

July 2, 1972

Dear Mrs. Rose Rodia:

The builder of the Simon Rodia Towers in Watts lived the last years of his life in California and we have been able to collect a good bit of information about his life from 1921 until he died in 1965 in Martinez, California. However, we know very little of his early life except that he was born around 1879 in Serino, Italy, prov. of Avellino. His name in Italy was Sabato (Sabatino) Rodia. We believe he came to America in 1890 where he had a brother in Philadelphia. But we know nothing of his life prior to his coming to California. It would be of great service to us if you would help us answer the following questions:

1. Was he the child of Sabatino Rodia and Nicolëtta Cirino or were his parents called Frank (Francesco) and Angelina Rodia? in 1886, on April 15.?
2. Was he born in Serino, (Rivottoli), prov. Avellino, Italy? Or Rome? or Naples? or where?
3. What kind of work did his family do? Did he go to school in Italy. Could he read Italian? Did he receive training for a trade in Italy? What were the interests of his family in Italy? What year did his brother (Dick) come to America? When, and how old was Sabatino Rodia (Sam Rodia-Simon Rodia) and with whom did he travel to America? Did he travel alone? Who met him in New York? Where did he enter the country?
4. What kind of work did Sabatino Rodia (when did he change his name to Simon Rodia?) do in those early years 1890-1913-14-15 etc.
5. When was his brother killed? How? While working in a mine?
6. Where did Sam go after his brother's death. What kind of work did he do. Was Sam in any Army? or
7. Did Sam Rodia have a sister in Philadelphia, ^{or} New York? When did she come to America. Whom did she marry? Where did they eventually settle? What was her name? When did she die?
8. Did Sabatino Rodia (Simon-Sam Rodia) become a naturalized citizen of the U.S.? Where, what year?
9. What relation are you to him?

If you can help us answer any of these questions we will be very grateful.

Sincerely,

Mae Babitz
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