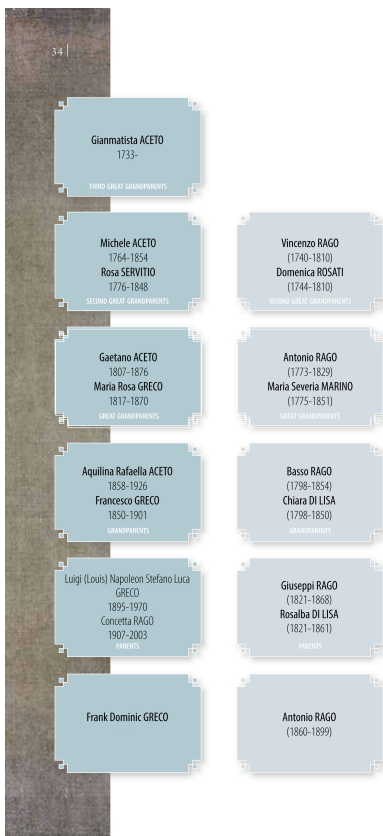
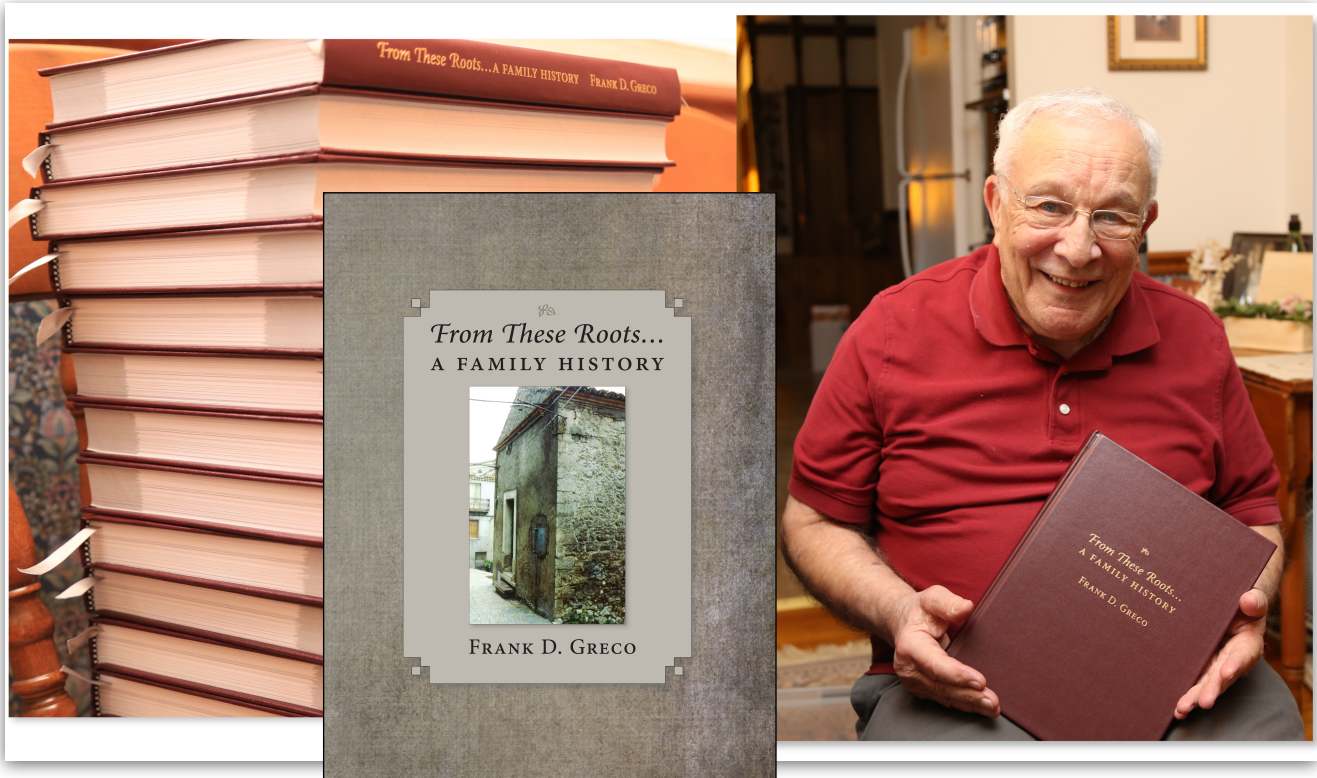


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Project Summary

From These Roots ... A Family History

(Manuscript - 112,000; 230 images; 41 genealogy charts; 2700 family records detailed)

Written and Prepared by Mary V. Daniels, Personal Historian

Documented Legacy LLC

2018 - Private Publishing

Hardcover & softcover books

Documented Legacy
 Recording memories for future generations

DOCUMENTED LEGACY LLC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For more than 20 years, Frank Greco researched his family genealogy, compiled thousands of records, and digitized old photos and negatives before they deteriorated beyond recognition. His explanation of that journey is detailed in a legacy letter to family that became the first chapter in his book, *From These Roots*. To share his research with family, Frank bought several copies of the software and backed up his files for each member. The software had a program to combine all written information about each family member and compile it into a manuscript form. The result, however, looked disjointed and didn't flow. Frank wanted a comprehensive story of his family's history that was both readable and enjoyable. He wanted a finished product that did more than share genealogical records; He wanted a well-written story.

Objectives

To organize and write up decades of family history genealogy research that connects current living family members with ancestors going back some 300 years. The client compiled more than 2,700 family names and traced his roots back to 38 sets of eighth great grandparents. The research includes dozens of family trees. His wife's family was also traced back many generations.

To give the extended family a summary of family history plus stories of yesterday.

To compile this research with old family photos and records

To include the life story of the client, the first American-born child in his family, and his wife.

To leave a lasting legacy for his family to cherish

To share values, beliefs and important family stories.

To encourage client's children, and nieces and nephews to write their own life stories.

Goals

To write a family history that is enjoyable to read and includes a memoir about the client's life.

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Project Outline

- Worked with client's Roots Magic software to organize family history storylines and develop relationship charts, similar to family tree graphics. The client had already input all known available information regarding each relative or ancestor, essentially creating some 2,700 file folders.
- Conducted three life story interviews to discuss family history genealogy research.
- Transcribed each interview for client's reflection and additional storytelling.
- Scheduled all follow-up interviews and research.
- Conducted several life story interviews discussing client's life as a child, his marriage, becoming parents, the life they lived together, and life lessons to share with the next generation.
- Fact-checking research was conducted on various communities and periods in history.
- Transcribed family letters and emails to be included in the memoir.
- Composed manuscript, starting with stories of the first immigrants to the United States and traveling back in time through each branch of the family tree - both maternal and paternal sides.
- Designed 41 different family trees, as relationship charts. (As an additional project, client had a large family tree created for each one of his children that requires a large blank wall to display.)
- Scanned and restored 230 images.
- Created an RFP for book designers, developing a scope of work.
- Managed book production process, working with a professional book designer and a publishing company to have the book professionally printed for private distribution.
- Content edited and proofread book
- Produced a 300-page 8 x 10 coffee table book with 230 images, 324 pages in length
- Professionally printed book in three forms: A superior linen-covered, hard-bound book with color interior, stitched binding, glossy paper stock, and a satin bookmark; A premium softcover version of the hardcover book with glossy cover stock that has an image of the family homestead in Italy on the cover. (A minimum 50-book order was required by the publishing company) A third version of the book, a lesser quality, was produced for print-on-demand purposes when the family needs only a few copies to share with friends.

SAMPLE CHAPTER - Introductory Legacy Letter

(Approved for release as a marketing sample by client)

Introduction A Letter to Family

This is the story of our family. Contained here is what I know from what I have experienced, from my interactions with others, both in and out of the family, and from my genealogical research. It also contains what I have learned from my wife Shirley (Wightman) Greco and her family during our 48 years - 5 dating and 43 married - with each other. For our children, this document represents most of their own histories.

I suspect that many of us ask, "How did we get here?", and would enjoy reading something of that story. The Greco Family History incorporates a wealth of genealogical information, photos and stories that illustrates the timeline of our family history. Each section is designed to answer the questions of where people lived and how they lived. I obviously know more about how my side of the family developed. Sadly, Shirley died before the idea of writing this story was conceived. As such much of the maternal side of our family's story is based on my recollection of what I learned over the years we had together. Thus, the skeletons in the Greco/Rago family line will probably have a little more meat on their bones than the Wightman/Neithammer lines.

I had long felt a curiosity about who my ancestors were, and what my family tree included, but never had an urge to do anything about it. That's where I was in 1993, three years into retirement and looking for something stimulating to do when I started researching our family tree. At first it was just a curiosity, because I knew very little about my family history. My father was an immigrant and my mother was a first generation American. Her parents had immigrated in 1902, although her father had been here earlier, around 1894. I knew bits of information about how two of my grandmother's sisters - my mother's aunts - came over. They had been living here. I was just curious about who they were, what their names were, what they did for a living and where they lived. The funny thing is we had all these cousins living around the Bristol, Pennsylvania area and Tacony, Philadelphia neighborhood and people we called aunts and uncles, but none of us really knew how we were related. In some cases they were cousins once or twice removed that we referred to as aunts and uncles. In other cases, they were more like life relatives, the people engrained in the culture of our family, who don't share a bloodline. Others were simply related through marriage and generations.

When I started I figured I would just create a nice family tree to give to the grandchildren. Proceeding slowly and sporadically, I learned the process, and that it would be slow and tedious, requiring time and patience. Everyday life gradually took precedence over all else. My wife and I enjoyed life with our ever-growing family and their activities. Grandchildren proved to be the most wonderful people.

We traveled by car extensively throughout the United States and most of Canada. After my wife's death in 1998, I gravitated back to the genealogy. It was still slow and tedious, often taking hours, or even days, to find one piece of information, driving to Washington, DC several times, flying to Salt Lake City three times, and spending hours on the internet. At some point during that period of time I realized that our children needed to know more about us, our parents and grandparents than a family tree could tell them. That was the genesis of this family history, how a family tree grew into a story. I am thankful that I have been able to bring this ambitious account, *limited as it is*, into being.

I also have tried to place each family into a brief historical context so that the reader can have a better understanding of its place in time. What is produced, on the Greco/Rago side of the family, builds on the legacy of my maternal grandfather, Dominicangelo Rago, and my father, Luigi Greco, both of whom immigrated to the United States in their early teens. Dominicangelo arrived at the age of 14 and Luigi at age 15. Their courage, determination and willingness to face an unknown world more than 3000 miles from their respective homes and families at such a young age, led us to what we are today. Each came from a different part of Italy, but they had much in common.

The Wightman/Neithammer branch has a much different story to tell. Those ancestors, John Neithammer (age 22), Helena Woll (age 17, a woman traveling alone) and David Eisenbraun (age 30), arrived in the United States in 1865, 1865, and 1872 respectively, for other reasons. Much of the information about them is based on official records, census reports, and very sketchy lore passed on by their descendants. Not knowing the cities or villages where they lived made finding German or Dutch records impossible. The Wightman branch started with Bill Wightman, my father-in-law, when he immigrated in 1923 at the age of 20. He was the lone member of his family to do so.

They all were seeking a better life. Some members of the Greco/Rago line left poverty while others in the Neithammer/Woll/Eisenbraun families sought refuge from war and oppression. Bill Wightman's reasons for coming are unknown, though unconfirmed evidence found on a ship's log suggests the reason might have been the love of a young lady, though not the lady who became my mother-in-law. All shared another trait: it seems they seldom, if ever, spoke to their children about their lives before their arrival here.

A number of people have contributed to this effort. Some related to me, some not. Some knowingly, others not so much. Other information came from census and tax records, real estate transactions, ships logs, military records, church and cemetery records and the thousands of official birth, marriage and death records collected on microfilm by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) from around the world, specifically Italy. We also included general genealogical and occupational research and local historic data.

This history will always be an unfinished product. There is a lot of information here. It is inevitable that this family history has some gaps and errors as well. It is the best I have been able to do with

the information and resources at hand. However, I do believe it is a good representation of what our family history is like. Please feel free to point out mistakes, poor logic, typographical slips, and any other inaccuracies you find. I will keep them with my research data so that whoever chooses to update and revise this document in the future can make the necessary adjustments.

The sources I have consulted have been most of the time useful, at other times tantalizing, and frustrating in some respects. Most often, the microfilm was excellent, or at least good. Sometimes the quality was such that not all entries were clearly readable, in whole or in part. Some were in Italian, and hand written, which made deciphering them and translating them difficult. Sometimes the records that do exist are contradictory or unexplainable, such as the ages shown on certain grave markers and census sheets. Wide variations in how family names were spelled produced false leads or confusion.

Even when the information is available, it can be suspect. It is based on human memory. Memory alone is not always reliable, as we have learned from personal experience. Some of the information that has been passed along to us was not first-hand knowledge, but had been passed along previously by others. It is possible the accounts of events, or the nuances related to them, were transformed in the re-telling, purposely or with no malice intended. It is easy for exact dates to slip away from memory, or for details of the various events to run together. Moreover, exact ages were not always regarded as critical to past generations, or even "officialdom." For instance, the term "about forty" was perfectly acceptable for most purposes.

As stated above, this history will always be an unfinished product. As new members are added to our family lines, I will add them to my data base. As new events occur, they, too, will be added. My work on it will continue as long as I am able to do it. Who knows what resources the growth of the internet will bring, or what mysteries will be uncovered by new and on-going research into our family's DNA? I will explore what I can as new sources are developed, unless it would require extensive or expensive travel. It is my hope that the next generations of the family embrace a shared responsibility to update and maintain our family history as new additions and information arise.

Let me say a word about how the information is presented here. Rather than simply produce a book of charts and records, I chose to tell stories about our ancestors' journeys and bring them forward through our own. That storytelling breathes life in the process. It begins with the stories of family members who immigrated to the United States. They embraced the hope for a better life for themselves and their extended family by traveling to this country to build the American dream. Like many in their generation they adopted their new home and didn't talk much about what they left behind. I begin talking about the travelers, the journeymen and women, the risk takers.

From there I researched further back in our family history, stringing together the bits of information I could find on various people. At some point, my information is based mostly on historical records.

The chapter *Growing Up First Generation* is where my story begins. It talks about what it was like for me, my siblings and cousins to grow up as first generation Americans. We had so many fond memories of growing up on Lincoln Avenue in Bristol and Philadelphia that it dictates its own special chapter. I've asked my cousins Sandy Rago (my mother's youngest brother's daughter) and Rita Cimino (My mother's sister's daughter) and my sister Rose (Greco) Donaghy to share their own memories of Lincoln Avenue. Our Rago grandparents made each of us feel like we were the favorite grandchild and those memories are a great source of joy and laughter to this day.

The chapter on Shirley introduces her family history. As I mentioned earlier there are gaps of information in her family genealogical history. I did the best I could, until new information becomes available. Still, there is much to tell. Shirley was my true love, my one and only. She was a very patient and loving wife and mother. I've turned to the memories of the life we lived together to fill the stillness of the years without her. These are some of my favorites. I talk about how we met, our courtship and our family. There are sections here dedicated to remembrances of Mom and Dad from each of the children.

Life Lessons is a fun section meant to share tidbits of advice that Shirley and I tried to live by. The Documents and Notes sections will tie these stories together with our family records.

We've been blessed with a good, solid life, filled with fantastic examples of people who came before us, worked hard, loved deeply and wanted a better life for their children and grandchildren. As much as life changes, some things stay the same. Shirley and I have always wished the same for each of you. Stay together. Be strong. Have faith. Remain a family.

All my love,
Frank Greco

Sample Chapter Opening - Chapter 8

My One and Only

Shirley Wightman Greco was my soul mate; my one and only ever and forever. All my dreams were her dreams. All of my hopes were her hopes. In our life together, there was no my, just ours. We started to date when she was nearly 16 years old and I was 19. She was the only girl I ever dated. Throughout our time together there was never any doubt that we belonged to each other. We just instantly fit comfortably together. When I think of her, a particular image always comes to mind. I see an effervescent smile. I hear a giggle that always retained its girlish joy. I also can still see her catching my glance across the yard and then happily skipping down the sidewalk on her way to meet me at the house as if she hadn't seen me for a month.