

EDITORIAL

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The Lucini Women of the Old Macaroni Factory
Part II: Maria Andreallo

The Lucini Women: (Part Two) researched and written by Maria Viola

Maria Andreallo (nee Lucini) 1873-1937

Last time we caught a glimpse of the great grand-mother Rosa Lucini and I suggested that her daughter-in-law Ada would feature in Part 2, but how could I forget Rosa's daughters Annette and Maria - my grand-mother.

Maria was the youngest child of Giacomo and Rosa Lucini. Her older brother Cosmo was eleven years of age when she was born, her sister Annette seven and her brother Peter only three. Both girls were born upstairs at the "Factory" at a time when the Lucini family, specifically their uncle, Pietro, was a prominent member of the community and they were raised in a manner befitting a wealthy Italian family.

Not much is known of Annette (Annie) but apparently she was a sickly lady, never married and lived with her sister Maria for many years until her death at the age of 35. For this reason Maria is the focus of Part 2.

We can only surmise about Maria's younger days, but for the hundreds of young Italians now living in the Spring Creek (Hepburn) area, witnessing a prominent Italian family living in an Italian style house, (in a manner reminiscent of their home town who maintained their cultural traditions), would have been heart-warming, to say the least.

Maria would have been taught the art of cooking and other household duties and probably helped with making of macaroni. Even though the family was wealthy, there was no electricity, gas or running water in the house and toilet and bathing facilities were primitive. Cooking on the wood-fired stove was commonplace. Like most young children, Maria attended a local primary school.

As the years passed, money became a problem in the household. Pietro, her rich uncle had lent a lot of money to a lot of people who had failed to repay the debt. They were in financial trouble. Although the search for gold continued, especially in the tunnels, the peak had long gone and with it the miners.

With the onset of the great world wide depression, Maria went to work at the nearby Boarding House run by their friend Fabrizio Crippa. The Lucini brothers borrowed money from a rich aunt in Italy, putting their factory up as collateral. She died before the brothers had repaid the debt and left the 'Factory' to the town of Intra in Italy and

her mansion overlooking the beautiful Lake Maggiore, to the two brothers as an incentive for them to go home. They refused and Maria was put on a ship with the task of going to Italy and swapping titles with the Mayor of Intra. She left in 1892 and wrote a diary about her travels. I have that diary.

Her diary records the death of her uncle Pietro in 1893 and then her father in 1896. My belief is that because of the lack of funds, the brothers borrowed money from another aunt in Italy and Maria had to work the debt off before returning to Australia. She was not happy and says so many times in the diary.

Maria returned to Spring Creek around 1900, met a man by the name of Lazzaro Andreallo who came from Genoa, travelling via San Francisco and arriving in Melbourne in 1870. They soon married and had three wine shops in Fitzroy and South Melbourne. There were four children from the marriage, my father Joseph being the youngest.

Lazzaro suffered dreadfully from rheumatoid arthritis and died when my father was only fifteen years of age. Maria and Joseph moved to Sydney to be near the other siblings, Jerome and William, who had moved there during the great depression of the early 1930s.

During the depression, Joseph cycled to Melbourne working on farms as he went. There are a number of letters in my possession - letters she wrote to Joseph - all in Italian.

Maria died in Sydney in 1937 long before I was born, but my father remembered her as being a gentle, loving woman, very religious and yet very strong lady. Maria's life is one that comes alive with just sitting and imagining a little girl on a goldfield.

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