

Burlington and the minister George "Preacher" Swinney of Glen Hope are as fully engaging as the brilliant and not insensitive Burlington Mills entrepreneur, James Spencer Love; and all of them are here for us to listen to, to look at, to laugh with, to argue with. To learn from.

"Teach us our recollections," the poet W. H. Auden prays in "Homage to Clio." For one who spent three formative years, 1948-1951, in the cotton mill village of Lyman, South Carolina, there are many, many recollections to be taught by these scholars, each of whom here earns the honored titles poet and millhand.

Immigrants on the Hill: Italian-Americans in St. Louis, 1882-1982, by Gary Ross Mormino. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986. xi, 289 pp. Illustrations, notes, tables, bibliography, index. \$21.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY SUZANNE O'DEA SCHENKEN, WEST DES MOINES, IOWA

Among the "Little Italys" established by Italian immigrants in several American cities, one—St. Louis's Hill—has been especially vital. Based on more than one hundred interviews of the Hill's residents and research in Cuggiono, Italy, Gary Mormino describes the characteristics that have allowed the neighborhood to retain its distinctive features for a century. Mormino found that stability and continuity among the residents separate it from other ethnic neighborhoods that have lost their identities. The Italians who provided the Hill with its stability defined success in different terms than many other immigrants who sought economic prosperity. St. Louis Hill Italians sank deep and tenacious roots into the homes they owned, the church they supported, and the family and community life they sustained. Isolated by geographic barriers, but more by their wish to remain separate, Hill Italians were immune to the temptations and encroachment of urban and suburban life.

Believing that the immigrant story begins in the native country, Mormino describes the reasons for emigration from Italy. He focuses primarily on emigrants from Cuggiono in Lombard, the source of an important portion of the Hill's residents. He follows the chain of migration from Cuggiono to St. Louis and relates the continuing connections between the two communities.

Lombards and Sicilians came to America with few skills adaptable to an urban environment. The clay mines under St. Louis and the brick factories that used the clay were important sources for employment, but the jobs offered low pay and few chances for advancement.

A pay rate of \$1.50 for a ten-hour day in 1912 prompted workers to attempt to organize, but they never successfully formed an effective union. Mormino cites the employers' use of scabs and the poor health of the industry as contributing factors in the failure of unionization efforts.

Prohibition did offer economic opportunities to many Hill Italians. Local grocers supplied the ingredients for whiskey, and basements and garages housed stills. Characteristic of the stability on the Hill, the moonshine business became a family and a neighborhood endeavor. The violence that occurred in Little Italy rarely touched the Hill, because its residents chose not to surrender their family values in order to become large producers. Mormino contends that the moonshine business extended a civilizing influence on the Hill because of the prosperity that it engendered.

While bootlegging may have had a civilizing effect, St. Ambrose Catholic Church provided a social center for the neighborhood. Innovative and exciting youth programs lured the neighborhood's children to the church. After a wooden church burned in 1921, Father Giovannini of St. Ambrose challenged the congregation to build a new, bigger, brick church. The many projects he developed to construct a building worth more than a quarter of a million dollars constituted yet another type of unifying force, contributing to the neighborhood's stability.

Mormino effectively uses oral history and the story-telling tradition of the Hill Italians as part of his research. Interviews with celebrities such as Yogi Berra and Joe Garagiola as well as dozens of other residents add flavor and richness to the narrative. Neighborhood resident Sam Chinicci, for example, describes the devastating effects on women of work in the tobacco factory, offering a personal perspective on life in the neighborhood.

Mormino also takes advantage of the existence of another Italian neighborhood in St. Louis, Little Italy, to draw comparisons between it and the Hill, contrasting their relative longevity and the conditions contributing to their differences and similarities. In addition to discussing the two Italian neighborhoods, Mormino offers comparable information on several other ethnic groups, such as Germans, Irish, and Greeks. Tables included in the text provide a straightforward means for understanding the relationships among various groups.

Immigrants on the Hill examines an exceptional ethnic community, one that has survived the urban pressures that often intrude upon and destroy neighborhoods. Both urban and immigration historians will find Mormino's work interesting and informative reading.

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