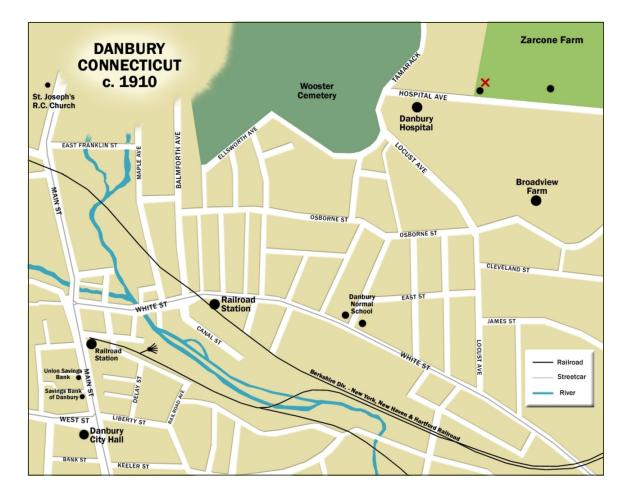
1909 MAFIA MURDER IN DANBURY, CONNECTICUT



Danbury Museum and Historical Society October 8, 2009



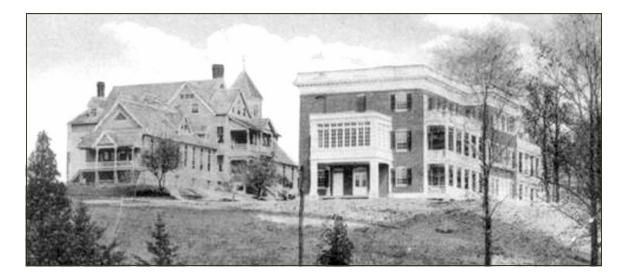


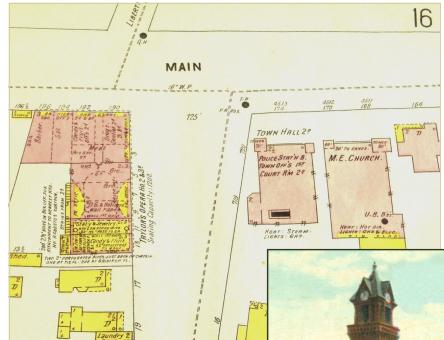
After visiting a woman patient in Danbury Hospital, local fruit farmer Giovanni Zarcone was walking home along Hospital Avenue when he was shot to death. Newspapers immediately linked Zarcone's July 27, 1909, murder to a Mafia organization in New York City.





At the time, Danbury Hospital occupied a complex Victorian-style building (above) at the corner of Hospital and Locust Avenues—near the location of the current hospital's South Building. The Zarcone home sat about three hundred yards east of the facility on the opposite—north—side of Hospital Avenue. The road was lighted only by the moon overhead, as Giovanni Zarcone walked home that night. He was ambushed as he passed a wooded area on the north side of Hospital Avenue. One year after Zarcone's murder, the hospital moved into a brick structure next door (below).

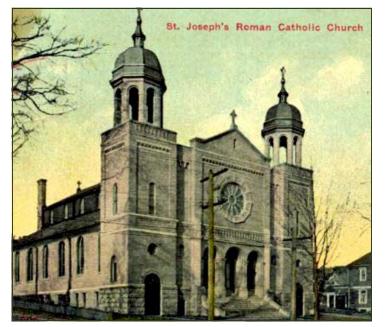




Map (left) shows the location of Danbury's town hall building in the era. The building housed municipal offices and a police station. The fire alarm box, located at the corner of Main and West Streets, was used to summon help after the Zarcone killing.

The clock tower of the municipal building dominated the corner of Main and West Streets (right). The site is now Danbury Library's Plaza. A portion of the municipal building's back wall has been preserved as the rear boundary of the plaza.





The Zarcones were parishioners at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church on Main Street (left). The parish was established by the Hartford Diocese in 1905, just as the Zarcones were moving into Danbury. (Interestingly, St. Joseph is the patron saint of the Zarcone's native Bagheria, Sicily.) In June 1908, Zarcone's son Peter married Angela Locascio in the young church. Father J.D. Kennedy, the first pastor of St. Joseph's, performed the ceremony.

DANBURY ITALIAN Shot from Ambush

Murder is Believed to Have Connection With Recent Black Hand Crimes.

REVENCE IS THOUGHT TO BE THE MOTIVE.

He Had Been Held as Suspect in Barrel Murder Case in New York.

(Special to The Courant.) Danhury, July 27. Giovanni Zarcone, an Italian fruit farmer, living outside the city limits, was shot from ambush and killed at 3 o'clock tonight, and the police and militiamen are now scouring the woods in an effort to capture the murderers, of whom there are ovidently several.

Zurcone had been to the Danbury hospital to visit his nicce, who is a patient there. A few minutes after he left to go home a number of shots were heard and Zarcone's body was found, lying in the road, with several builtet wounds in it and a gunshot wound. The latter almost blew his head off.

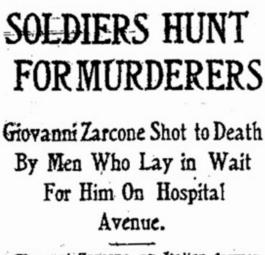
The police were notified and secured the assistance of the militia, and the soldiers and all the special police in the city began searching the woods in the vicinity of the scene of the murder for the slayers.

ANOTHER SHOCKING MURDER MYSTERY

Thought Victim Was Killed by Gang That Believes: "Dead Men Tell No Tales."

NEW YORK, July 28.—Glovanni Zarcone, the Italian murdered yesterday near Danbury, was the fourth man connected with the mysterious barrel murder in this city in 1903 to meet a violent death. Following the discovery of the body of Madonia Benditto in a barrel here. Zarcone was one of those arrested on a charge of causing Henditto's death. Later he was discharged.

Reno Nevada Evening Gazette



Glovanni Zarcone, an Italian farmer, fifty-two years old, was ambushed and shot to death a few minutes after eight o'clock last evening on Hospital avenue, a few hundred feet away from the Danbury hospital. The identity of the murderers is unknown and the mo-

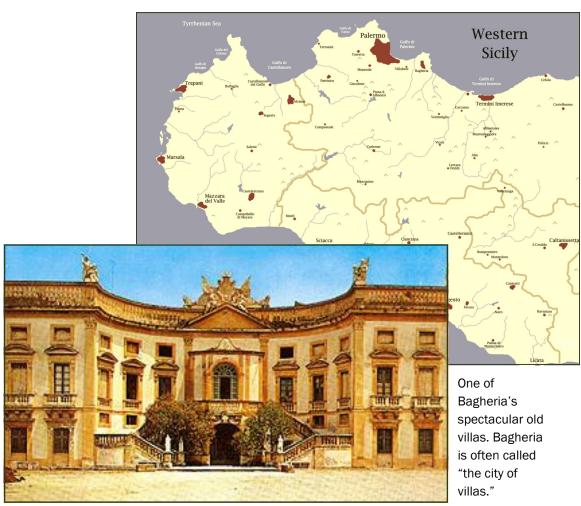
Hartford Courant

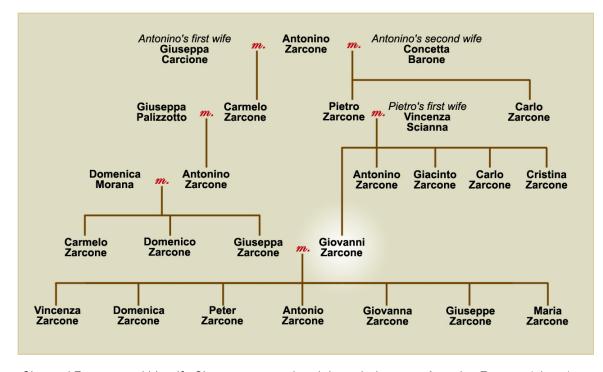
Danbury Evening News

The Zarcone family was rooted in Sicilyin the clustered towns of Bagheria, Santa Flavia and Villabate. Santa Flavia was also the hometown of the Guardalabene and Alioto families, rulers of the Mafia in Milwaukee.



Villabate is the ancestral home of the Profaci clan, which established a Mafia organization in Brooklyn. In the 18th and 19th Centuries, Bagheria became a summer playground for the old, Palermo aristocracy. More recently, it has become known as a center of organized criminal activity. The Aiello family, which for a time ruled Chicago's Sicilian underworld, was originally from Bagheria.





Giovanni Zarcone and his wife Giuseppa were related through the same Antonino Zarcone (above). The Sicilian-born Zarcones had no qualms about marrying relatives—a common practice among noble families of the time. Two of Zarcone's daughters married cousins. The ship's manifest of the S.S. Calabria (below) documents Zarcone's arrival in the U.S. with the mysterious Gaetana Giardina. The first destination of both was the Manhattan apartment of Gaetana's brother Ignazio.

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The first U.S. home of the Zarcone family was in Brooklyn, between the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges (left). The family lived at 50 Main Street (below) only briefly before moving on to Brooklyn's Hudson Avenue. Shortly after their move, the home at 50 Main Street was raided by the U.S. Secret Service (bottom). Zarcone in-law Salvatore Bufalo was among those arrested for counterfeiting.



HAD BOGUS \$5-BILL.

Six Italians, Alleged Counterfeiters, Arrested.

Believing that they are connected with a gang of counterfeiters who have been making and circulating bogus \$5 bills of the National Iron Bank of Morristown, N. J., five Italian and one woman were arrested in Brooklyn erday by William J. Flynn, of the United es Secret Service, and his associates. The oners were taken from No. 50 Main-st., where raid was made, to the Federal Building. re they were arraigned before Commissioner edict and held for examination. Failing to in bail, they were sent to the Raymond eet jail.

The prisoners are Salo Buffalo and Frances o. his wife, of No. 50 Main-st.; Dominico Paris, of No. 30 Main-st .: Joseph Spischelo, of

COUNTERFEITERS' GANG IS CAPTURED

Five Men and One Woman, All Said to Be Members of the "Society of the Blood," Run

h was occupied by **Salvatere Bufalo** his wife as a dwelling. They were d is a room with three men, who ward gave their names as Joe La-Salvatore Speciale and Dominico

neternation prevailed the instant the neternation prevailed the instant the res made themselves known, and sight of their revolvers caused in-and Buedais to produce similar networks. Lavorie was concessed in a neroided and he was pointing it di-y at Figure, when Detective Henry verse his purpose and felled him. 114

Tried to Burn Consterfeits.

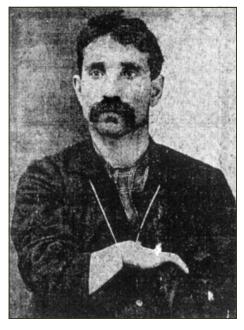
was then a case of knock down "Society of the Blood," Run Down by Secret Service Men Beoret Service Agent Flynn and four of his assistants, Henry Clinke, Ricel. Heims and Brassinski, captured a gang of Italian counterfeiters at No. 50 Main

OCTOBER, 1903.

- Reff, Mile. Case in United States district court. Alien rejected because of trachoma. Question litigated was whether the fact that her husband having declared his intention of becoming a citizen and having taken out his first papers entitled him to bring his wife into the United States. The writ dismissed and alien remanded to the custody of commissioner. Zajkowska, Catharine. Case in United States district court. Alien rejected because of trachoma. Relator's attorney consented to dismissal of writ. Bizzo, Girolamo. Case in United States circuit court. Alien excluded as likely to become a public charge. Writ dismissed and alien remanded to custody of com-missioner.

- become a puole charge. Writ dismissed and alien remanded to custody of commissioner.
 Turner, John. Case in United States circuit court. Question litigated was the constitutionality of section 2 of the act of March 3, 1903, excluding anarchists from admission into the United States. Alien expelled under warrant of Secretary as an anarchist. Writ dismissed and alien remanded to custody of commissioner. Opinion of circuit court reported in 126 Fed. Rep., 253. Subsequently affirmed by United States Supreme Court.
 Zarcone, Vincenza and Giuovanna. Case in United States circuit court. Giuovanna rejected because of trachoma and Vincenza deported as an accompanying alien whose protection was required by said Giuovanna. In May, 1903, a writ of habeas corpus in relation to these aliens was dismissed and the aliens remanded to the custody of commissioner. The aliens then appealed to the United States Supreme Court, and pending the hearing of the appeal that alien afflicted with trachoma was cured, and their father thereupon took out a second writ of habeas corpus. This second writ was sustained and the aliens discharged. Under instructions an appeal was taken by the commissioner, but for good reasons both appeals were subsequently abandoned.

Zarcone was an associate of Manhattan-based Mafia boss of bosses Giuseppe Morello (right) when immigration authorities refused admission to two of Zarcone's daughters. (above).







As Zarcone battled

immigration officials in 1903, the remains of a murdered man turned up in a barrel on a Manhattan street corner (above). Morello's Mafia was believed responsible for the "Barrel Murder." Twelve members were arrested immediately (left).

William Flynn (above), chief of the U.S. Secret Service in New York, helped police identify the Barrel Murder victim as Benedetto Madonia of Buffalo, New York. According to Flynn, Morello ordered Madonia killed because he believed Madonia's jailed brother-inlaw Joseph DePrimo (right) was aiding the government in its investigation of Morello counterfeiting operations.

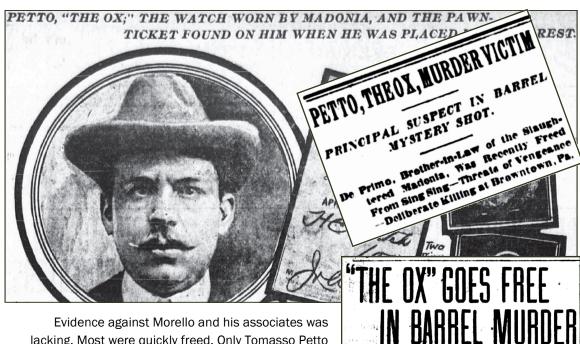
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ANOTHER ARREST IN BARREL MURDER CASE.

Prisoner Is Giovanni Zacconi — Seven Men Held by Coroner's Jury as Accessories to the Crime.

Giovanni Zacconi, owner of the Stanton Street butcher's shop, where the Secret Service agents saw Benedetto Madonia, the barrel murder victim, with some members of the gang on the last night he was alive, was arrested last night by Detectives Carey and McCafferty at his home, 145 Hudson Avenue, Brooklyn, and taken to Manhattan Follee Headquarters.

Due to the statements of Secret Service agents, Zarcone was arrested in connection with the Barrel murder. The agents said they had observed victim Madonia in the company of Morello gangsters at a Manhattan butcher shop owned in part by Zarcone. Police believed a wagon owned by Zarcone was used to cart the barrel holding Madonia's remains.



lacking. Most were quickly freed. Only Tomasso Petto was indicted for the Barrel Murder. But he too was eventually released. Petto moved out of New York to Browntown, Pennsylvania. When he was found shot to death, police wondered if Morello was covering his trail.

Justice Giegerich Releases Tomasso Petto on Recommendation of Assistant District-Attorney Ely, Who Admits Evidence Is Insufficient to Go to Trial.

MAFIA PROTECTS Men Who Cut up Body of Victim

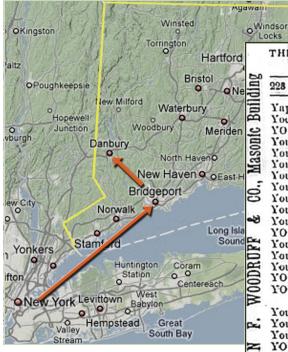
Fear of Secret Society Handicaps Police in Finding Marchinne's Slayer.

FIFTH MAN TO BE SLAIN.

Laduca, Leader of Black Hand, Killed by Members of



Additional murders supported the theory that Morello was eliminating witnesses who could tie him to Madonia's killing. Morello mobsters Vito Laduca (above) and Antonio Genova were both murdered within a short time. Laduca had fled to Baltimore and then back to Sicily, where he was killed. Genova was shot to death after relocating to Dayton, Ohio. 12



Zarcone moved his family first to Bridgeport and then on to Danbury (above). He bought a 53-acre farm and settled into a crowded farmhouse on Hospital Avenue (below). Zarcone's son Peter and

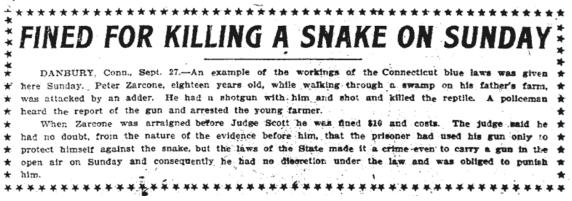
son-in-law Francesco were among those packed into the home (above right). Zarcone began converting a barn on the property into more spacious living quarters (right).

119-325 Main Struct. Farmiture, Carpets Crockery, Bloves. CO-OPERATIVE CHARTONE CO. THE 228 DANBURY CITY DIRECTORY. Yaple Miss Louise, h 39 West Yochum Oharles F. block maker, 7-9 River, h 75 Garfield av YOUNG ADELBERT M. policeman, h 41 Maple av Young Albert F. hatter, h 36 Park av Young Miss Amy, h 36 Park av Young Benjamin R. hatter, h 41 Maple av Young Mrs. Edward, h 92 Elm Young Edwin E. hatter, h 36 Park av Young Frank R. clerk, h 100 Garfield av Young George E. hatter, h 50 Division Young James F. student, h 36 Park av YOUNG JOHN E. (P. Young & Sons), h 6 Prospect Young Joseph F. hatter, h 100 Garfield av Young Miss Mary, h 36 Park av Young Nicholas, hatter, h 3 Balmforth av YOUNG PATRIOK F. (P. Young & Sons), h 36 Park av YOUNG P. & SONS, (P. F., J. E. and W. J.), furriers, Rose cor River Young Stanley M. hatter, h 10 Willie Young William H. 2d, farmer, h 26 E. Pearl Young William H. hatter, h 98 Elm YOUNG WILLIAM J. (P. Young & Sons), h 45 Park av Young William L. salesman, h 21 Centre JOHN Yula Rocco, bootblack, h 12 Patch at z BAGS

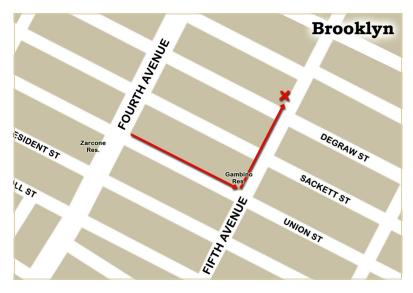
Zaborski John, h 28 Town Hill av Zang Mrs. Anna, wid Ernest, h 15 Griffing av

- Zarcone Peter, butcher, h Hospital av Zarcone Frank, butcher, h Hospital av
- and
 - Zarcone Giovanni, h Hospital av





If Zarcone hoped to keep his Danbury location a secret, that became impossible in 1906 when newspapers across the country published accounts of his son's arrest (above). Peter was arrested and fined for violating Connecticut's "blue laws."



SHOT DEAD IN STREET FIGHT.

Italian Killed in a Battle That Lasted for Fifteen Minutes

After a running fight lasting for fifteen minutes and covering three blocks, participated in by four men, Andrea Gam-bino, an Italian barber, of 2304 Fourth avenue, Brooklyn, was killed at 6 o'clock last night at Lincoln place and Fifth ave-

avenue, Brooklyn, was killed at 6 o'clock last night at Lincoln place and Fifth ave-nue in that borough. Beatro Zarconi, a butcher, and James Munzo, who gave his address as the same as that of Gam-bino, were arrested. A crowd gathered and Gambino's wife, with whom he has not been living, seeing his body on the pavement, fainted. Zar-coni said that Gambino demanded a large sum of money from him and that he (Zarconi) said he would go home and get him \$10. Gambino, it is alleged, started the shooting and ran. Two men, who Zarconi says he did not know. followed Gambino and began shooting; as did Zarconi. The fight started at Fourth avenue and Union street, and the men ran along Union street toward Fifth avenue. Stray bullets shattered windows of a bake shop at 201 Fifth ave-nue, a fruit stand at 191 and a vacant store room at 173. According to the police Gambino was arrested in Brooklyn two years ago for shooting a man, but was discharged.

A Brooklyn gunfight in spring 1909 could have been a factor in the murder of Giovanni Zarcone 15 weeks later. Giovanni's nephews Pietro and Francesco were arrested in connection with the killing of Sicilian racketeer Andrea Gambino (above right). Pietro Zarcone and several others pursued a retreating Gambino through Brooklyn streets (above). Gambino might have been a relative of Morello Mafia lieutenant Ignazio Lupo (near right).





Fairfield County Coroner **Clifford Brittin Wilson** (above) traveled from Bridgeport to Danbury to participate in the investigation. Faced with numerous government responsibilities in the City of Bridgeport (where he also served as common council president and acting mayor), Wilson quickly turned the case over to Deputy Coroner Henry Stevenson. Connecticut State Archives report that no records survive of a coroner investigation of the case. Danbury Hospital, Danbury Police and **Connecticut State Police** also have no records relating to the Zarcone murder case. There may be some information on the case within Wilson papers held by the City of Bridgeport, but Bridgeport has been slow to respond to inquiries.



NØ TRACE OF MURDERERS

There Are Many Puzzling Features About the Zarcone Case. New York Police Active.

Both in this city and in New York, and Brooklyn the search for clues to the identity of the murderers of Glovanni Zarcone, who was killed near his home on Hespital avenue on Tuesday night is being vigorously prosecuted, Police followed a number of clues in an effort to learn the identities of Zarcone's killers. One report indicated that a Danbury patrolman stopped and questioned three shotguncarrying men at the Danbury Railroad Station (above) on the morning before the killing.

These parties were a man and a woinan who were strolling along Hospital avenue, between Zarcone's house and the entrance to Broadview Farm at the The woman saw time of the shooting. and spoke to one of the murderers, but falled to recognize the man and is not even certain as to whether or not he effoctually story Her were a mask. disposes of the statement that half a down men took part in the shooting, She declares that the murbowever. derers were three in number,

On August 13, an unidentified Italian couple went to the Danbury Police to report that they had witnessed the Zarcone murder. One of the pair ran up to the Zarcone home as the final shot was fired into the Danbury farmer's head. The couple could not identify any of the three gunmen involved in the murder.



The Danbury Evening News (office shown above left) linked the Zarcone killing to the assassination of New York Police Lieutenant Joseph Petrosino four months earlier. According to the newspaper, Petrosino visited Danbury in 1906 and warned local police that Zarcone's recent arrival would bring trouble. "Sooner or later they will get him," Petrosino reportedly said. Petrosino was shot to death while on assignment in Palermo, Sicily (above right). Many believed that the killing was orchestrated by the Morello Mafia in New York.



While the Morello leadership successfully insulated itself from prosecution in the Barrel Murder case, much of the organization—including Morello (right) and Lupo (left) — was rounded up by the end of 1909 on counterfeiting charges. Morello, Lupo and others were convicted and sentenced to long terms in Atlanta Federal Prison.

Giovanni was not the only Zarcone to be linked with the underworld. Carlo Zarcone of Milwaukee (right) and relatives Stefano Zarcone and Santo Marino were accused of counterfeiting. Carlo was convicted in January 1909 and sentenced to two years at Leavenworth Prison. Stefano Zarcone jumped bail and vanished. Marino's trial ended with a hung jury.



The Milwaukee branch of the Zarcone clan was closely linked with the Guardalabene and Alioto families, rulers of the local Mafia. In Santa Flavia, Sicily, the Guardalabene and Zarcone families intermarried. Nicola Zarcone of Brooklyn was convicted of manslaughter and sent to Sing Sing Prison in January 1909. Francesco Zarcone of Adams Street in Brooklyn was arrested late in 1909 and charged with killing Brooklynite Rosario Secimo. Though acquitted, Francesco was deported to Italy. Giovanni's nephew Pietro, who killed Andrea Gambino in spring 1909, was accused of kidnapping in 1914 and of extortion in 1931. The branch of the Zarcone clan originally from Villabate, Sicily, included a Nicolo Zarcone, who was a cousin to Gaetano Profaci. The two men came to the U.S. about the same time, settled together in Brooklyn and by the early 1940s worked together at the Brooklyn Mama Mia Importing Company run by Mafia boss Joseph Profaci. A Carlo Zarcone, originally of Villabate and also an employee of Profaci's importing company, was convicted of attempted extortion in 1940 and sentenced to several months in Sing Sing.

Page 1-Zarcone portrait provided by Matt Nuccio. Page 2- Thomas Hunt map and photo. Page 3-Bailey, History of Danbury, Conn.; postcard c. 1910. Page 4 – Map from Danbury Public Library; city hall and church postcards c. 1910. Page 5— Newspaper clippings from July 28, 1909, Page 6– Hunt maps: Villa Valguarnera image from www.donnalia.it. Page 7- Family tree info provided by Marina Riggio; manifest of the S.S. Calabria arrived NY June 11, 1901. Page 8 – Brooklyn Main Street photos from New York Public Library Digital Gallery; New York Tribune, July 18, 1903; New York Evening World, July 17, 1903. Page 9 -Report of Commissioner-General of Immigration, 1903; World, April 14, 1903; World, April 16, 1903. Page 10 - Sing Sing inmate register; New York Times, May 9, 1903. Page 11 – World, April 25, 1903; New York Sun, Oct. 24, 1905; World, Jan. 29, 1904; World, Feb. 22, 1908; World, April 16, 1903. p. 10. Page 12 – Google Maps; Danbury Municipal Directory, 1906; Hunt photo; Vision Appraisal photo. Page 13 – Oakland CA Tribune, Oct. 9, 1906; Hunt map; Washington Post, Feb. 5, 1922. Page 14 – Encyclopedia of Connecticut Biography, 1917; postcard c. 1910; Danbury Evening News, July 30, 1909; News, Aug. 16, 1909. Page. 15 – Postcard c. 1906; World, March 13, 1909; Atlanta Federal Prison mugshots, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Page 16 – Leavenworth Federal Prison mugshot, NARA.

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