

DOCUMENTO D'IMPEGNO FIRMATO DALL'EMIGRANTE E DAL RAPPRESENTANTE DEL GOVERNO DEL COMMONWEALTH IN CONFORMITA' DELL'ACCORDO ITALO-AUSTRALIANO SULLE MIGRAZIONI ASSISTITE

FORM OF UNDERTAKING SIGNED BY THE MIGRANT AND THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN ITALY AND AUSTRALIA FOR ASSISTED MIGRATION

Io sottoscritto
I,

MARIO

BERRA

Cognome - Surname

FRANCESCO
Patrono dell'azienda - Name of employer

dichiaro di essere pienamente consapevole delle condizioni sotto le quali sono stato scelto per un passaggio assistito per l'Australia e in considerazione di essere stato così prescelto dichiaro solennemente che rispetterò le seguenti obbligazioni dopo il mio arrivo in Australia:

(i) di rimanere negli impieghi approvati dal Governo del Commonwealth, per un periodo di due anni dal mio arrivo in Australia;

(ii) di rimborsare l'ammontare dei contributi concessi dai due Governi a me (e alla mia famiglia), qualora io (o la mia famiglia) non rimanessi in Australia per due anni dopo il mio arrivo, tale rimborso dovendo effettuarsi prima della partenza dall'Australia;

(iii) di fare tutto il possibile per imparare la lingua inglese e di frequentare regolarmente i corsi serali organizzati per tutti gli emigranti a spese del Governo del Commonwealth al fine di insegnar loro tale lingua.

Il rappresentante del Governo del Commonwealth dichiara che

hereby declare that I have made myself fully conversant with the conditions under which I have been selected for an assisted passage to Australia and in consideration of being so selected I solemnly declare that I will carry out the following obligations after my arrival in Australia:

for a period of two years after arrival in Australia I shall remain in employment approved by the Commonwealth Government;

I shall refund the cost of contributions by both Governments towards me (and my family) should I (or my family) not remain in Australia for two years after arrival, such refund to be made prior to departure from Australia;

I shall use every endeavour to learn the English language and to attend regularly the night classes which are conducted for all migrants at the Commonwealth Government's expense for the purpose of teaching them the English language.

The representative of the Commonwealth Government hereby declares that

MARIO BERRA

Nome e cognome dell'emigrante - Christian name and surname of migrant

(a) sarà collocato al lavoro in Australia con salario, alloggio e condizioni generali non meno favorevoli di quelle godute dagli australiani nello stesso tipo di impiego;

(b) riceverà comunicazione scritta, nel momento in cui verrà avviato ad un particolare impiego in Australia, del salario e delle altre condizioni che si riferiscono;

(c) avrà la facoltà di presentare domanda per restare in Australia allo scadere dei due anni per i quali è stato ammesso a risiedervi in esenzione delle norme dell' "Immigration Act (1901-1949)";

(d) riceverà prontamente l'autorizzazione per restare in Australia, purché nel periodo dei due anni si sia comportato in modo soddisfacente e subordinatamente al diritto del Governo del Commonwealth di rimpatriare in Italia quegli emigranti, o persone a loro carico, accolti in base all'accordo, che entro cinque anni dall'arrivo in Australia contravvengano alle disposizioni dell' "Immigration Act" del Governo del Commonwealth o altrimenti si dimostrino indesiderabili;

(e) sarà libero, dopo la concessione di tale autorizzazione, di scegliere l'occupazione e il luogo di residenza che preferisce.

will be placed in employment in Australia at wages with accommodation and general conditions not less favourable than those enjoyed by Australian workers in the same kind of employment;

will be informed in writing upon allocation to employment in Australia of the rate of wages and conditions applicable to that employment;

will be able to apply for permission to remain in Australia after the expiration of the two years period during which he has been admitted under exemption from the Immigration Act (1901-1949).

will readily be granted such permission provided that during the period mentioned he has behaved in a satisfactory manner and subject to the Commonwealth Government having the right to return to Italy any migrant and or his dependants selected under the scheme who, within five years of arrival in Australia, contravene the provisions of the Immigration Act (1901-1949) of the Commonwealth of Australia or who may otherwise prove undesirable;

will be free, on such permission being duly granted to engage in such occupation and to choose such place of residence in Australia as he may desire.

Luogo in cui avviene la firma - Place where signed

Data
Date

Giorno - Day

Mese - Month

Anno - Year

Mario Berra
Firma del lavoratore emigrante - Signature of migrant worker

Firma del rappresentante del Governo del Commonwealth
Signature of the representative of the Commonwealth Government



N.B. Il presente documento sarà firmato in due copie dall'emigrante e dal rappresentante del Governo del Commonwealth che tratterrà l'originale e consegnerà la copia all'emigrante.

N.B. To be signed in duplicate by the migrant and a Commonwealth Government representative who shall retain the original and hand the copy to the migrant

THE ASSISTED PASSAGE CONTRACT Described in letters written in the first months in Australia.

by Ilma Martinuzzi O'Brien

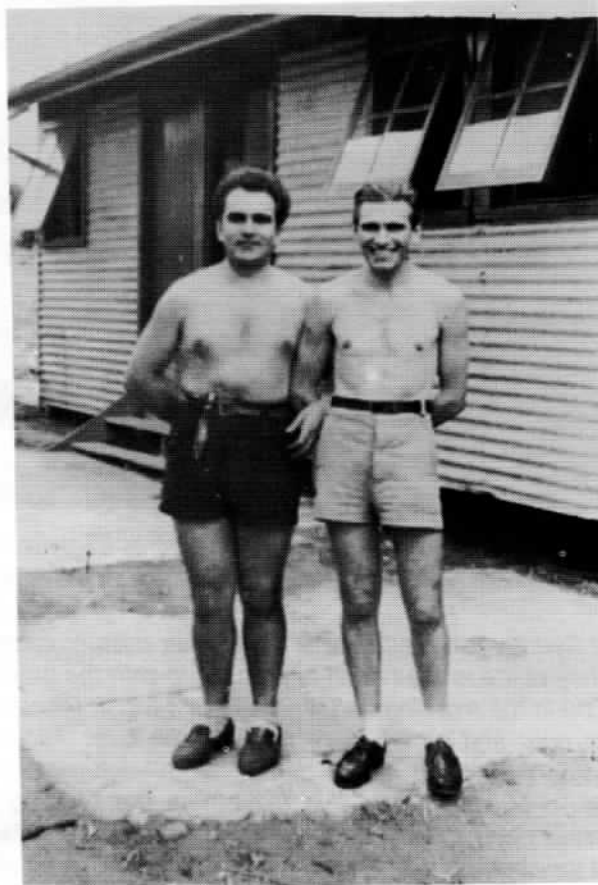
In the days following World War II, when Arthur Calwell, as Minister for Immigration, launched the post-war migration policy, he encouraged immigration from Europe as well as the British Isles. Initially only British migrants and some refugees and displaced persons received assisted passages. Then in 1951 the Australian Government extended the assisted passage scheme to Italian immigrants.

Under this scheme the Italian immigrant was financially assisted by having part of the cost of the passage paid by the Government. The immigrant undertook to repay the balance of the fare (about half), and was required to work in approved employment for a period of two years. This contract did not guarantee work, although many had believed when they accepted the offer to come to Australia that they were signing a work contract.

The Italian assisted immigrants who pioneered the scheme found many unexpected difficulties during their initial two years under contract. Australia experienced a recession in 1952, and the anticipated industrial expansion and the jobs the immigrants expected were not to be found. In addition, the immigrants were housed in rudimentary hostels and camps, often in remote parts of the country, reminiscent of the wartime arrangements many were migrating to forget. These circumstances led to riots at Bonegilla and other centres in 1952 and to demands for jobs or repatriation to Italy.

Mario Berra and his brother Pino left from Venezia on the **S. Giorgio** in October 1952. They and their fellow shipmates were taken to Rushworth, a Holding Center in northern Victoria, then to Villawood hostel in NSW where they made friends with other newcomers, especially a group who had dis-embarked from the **Castel Felice** a few weeks earlier. On their arrival they found that employment prospects were not what they had been led to believe. The contract signed by Mario (and the other assisted immigrants) had implied that work would be available: *The representative of the Commonwealth Government hereby declares that **Mario Berra** will be placed in employment in Australia at wages with accommodation and general conditions not less favourable than those enjoyed by Australian workers in the same kind of employment.* When after weeks or months there were no jobs available there was real distress, because the repayment of the debt owing for the assisted passage could not be met. This state of affairs was regarded by many of the immigrants as a breach of their contracts.

Letters were exchanged between the two brothers Mario and Pino and a third brother Franco who joined them two years later, and their friends Egidio and Ezio. In the pages which follow I have given extracts from some of the letters which record the conditions as these young men found them. About three months after his arrival Mario Berra was sent to work as a cook for the Department of the Army at Singleton, NSW. The first letter was sent to him there by his



Mario, right, and Pino Berra at Rushworth at the end of 1952.

friend Ezio Manzini, who had come on the **Castel Felice** and remained at the Hostel at Villawood in Sydney. Ezio wrote to Mario on 29 February 1953 about the situation at Villawood and the other camps:

Dear Mario,

Please excuse the delay in replying to your much appreciated letter. I hope you forgive me for replying so late. I inform you that I am in excellent health and hope that both you and your brother are also. Last week we changed jobs and have been working out



Mario Berra photographed his friends working at Singleton in 1953. Brother Pino is in the centre, Egidio Cattani is behind him, Milani is in the front row on the right and Ghiselini in the back row on the right.

of Sydney for over a week in another military camp. They come to the hostel to pick us up with the bus at 7.00 in the morning and we finish at 4.30. It takes us an hour and so we save on the train fare. In that camp everything needs doing. They've turned me into a builder, Milani and the others are building a tennis court. Toto is a carpenter. There are 20 of us at the camp and 12 are from the **S. Giorgio**, three are from the **Castel Felice** and so for the time being we really can't complain.

Fifteen days ago, all the unemployed at this hostel were sent off to pick grapes for 6 weeks. About 100 accepted the job. The others refused because they want a two year contract or to be repatriated. As you probably already know, the case against the Government has already begun and if you bought the **Fiamma** you would have seen a photograph of the Commission at Bonegilla, Cowra and Villawood. ... Based on rumours, the lawyers are quite confident that we will win the case and either obtain a two year work contract or repatriation with all expenses paid. They have assured everyone that within a month we should know the outcome of the matter. As you

know, should they decide to repatriate us I'm not leaving. Last week we had a visit from the employment office and they took down some personal data from those who wish to go cane-cutting. They said they would come back every Thursday so I'm going to stay home those days and will apply for the job...

Not long after he received this letter, Mario Berra saved his fare and travelled to Melbourne to look for work and visit his fiancée. He found accommodation in Carlton, at 113 Drummond Street, and obtained a job at a factory. He had had no experience working on heavy machinery, but was put on as a press operator in a company making Electrolux fridges. His brother Pino, who had come to Australia with him, remained at Singleton, still working for the Army. Pino wrote on 8 March 1953:

Dearest Mario,

I received your letter yesterday informing me that you have been hired on a definite basis at the factory. I'm so pleased that everything went well for you and

let's hope that in the future everything continues to get better and better. What I do want to tell you is to please be very careful and watch your hands. There's always some sort of danger lurking around when you use those machines and make sure that nothing terrible happens to you.

On my part, I'll inform them here that you won't be coming back (tomorrow is Monday) and I'll collect your little earnings for you and by next Saturday I'll send you your trunk and suitcase with everything I can possibly gather. ... Everything up here is proceeding as usual. I'm sending you herewith two letters I received from home during the week ... Would you please send last weeks' **Fiamma** to Piero because I'm sure that it's a little easier for you to do it. I've sent him all the previous issues...

When Mario settled in to his job he began preparing for his brother to join him. The two brothers kept in regular contact, and in his reply Mario described his first Easter in Australia, and mentioned that he was still awaiting payment for some of his work at Singleton. He wrote from Melbourne on 6th April 1953:

Dearest Pino,

Here we are and it's already Easter (that time of the year that brings back such fond memories of wonderful food and snacks at Chiesa Pesio) and consequently at our very first Australian Easter. I hope that you've had a nice time just like I have. I've been on holidays since Friday but tomorrow I start work again. Back to routine. Melbourne celebrated Good Friday in a grand manner. I had a wonderful day at that skinny lady's house - the one I spoke to you about in my previous letter. We made a lot of noise, had a lot to drink, a light snack at dinner time and a frenzied mad rush at midnight in order to catch the last train. On Saturday I played "housewife". I washed and ironed my clothes etc. Yesterday, I was invited to spend the day at Claudia's house and so between lunch and dinner, we ended up spending the whole time at the table until very late in the evening. Demetrio, who's a wonderful cook made me try some of his most famous dishes. The only problem was that my stomach, as you know, just couldn't cope with the mountains of food ... Today, Monday, I'm going to watch a soccer match between Juventus (Melbourne's Italian Soccer Team) and a local Czechoslovakian team and so with this I end my tales of Easter.

I haven't received mail from home either but as soon as I do I'll send them to you. I've got an enormous amount of newspapers to send you and if I manage to come home before 5.00 p.m., one night this week I'll mail them to you. (The post office was closed during the Easter break). I've already begun looking for a decent room with two beds so that when you arrive you can lay your heavy bottom on a nice soft

mattress. Last Wednesday I received a very good wage and between "super-production" 2.5 pounds, overtime 3.3 pounds and basic salary 16.3.6, clear of taxes I earned 18.12.6 but had to pay 2.9 pounds in income tax. As you can see I've really been working hard but at least I earned 4 pounds more than my normal earnings. Next Wednesday I'll only be getting the usual 11.8 because of the holidays. I spent nearly 3 pounds on buying a present for Claudia and one for Fulvia. I wanted to buy something for everyone else in the family but decided only to get one for each of the girls otherwise it would have been "goodbye to a hard week's work". I bought Claudia a jumper and Fulvia a beautiful chocolate Easter egg. The family was extremely pleased and they said that in May when it's my birthday they're going to organise a big party for the both of us because you should be here by then! As far as your job is concerned, Demetrio says that you've got

21st Instalment

Assisted Migration } N^o 10413
Credit }

To be completed and sent by the Bank who receives payment to Sydney Office of:

Australia and New Zealand Bank Ltd. } Delete names
Bank of New South Wales } not concerned
Commonwealth Bank of Australia }

Please credit the account of ICLE
Istituto Nazionale di Credito per il Lavoro
Italiano all'Estero - Rome

the sum of L/A
payment made today by
Surname (Cognome)

Christian name (Nome)

Father's name (Paternità)

For said amount of L/A
we credit your account with us.
Date, stamp and signature of bank

ICLE-ROME

We have today credited you with:
L/A covering 21st instalment

of Assisted Migration Credit N^o 10413

(Date, stamp and signature of Bank)

PARTE 3^a

Docket for the immigrants' repayment by instalments of the debt incurred as an assisted immigrant.



**BITTER MIGRANTS
LEAVE FOR HOME**



THESE ARE some of a contingent of 70 unemployed Italian and Maltese migrants who sailed for Italy in the San

**Hostel Italians
plead for work**

To The Editor
SIR, We, the undersigned, are Italian assisted migrants representing about 90 of our compatriots who all arrived in Australia during the past six months.

Our position is a difficult one and we therefore turn to you so that it may be brought to the notice of the public.

We came to your country for one reason only: to create with our work a new life and, in this way, to become an asset in the expansion of Australia. We were employed by the Federal Government for a brief period and we have all been unemployed for eight weeks.

We have not had the opportunity of planting those roots without which our initial position as immigrants will never have the possibility of changing.

In a few words, the little we earned has gone to provide for the needs of our families and for necessities. We have now made new debts and we are reduced to accepting subsidies from our Consul and offers of clothing from the Italian community. On 5/ a week we are not even able to go about seeking employment.

We know that the Government in Canberra has our problem under consideration. At all events, we wish to bring our point of view to your notice.

We were engaged, after a long procedure, to come to Australia as selected manpower, involving a debt of £90, repayable within

20 months. We feel there is a moral obligation towards us.

We did not come to deprive your people of what we believe is a special privilege which we could increase if you could increase of provide close collaboration with Australia.

- Yours, etc.,
- LUIGI NUCCI.
 - DOMENICO RESCIGNO.
 - DOMENICO CORSANO.
 - VINCENZO SCHIAZZA.
 - TOMMASO SALLORANI.
 - DINO VALLORANI.
 - PIETRO MILONI.
 - GIOVANNI DI PAOLO.
 - RENATO PIZZINATO.
- Breadmeadows, Maryborough and Williamstown hostels.

Giorgio yesterday. They spoke bitterly about Australia and her migration policy. Many told of distressed families in Italy and Malta because they could not send money home; of high rents paid here and of walking the streets for weeks without finding jobs.

PAUL VASSALO (left) said that his wife and seven children in Malta had intended to follow him to Australia. But he had lost his job as a driver and they had sent their last £50 for his passage money. He added: "The Australian Government should not bring people here unless it can offer them definite jobs while they are settling into the country."

Others in picture are: EMMANUEL ELLON, 21: "I've been here six months and out of work for three. Migrants are still coming out. I think it is a disgrace."

CHARLES BORG, 19: "I've been here 10 months, and out of work for a month. Once you lose a job it's almost impossible to get another."

N. BONNICI, 20: "I arrived seven weeks ago and haven't had a job. I'm going home before all my money is gone."

CHARLES BRINCAT, 18: "I have not had a job in five months. I'm convinced there is no chance for a migrant at present; that's why I'm going."

nothing to worry about, because even if the job isn't available by the time you get here (as I sincerely hope), it will be available a short time afterwards. The most important thing is that you can manage to make yourself understood a little in English. In the meantime, try to speak as much as you can with the soldiers and naturally study a little! - get my message?

...
I still haven't received any cheque from Singleton, so could you please try to find out what is happening about payment for my week's work in Villawood and the other one in Singleton.

...
Please give my regards to the officers and the Captain (that way you'll remind them about my cheque). Please do not send my regards to the little one in the kitchen.

A week later on 13 April, 1953 Mario wrote again with more information about the work situation in Melbourne:

Dear Pino,

Only today am I replying to your letter of last week because I wanted to wait until I received mail from Italy: in fact tonight, on my way back from work (at 8.20 p.m.), I found only one letter from Cuneo but everyone wrote something in it. I also received a letter from Pino and one from Auntie. I've already replied to Pino's letter (last week) and will write back to Auntie during the week.

No news on my part. My work continues and tonight I worked until 7.30 so that in just one night I already

have 3 hours overtime owing me in order to compensate for last week when I had none. Today is the last day of the week and so I should receive this evening's overtime the day after tomorrow. I think that for 3 continuous hours of overtime I should earn about 30 shillings. I'm also going to work until 7.30 tomorrow night and so on for the entire week so that by the end of next week I should have about 13 pounds. Just to change the subject, I still haven't heard anything about the weeks salary owing to me from Singleton together with liquidation, interest and so on.

I've sent you some newspapers and if you've already read them all, it's just your bad luck because you won't be getting any more for another week. As for the letter received from Gardinenghi please tell him that as far as I can see and as far as those I've spoken to that have been here longer than me, the general opinion is that things seem to be getting better and better all the time. In fact now, even in Melbourne it's a little easier to find work compared to five or six months ago. The only difficulty is the language barrier but if one can manage to make himself understood a job can be found within one day. This is also why I'm surprised that so many people are applying to be repatriated. They're just nostalgics and have no backbones. Pino also told me that M... M... has gone back. He was a real no-hoper who didn't want to do anything. He considered himself too clever and now he goes around telling everyone that he didn't make any money in Australia because he didn't want to. I'll end this letter here wishing you all the best. I embrace you and send you kisses. Love, Mario.

ho intravisto un'altra volta Franco ma questa volta lui era sul tram ed io ero a piedi: l'altro giorno domenica loro vennero due a cercarmi: io ero da Claudio, e fatto Melbourne 13 Aprile 1953. che uno di questi sig lui (da come me). Salut. da parte di Claudio, e Fulvia e tutta la sacra famiglia.
Carissimo Pino.

Rispondo solo oggi alla tua della settimana scorsa, perché ho voluto aspettare per ricevere posta dall'Italia: infatti stasera, al ritorno dal lavoro (alle 8.30 p.m.), ho trovato, in una sola lettera proveniente da Cuneo, gli scritti di tutti quanti; ho pure ricevuto una lettera da Pino ed una dalla Liza: a Pino ho già risposto, (la settimana scorsa), ed alla Liza scriverò in settimana.

Notizi da parte mia nessuna: il mio lavoro continua sempre diserbamente: stasera

A number of other friends and companions returned to Italy, while yet others went to north Queensland for work. Most of them, including Egidio Cattani, decided to try cane-cutting at Ingham. He wrote on 29.5.1953 to tell the two Berra brothers, who were now together in Melbourne, about conditions and prospects in the sugar areas, as he and his companions found them:

Dearest friends,

On the 10th at 12.30 we arrived in Ingham where I thought I had found a piece of our Italy. Wherever I would stop I could hear our language being spoken. I had already heard a little about Queensland but I never imagined it to be like this. Here in Ingham they say that about 80% of the population is Italian. Many of them have been here for a number of decades and have obtained important social and economic positions. The majority of shops are owned by them. Moreover in every shop there is someone who speaks Italian, perhaps sons of Italian migrants etc. We spent five days in Ingham and were staying in a hotel that is owned by Veneti, then with the Consul's assistance we arrived here - about 12 miles from Ingham (Lannercost).

*I didn't write sooner because I had hoped to be able to give you some details about the cutting. With a sad heart I'm still not able to do so. It seemed that we could begin from one day to the next. Today after having signed on at the Mill we were informed that until the beginning of July, there won't be any possibility of commencing. From what's being said around this is due to strikes on the part of the employees of the Mill. At the other Mill, they've already started working. We're very happy about the farm. The cane is beautiful and they say that the contract is good. The boss seems to be a very nice person. I think he's English. We live in a new house built by us and it has every comfort. The bus that goes to town comes by and is about 60 metres away from the house. In the past few days I've had the possibility of meeting up with Celestino and the others from Parma that were staying in Villawood and nearly all those from **S. Giorgio** and more or less half of those from **C. Felice**. Many of them still haven't found work and some have gone back home...*

I nearly forgot to tell you. Saputo is the luckiest to have found work in town in a hotel as a Chef. He has a contract for a year and his salary is also very high...

Cane cutting was seasonal work, with the season lasting about six or seven months. As well, living and working conditions were tough. Egidio again wrote to the brothers, who were now living at 179 Drummond Street, Carlton, on 16th August 1953. This time he reported his experiences cutting the cane, and his thoughts about whether he felt it was worth the hardship.

My dearest friends,

I hope again that you'll forgive me for my silence and I reply to your much appreciated letter. My long delay in replying to you doesn't mean that I'm forgetting our treasured friendship but for a series of factors and things that only by speaking to you both could I possibly explain. I also wanted to wait a while so that I could give you some details on the cane-cutting and those famous pounds that you Pino desired so desperately. Cane cutting is an extremely hard job not just for the first few days but continuously. It's dirtier than shovelling coal and murderous and bear in mind that it's not that hot yet. They say that it becomes unbearable as the weather gets hotter and that many people resist the heat and fatigue. You also know what it's like when you finally manage to get a contract. It's not hard to imagine. We work from dawn to dusk and every night before dinner we all have a bath (and what a bath it is) helping one another like brothers so that we can all begin to look decent again. However, the first month we all earned 57 pounds each and I can tell you that it's just not enough. If we weren't so desperate nobody would cut cane for that amount of money. The older people say that you shouldn't think about the first month too much. In fact next month we'll be earning more. I don't know how much more. I'm telling you that it's not enough money because there are more expenses to be paid such as rent and clothing. The older ones tell us that our clothes will tatter and tear in no time.

I think that if we ever had a choice to come here or not, I would really reconsider my decision. I can't begin to tell you how many of the newly arrived all returned home after the first week. Those of us still here are going to try to make the best of this situation and work right up to the end, unless we encounter health problems. We all get along very well and this is quite difficult among gangs. We have a very nice boss and he's very pleased with us all. He tries to help us as much as possible. Just to give you an example, he never goes to Ingham by car or truck without coming by and asking if any of us would like to go with him (so that we can save the bus fare). He's been to see the Consul, Count Lalli on several occasions telling him that he's very pleased with us and is forever thanking him. The others say that our gang is full of stupid people for putting up with all the hard work. I must tell you softly in one ear however that we had considered abandoning this job at the very beginning.

What are you both doing? I hope you're all well. I was so pleased to hear that you Pino have found a secure position just like Mario who was able to find a job in Melbourne. Are there still many unemployed? ...I'll sign off now and together with all my colleagues wishing you all the very best. Your very dear friend. Egidio Cattani.



With friends in Melbourne at a ball at the Exhibition Building in 1953 are Mario Berra, front left, behind him his fiancée Claudia, and behind Claudia is Pino Berra.

Grape picking was another seasonal occupation which, for want of more permanent employment, was taken up by many of the immigrants. Mario's brothers tried their hand at this in 1954 and described their experiences in the final letter reproduced here, dated 27 February 1954, to Mario and his bride, Claudia. It was written by his brother Franco from Red Cliffs near Mildura:

Dear Mario and Claudia,

...The first week of grape picking went by in a flash and both Pino and myself have more or less accustomed ourselves to this country lifestyle (healthy but uncomfortable) and we no longer have problems with aches and pains and fatigue due to hard work. Should we have listened to our hearts though, we would have gone back the Monday evening after our first days' work. In fact, that first day we cursed the grapes, the vineyards and the sun and whoever had told us that you could fill 100 boxes in no time. By Tuesday things were looking a little better and now after a week it's as though we've done nothing else all our lives. As far as earnings are concerned, the first week, we earned about 22.10 pounds gross each. But now, after a little practice we should be averaging about 25 and perhaps (with some difficulty) even more. To be able to earn that much we should be filling about 600 boxes per day (between the two of us), working six days a week. (Saturdays and Sundays, on the contrary to what we had hoped, we only work mornings. So far, we haven't worked on weekends for various reasons, but mainly because 1) we weren't skilled enough, 2) there were four of us

working and often there were only 20 odd boxes left to fill. The second explanation from now on should no longer exist because the other two left yesterday and only Pino and I are left. After the other two men left yesterday, we've rearranged our barracks. As far as our board is concerned, we can't really complain. When we get up from the table our stomachs are full even if we've only eaten goat....

By the end of his two year contract, Mario was established in a steady job in Melbourne, he had married his fiancée Claudia with a son, and the young family had made their home at 811 Drummond Street North Carlton. Mario remained with the factory for three years, and then worked as a fur cutter for a furrier in the city before becoming a delivery man and then a merchandising representative. He and the other young men who remained in Australia established their new lives as best they could, showing considerable versatility in the wide range of occupations they undertook.

As a postscript, in 1967 Mr. Mario Berra in partnership with his brother Franco established a coffee manufacturing and distribution business. Since 1973 **Coffee Mio Pty Ltd** has been located at 811 High Street Thornbury.

Mr Mario Berra has treasured the letters all these years and has made them available to the Society, where they are a valuable addition to our collection.

Editor's Note: These letters were translated by Gabriella Belgiovane.