

# Ellis Island Oral Interview

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Education Department  
Ellis Island Immigration Museum  
Statue of Liberty National Monument



## Interviewee: Emma and William Greiner

Date of Birth: December 30, 1913 and July 18, 1912

Date of Interview: March 3, 1991

Interviewer: Paul E. Sigrist, Jr.

Immigrated from Italy (on German and French Quotas) at Age 11 and 12 in 1925

Ellis Island Collection: EI-28

### Greiner (What He Packed):

**EMMA:** Yes, yes. It was very disrupting, you know, to pack and break up your home.

Oh, we took, of course, our clothing and some pieces of like china that were very, very special. And maybe a blanket or two also that were real good wool, that we felt maybe we may not be able to get here in the United States.

**WILLIAM:** Of course, there was pressure to leave things there but they accommodated us kids. And I brought a lot of things that (he laughs) I now wonder why I was so attached, for instance, to greeting cards. They were very, very romantic in those days and they were through the years birthdays and so on. And a few toys. My tin soldiers. I don't remember whether I brought anything about my small railroad, um.

**WILLIAM:** Oh, yes, yes. And then I had, uh, what we called a "Magic Lantern." It was a... Projector.

Very, very primitive, (he laughs) compared to today's.

**EMMA:** And I was hoping he wouldn't bring those soldiers because when we played together at home, you see I was German and he was French, you know, and he would always decimate all my soldiers, kill them all off, so we had quite a different set in our lives...(she laughs)