted to them, for cultivation, an extra amount of land close to their lot (Sunny side Section).

The two aforesaid measures of additional 7.½ acres to the lot and gradation of certain land, not now apparent in the Agreement of purchase between the Sunny Side Company and the colonists, will be further on embodied in the recorded deed which the Company proposes to give to each purchaser in a near future, that is, when all said measures are adopted.

As the last information on the aforesaid accounts, I will say that of the \$14,600,00 (146 lots x \$100) that constituted the annuity paid by the colonists to the Company, \$1414,70 has been allowed by Mr. Corbin to different colonists on compensation for different reasons, while said income of \$14,600 is by far inferior to the sum actually spent by the Sunny Side Company, with the object of settling at Sunny Side the first Italian Colony.

The Crop. The operation of handling the colonists crop has been carried on as follows: Each colonist's cotton, after having been put in the cotton houses of the plantation, has been sent to the gin, there to be baled and weighed and put to their credit afterwards according to the date and the price of the sale as it resulted in the official accounts of the New Orleans Cotton Exchange. When differences with regard to the weight appeared to have existed, by which the colonists had a claim, said claim was made by Mr. Corbin an object of personal inquiry and was settled with the colonists in my presence and with the assistance of the Italian and of the American office, and the information given by the colonists, by the gin manager and the Italian foreman. Allowances were made when the claim appeared just and proved.

According to the customary plantation use, the seed left at the gin, after the baling of the cotton, was retained by the company for the

expense of ginning and baling the crop.

Among the concessions made by the Company to the colonists this year, for which there was no obligation, I think it useful to quote here the use of the mules through, out the period of cultivation and of the implements for that, which the company did not charge to the debit of the colonists, as well as the taxes of the county and State, directly paid by the company. A favor that the Company has decided to grant also for the pending year; together with the continuation of the expense for Italian clerks, foremen and interpreters, in order to help as much as possible the colonists to the object of their settlement.

When I will have added that the Sunny Side Company has furnished the Colony with the Church and a School, under the direction of Rev. P. Bandini, and an assistant Rev. J. Gastaldi and of three school-mistreeses of whom two are nuns; that the school is frequented by about 150 children of both sexes and that Mr. Corbin has made among other presents to the Colony that of an incubator, of a complete printing press, of an organ for the church, and of instruments for a band; that the railroad train of the plantation has been put twice a day at disposition of the school for the commodity of the children, I think I have conveyed to you all the information of a certain importance, that you may form an opinion on the future of the Italian Colony of Sunny Side, Arkansas, founded by the ever-regretted Mr. Austin Corbin.

I will be pleased to give you any other information that you may eventually desire.

Very respectfully yours,

(Sig) ALEXANDER OLDRINI.

To his Excellency,

Baron S. Fava,

Washington, D.C.

N.B.- All these figures are under O.& E.

Appendix IV

REPORT OF THE TENEMENT HOUSE COMMITTEE¹

New York, December 7, 1894

Committee met pursuant to adjournment, all the members being present.

Peter Bandini, being duly sworn, testified as follows:

By Charman Gilder:

Q. Will you please give your residence? A. No. 113 Waverly place.

Q. And you are the priest of what church? A. The Chapel of the Holy Rosary, at the same place, and I am secretary of the Society of San Rafael for the Protection of Italian Emigrants.

Q. You made a special study, did you not, about four years ago, of the Italian children? A. Yes, sir; I belong to the Society for the Protection of Italian Emigrants, and as secretary of such society I used to visit the landing place about every day, and the arrival of some boys in the care of people who were not related to them aroused my suspicions, and I went after them and found that they were used a few days after reaching New York for shining boots and shoes or selling newspapers; I called them and asked whether they had relatives and who their parents were, and they told me they belonged to such and such villages or towns in Italy, and I found that they never went to school or church; one day I had four of them held in the Barge office, waiting to see if I could find out where their relatives were, and two

¹ *Report of the Tenement House Committee as Authorized by Chapter 479 of the Laws of 1894.* Albany: James B. Lyon, State Printer, 1895, 524-27 (<http://books.google.com>).

men came, each of them claiming the same boy as his own child, and they could scarcely give me the right name of the boy.

Q. They each claimed to be the father of the boy? A. Yes, sir; of the same child; the child did not care for either; that aroused my suspicion more and more, and I found out that really it was a kind of selling of children, in this way: by the people going around in some places in Italy and visiting some families where there were children, and they used to promise them if they would send their children here they would have them go to school, and they would earn money; and these men also would give to the poor parents some money, telling them that every year or every six months they would send some more money from this country; but I heard that they never keep their promises – they only send some money in the beginning.

Q. Do you think that there has been an improvement of late years? A. I think it has changed a great deal from four years ago; that there has been a kind of improvement, that the children have learned by going to school - if they find some other way of smuggling children I don't know; only six or seven months ago a boy about ten years old came to this country and was claimed by some one who said he was his uncle, and really was his uncle, but there was another party who claimed that he was also his uncle, and one of them took the child in his care, although there was the other party who claimed it as his own; but they fixed it up for \$200, the one that got the child paid.

Q. These children live in the Italian quarters? A. In the Italian quarters – they used to, but for a year I did not make any special study of it; I found out that some of the children who did not go school or to church used to live – for instance, they lived on the east side and worked on the west side; I found three children once in One Hundred and Thirty-first street on the west side, and they told me they lived in One Hundred and Sixth street on the east side.

Q. Why did they go across town that way? A. I guess so as better to deceive the policeman – I don't know; they told me that early

in the morning they used to go over on the opposite side; there were three of them, and they had never been to school; that was about a year or a year and one-half ago – I don't remember.

Q. All these children live in tenement-houses, do they not? A. Generally.

By Mr. Schuchman:

Q. Are there any special houses that children of that kind live in? A. I couldn't say – that I am unable to say.

Q. They live all over the city? A. All over - they live in the Italian quarters, Little Italy and Baxter street and Mulberry street.

Q. Did you ever visit any of the houses where these children live? A. Only in pursuance of my office; to administer the sacraments, and whenever I was called.

By Chairman Gilder:

Q. You have seen the tenement-houses in which the Italian population live? A. Yes, sir; many of them are not decent.

Q. Many of them are not decent in what way? A. Morally and materially; it was very hard for me to go upstairs in the flats; sometimes I could not stand it at all – I had to go down in the street and get some fresh air.

Q. That is partly the fault of the people, themselves? A. Yes, sir; and also on account of the building; because they have so many people crowded in; but some of them are not fit, it seems to me – there is no air, the yard is too small and there is not light enough.

Q. Where do those people come from generally - what parts of Italy? A. It is very hard to tell now; once, many years ago, the emigration from Italy was mostly from the north, but for about seven

or eight years the majority of the emigrants have come from the south; many Italians go directly to South America, and even now those that emigrate from northern Italy the majority of them go to South America; at present the greatest emigration to New York is from the south of Italy; but the greatest number of Italians who leave their country still go to South America.

Q. And after that the greatest number goes to New York? A. And after that to New York. The Neapolitans are apt to stay in New York for a year or so, until they are able to save some money; then they go to work elsewhere, some times on railroads, or they settle and open stores, etc. The Italians from the north are apt to go at once to work elsewhere in the mines, at stone-cutting, etc.

Q. You don't know how many remain in New York? A. It is hard to say. Some remain permanently; the majority seek their fortunes in others places. In little Italy some streets are from Lombardy and others from the south.

Q. Have you anything to say about the moral effects of this crowded life in our tenements here? A. I think it is not so bad as one would think it would be among these surroundings; in fact; their morals are better than you would think; even in those families where they are so crowded, where it looks very immoral, by the knowledge I have of the people, I would say they are moral, as a rule, generally speaking; but lately, within a few years, there is something you would say was immorality beginning to spread among them.

Q. You think it is? A. A little, beginning; but as a rule, generally, I guess they are moral.

Q. Do you think they generally avail themselves of school accommodations when they can get them? A. I think they do better now than they used to do; but I think there are cases yet where you will find, perhaps not so many as there used to be, but their parents understand it better now; also in Italy that is a great question in some

provinces, where the Italian government finds it very hard to get the people to send their children to school; the government does all it can, but the parents live in the mountains, where there are not very good accommodations for schools, and they do not send them in some provinces; perhaps when they come here they feel the same way, and after awhile, seeing that it is more easy, and that we have more accommodations they understand it better and they begin to send their children to school; I think myself now they generally send their children to school although there are a great number of them that do not go to school; you will find children from some provinces, who are now 13 or 14 years of age, and who have not been to school; but the children are going now, which, I think, shows that their parents understand better.

Q. Is there anything you would like to suggest to the committee?

A. I don't think of anything at present.

Essay on sources

Abbreviations

Archives:

ALE	Ancestry Library Edition - HR Historical Records
AANY	Archives of the Archdiocese of New York
AASL	Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Louis
AASF	Archives of the Archdiocese of San Francisco - PPF Priests Personal files
ACMS	Archives of the Center for Migration Studies, New York - 005 Saint Raphael Society Records (1891-1936) - 037 Scalabrini Fathers in North America, Eastern Province Church of Our Lady of Pompei, New York City, Records (1892-1967) - 078 Scalabrini Fathers in North America, Eastern Province, Provincial Headquarters, Records (1891-1980) - 078A Scalabrini Fathers in North America, Eastern Province, Provincial Headquarters, Records (1891-1980)
AOC	Archdiocese of Chicago Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center - MC Madaj Collection
ADLR	Archives of the Diocese of Little Rock, AR - PBF Rev. Peter Bandini file - TBF Rev. Titus Bandini file - MFF Rev. Mercurio Fiorella file - PHSJT Parish History, St. Joseph, Tontitown - TSJC Tontitown, St. Joseph's Correspondence

- FSJC Fayetteville, St. Joseph's Correspondence
- ASBS Archives of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Bensalem, PA
- AUND Archives of the University of Notre Dame, IN
- CCV/CCS Catholic Central Verein of America Records/Catholic Colonization Society
- AUT Archives of the Ursulines of Toledo, OH
- ASFO Archivio di Stato di Forlì
- AGS Archivio Generale Scalabriniano, Roma
- BA Superiori e Consigli Generali
- DH Sacerdoti egressi
- EB San Carlo (New York Province)
- RC Società San Raffaele
- RP Italica Gens
- AGIS Archivio Gesuiti Italia Settentrionale, Gallarate
- APSM Archivio Parrocchiale di San Mercuriale, Forlì
- ASV Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City
- DAUS Delegazione Apostolica negli Stati Uniti d'America
- APF Archivio Storico della Sacra Congregazione per l'Evangelizzazione dei Popoli o "de Propaganda Fide," Roma
- Acta Acta Sacrae Congregationis
- SOCG Scritture Originali riferite nelle Congregazioni Generali
- NS Nuova Serie
- ASDFB Archivio Storico Diocesano di Forlì-Bertinoro, Forlì
- Sem. Seminario
- ASDMAE Archivio Storico Diplomatico Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Roma

- LSRD Legazione Sarda e delle Rappresentanze Diplomatiche Italiane negli U.S.A. (1848-1909)
- ARSI Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Roma
CPT/VSJ Catalogus Provinciae Taurinensis/
Venetae Societatis Iesu
- Prov. Taur. Provincia Taurinensis
- BCF Biblioteca Comunale “Aurelio Saffi” di Forlì
- CFASA Comune di Forlì, Archivio Storico Anagrafico
- DHA Diocese of Helena Archives, Helena, MT
- Ser. Series 2002.006.005
- ASDH Acts of the Synod of the Diocese of Helena
- Scrapbook Scrapbook collection
- JOPA Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, Spokane, WA
- JBPP Joseph Bandini Personal Papers
- PBPP Peter Bandini Personal Papers
- PPPP Peter Prando Personal Papers
- PNTMC The Pacific Northwest Tribes Missions Collection
- RMM Cataldo
- SFXM St. Francis Xavier Mission
- MUSCUA Marquette University Special Collections and
University Archives, Milwaukee, WI
- BCIM Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records
- SMOH Shiloh Museum of Ozark History, Springdale, AR
- RF Research files
- AC Archival collection
- TCHR Tontitown City Hall Records, AR
- WCA Washington County Archives, Fayetteville, AR
- AFR Administrative & Financial Records
- CR Court Records
- LR Land Records
- L&R Licenses and Registrations

Newspapers, Periodicals, and public documents:

<i>Boll. Emig.</i>	Bollettino dell' Emigrazione
<i>Emig. e Col.</i>	Emigrazione e Colonie
<i>LEPT</i>	Lettere Edificanti della Provincia Torinese della Compagnia di Gesù
<i>NYT</i>	New York Times
<i>OCD</i>	Official Catholic Directory
<i>Scal. mig.</i>	Scalabrini e le migrazioni I/II
<i>SN</i>	Springdale News
<i>WL</i>	Woodstock Letters

Since the notes include all the primary and secondary material used and consulted for this study, this essay refers only to the most important sources used in it. The abbreviations listed above, which refer to archives and the most frequently cited newspapers, periodicals, and public documents, are used throughout this work. Other material is fully cited the first time it appears, after which a shortened note is used.

ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

Since the archival material used and consulted for this study was collected over a number of years, the citations used in the notes are those available at the time of consultation. The most important archival collections for this study, listed in alphabetical order, are:

The Archives of the Archdiocese of New York (AANY) holds material that relates to Bandini's work in New York City.

The Archives of the Center for Migration Studies in New York (ACMS) holds material relating to the Italian Saint Raphael Society in New York and Boston. It was kept at the Church of Our Lady of

Pompei in Manhattan until 1970, when it was transferred to the archives of the Center for Migration Studies (CMS), 209 Flagg Place, Staten Island, New York. In January 2014 the archives were moved to CMS' new headquarters at 307 East 60th Street in Manhattan. The key CMS archival collections for this study include: 005 Saint Raphael Society Records (1891-1936 - 17 boxes), 037 Scalabrini Fathers in North America, Eastern Province Church of Our Lady of Pompei, New York City, Records (1892-1967), 078 and 078A Scalabrini Fathers in North America, Eastern Province, Provincial Headquarters, Records (1891-1980). A complete list of the processed collections at ACMS is available.

The Archives of the Diocese of Little Rock, AR (ADLR) holds material relating to Bandini's work in Arkansas in the Peter Bandini, Titus Bandini, and Mercurio Fiorella files as well as in the Tontitown and Fayetteville parish history files.

The Archives of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Bensalem, PA (ASBS) holds material relating to Bandini's work in Montana in H10B 03 and 13.

The Archivio di Stato di Forlì (ASFO) holds material relating to Bandini's family.

The Archivio Generale Scalabriniano in Rome (AGS) holds the following material on the Saint Raphael Society: Boxes RC 01 to 04 hold the papers of the Società San Raffaele, box DH 02 holds material on P. Pietro Bandini (includes photographs), box RP 01 holds material on Italica Gens, and boxes labeled BA hold material from the superiors general of the congregation.

The Archivio Segreto Vaticano (ASV), Delegazione Apostolica negli Stati Uniti d'America (DAUS) has relevant material in Sez. II - Stati Uniti 1b/1 and 1b/2 Emigrazione Italiana (1893-1900), Sez. IX - Diocesi, Little Rock (Arkansas), 3 Vescovo Fitzgerald, S. E. Mons. Giovanni-Battista Scalabrini e Rev. Fr. Pietro Bandini di New York, sulla colonia italiana (1895), 34 Rev. Pietro Bandini di

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The Archivio Storico della Sacra Congregazione per l'Evangelizzazione dei Popoli o "de Propaganda Fide," Roma (APF), holds material in Nuova Serie (NS), Vol. 30 (1894), rubr. 5, ff. 658-665 and Vol. 332 (1905), rubr. 153, ff. 5-11, 92-100, 171-73, 190-91, 396. See Nicola Kowalsky and Josef Metzler, *Inventory of the Historical Archives of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples or "De Propaganda Fide,"* 3rd ed. (Roma: Pontificia Universitas Urbaniana, 1988); Giovanni Pizzorusso, "La 'Nuova Serie' dell'Archivio di Propaganda Fide e la Storia degli Italiani in Nord America," *Il Velcro* XXXIV (Gennaio-Aprile 1990): 67-85, "B - Altri archivi vaticani. - L'Archivio della Congregazione 'de Propaganda Fide' (1893-1911)," *Studi Emigrazione* XXXII (Dicembre 1995): 690-721, "D - Archivio della Congregazione 'de Propaganda Fide' 1788-1918," *Studi Emigrazione* XXXIII (Dicembre 1996): 617-86.

The Archivio Storico Diplomatico Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Roma (ASDMAE) holds material on Bandini's work in Arkansas. See Cinzia M. Aicardi and Alessandra Cavaterra, eds., *I Fondi Archivistici della Legazione Sarda e delle Rappresentanze Diplomatiche Italiane negli U.S.A. (1848-1901)* (Roma: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1988; available online) and Alessandra Cavaterra, ed., *I fondi archivistici delle Rappresentanze Diplomatiche Italiane negli USA: 1901-1909*, vol. II (draft).

The Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, Spokane, WA holds

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