

Vilma Emanuela (del Mastro) Rendina
Italian Immigrant
Queen Elizabeth
December 25, 1956



Story of Vilma Emanuela (del Mastro)
Rendina

I was born in the town of San Marco in Lamis, near Foggia, in southern Italy. Before I reached my second birthday, I would live in a new land.

My mother and I left our town, for the port of Naples, to board the ship that would take us to Canada. We came across on the Queen Elizabeth. Our cabin was in the bottom of the ship, which we shared with another lady and her four children. Her children had the reddest cheeks and she said it was because they ate polenta every day. There was not a lot of space. My mother was very seasick the whole voyage so she barely left her room. I, on the other hand, was always disappearing. I threw my two best dolls overboard and it is a miracle that I did not throw myself overboard too. I had an interesting diet on board. My mother had a large suitcase filled with biscotti under the berth. I would help myself to the biscotti whenever I got hungry. There was a kindly older gentleman who was responsible for cleaning the fruit. I would often be sent to see him and he would fill my cupped dress with fruit. We arrived in Canada on Christmas Day, 1956. My mother had to be helped down the plank to disembark. She was very relieved to finally be on solid land. We then took the train from Halifax to Toronto, arriving on New Year's Eve.

This is the story as I remember it from the stories my mother told me over the years. I have no recollection of the voyage myself, as I was only a toddler.

In Memory of my Mother
Giuseppina (Ceddia) del Mastro

