

NAME OF PROJECT: *Italian Canadians as Enemy Aliens: Memories of WWII*

TRANSCRIBED BY: Grant Karcich

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ACCESSION No.: ICEA2010.0008.0011.a-b

- **ICEA2010.0008.0011.a**

Recto [t-b, l-r]:

[typed] February 16, 1942 [triple forward slash] / Peat and McBride, / Canadian Bank of
Commerce, / King and James Strs., / Hamilton, Ont. / Refer to Mr. Peat, please. / Dear Sir: /

I am writing about Mr. Donato Olivieri, who is now interned under Canada / Defence
Regulations Act. / I have known Mr. Olivieri for a number of years and can say that he is a / very
good hearted man, lending his help to whoever asked him. I have known him through / our
relations in the Order of Sons of Italy of Ontario Mutual Benefit Society, and can / testify that
whenever an appeal to help some distressed member reached him he was always / ready to
give his contribution and do his best to help. When in the Fall of 1939 I launched / an appeal in
the name of the Order to collect Funds in favor of the Canadian Red Cross / Society Mr. Olivieri
showed great patriotic and humanitarian zeal in collecting quite a / sum of money among the
members of his Lodge and friends. / His good disposition to help , as stated above, I believe
might have led / him to sign some paper which might have caused him trouble. Before the war,
a certain / Camillo Vetere, former Director of a fascist paper "L'Italia" of Montreal, proposed to
/ print a book called "Oltremare" (Overseas), a kind of book which would correspond to / "Who
is Who". The book was to contain short sketches of lives of the Italian people in / Canada. The
people whose sketches were to appear in this book were required to sign / a prepared form,
which in most cases, I believe, was filled by Camillio Vetere himself, / and to pay a certain fee in
advance. / Camillo Vetere, immediately before the war, was an Agent of "Il Progresso / Italo
Americano", an Italian Daly [sic] of New York, and as such he had the opportunity to meet / a
large number of Italians in Canada. He apparently for some reasons [sic] seemed to be always /
in need of financial assistance. His personal disposition and attitude moved people to / a sort of
compassion for him, especially when they happened to know that he had a large / family, so
that, whether they wish to subscribe to his Newspaper or to his "Oltremare" / or not, they
would subscribe in order to help him out financially. I believe Mr. Vetere / approached Mr.

Olivieri who likely subscribed as many other [sic] did. / Camillo Vetere at that time – and he may be now for all we know – was a / Commissioner appointed from Rome to supervise and to form Fasci among the Italians in / Canada. This he admitted to me in my house in January 1941. I believe that invariably / these forms relating to the book “Oltremare” were filled in a way that the applicant / would appear to be a fascist. This is easy to understand: the book, which, by the way / was never published, would be sent to Rome and Camillo Vetere’s “Superior” would see / that he was doing a “good job” among the Italians in Canada.

- **ICEA2010.0008.0011.a-verso**

Verso [t-b, l-r]:

[printed on paper] [circular logo of Ordine Figli d’Italia in America] Ordine Figli d’Italia in America / GRANDE LOGGIA DELLA PROVINCIA DI ONTARIO / (THE ORDER SONS OF ITALY IN AMERICA, GRAND LODGE OF THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO) / HEAD OFFICE – TORONTO, ONT. / UFFICIO DEL / [dotted line] / [dotted line] / TORONTO, ONT.

[typed] Toronto, [dotted line]

- **ICEA2010.0008.0011.b**

Recto [t-b, l-r]:

[typed] Re-Donato Olivieri continued / If Mr. Olivieri finds himself in a predicament for having signed such / a paper he is, I believe, a victim of his own simplicity, and what I said should / help to explain his case. / Respectfully yours,

- **ICEA2010.0008.0011.b-verso**

Verso [page upside-down] [t-b, l-r]:



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[typed] Toronto, [dotted line]