

# ONE MAN, TWO IDENTITIES

*How Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano lived his life as John R. Prevost*

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### Executive Summary

This report demonstrates that John R. Prevost, the paternal grandfather of Pope Leo XIV, was born Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano in Milazzo, Sicily, on 24 June 1876. Extensive evidence supports this conclusion, including their identical birth dates, parallel careers as language instructors, and the direct lineage between the Riggitano School and the later Riggitano-Prevost School. Further confirmation comes from a 1917 scandal involving a French woman, Suzanne Fontaine, who later appears as John Prevost’s wife. Their son, John (Jean) Prevost, was born shortly after and appears with the family in U.S. records under the Prevost name. The disappearance of Salvatore from U.S. records aligns precisely with the emergence of John Prevost in the United States.

In addition to resolving this identity, the report documents three generations of extended ancestry from Milazzo, tracing the Riggitano family back to Santo Riggitano (b. 1824) and Maria Alioto. Using civil records from Portale Antenati, FamilySearch, and U.S. vital records, the report details the births, marriages, and deaths of Santo’s descendants. These records provide a comprehensive view of the Pope’s paternal lineage, situating his family within broader historical and migratory contexts.

## BACKGROUND

Pope Leo XIV was born Robert Francis Prevost on 14 September 1955 to Louis Prevost and Mildred (Martinez) Prevost.<sup>1</sup> His father, Louis, was born on 28 July 1920 in Chicago, Illinois to John R. Prevost and Suzanne (Fontaine or Fabre) Prevost.<sup>2</sup> Excluding his birth certificate, the earliest known record for Louis Prevost appears in 1942, when he registered for the World War II draft. His draft card listed his father, John Prevost Sr., as his emergency contact. At the time, Louis lived at 5465 Ellis Avenue in Chicago, Illinois, and worked at the Central YMCA.<sup>3</sup> This draft card is one of the few records that shed light on Louis's early life.

We can trace the family in the 1950 U.S. Census by searching for John Prevost Sr. at this Ellis Avenue address. He is found living on Ellis Avenue, aged 73, living with his wife Suzanne L. (a native of France), and their son John C. Prevost, born in 1917 in New York. The census lists John R. Prevost as a teacher of romance languages at a private language school, while his son John C. is recorded as a French teacher at the University of Chicago.<sup>4</sup>

Further details about John R. Prevost appear in the Social Security NUMIDENT files, which list his birth date as 24 June 1876 and his death as 22 May 1960 in Cook County, Illinois. His wife, Suzanne Prevost, was listed as the informant on the death certificate, which records the same birth date. He was buried at Evergreen Park Cemetery. His father was recorded as John Prevost; his mother was recorded as unknown.<sup>5</sup>

### Prevost Family History

The first mention of the Prevost name is on the birth certificates for Louis Prevost (1920) and Louis' brother, John C. Prevost (1917). Their parents are listed as John R. Prevost and Suzanne Fabre. However, other records report her last name as Fontaine.<sup>6</sup> Attempts to locate a marriage record for John Prevost and Suzanne Fabre were unsuccessful. No such record appears in major genealogical databases such as Ancestry, FindMyPast, FamilySearch, or in available newspaper archives and local records.

The Prevost family proves difficult to trace in U.S. census records prior to 1950. Given that John C. Prevost was born around 1917, we would expect to find the family listed in the 1920, 1930, and 1940 U.S. Census. However, searches for the Prevost family yield no relevant results, nor do searches for individuals with similar names, birth years, or birthplaces. As a result, there is no clear documentation of the Prevost family living together prior to 1950. The first undisputed record of the Prevost family is John C. Prevost's 1940 WWII draft registration card.<sup>7</sup>

## THE RIGGITANO CONNECTION

Searching Chicago newspapers for "Prevost" returns many results for the Riggitano-Prevost School, which specializes in the arts and languages.<sup>8</sup> Notably, John R. Prevost was a romance language teacher, as shown

<sup>1</sup>Ward, Joe, Melody Mercado, Alex V. Hernandez, and Patrick Filbin. 2025. "Pope Leo XIV Named First American Pope — and He's From Chicago." Block Club Chicago, May 12, 2025. <https://blockclubchicago.org/2025/05/08/pope-leo-xiv-named-first-american-pope-and-hes-from-chicago>

<sup>2</sup>"Illinois, Cook County, Birth Certificates, 1871-1953", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N736-NH3> : Wed Jan 15 12:23:53 UTC 2025), Entry for Louis Lanti Omarius Prevost and Jean Lanti Prevost.

<sup>3</sup>"Illinois, World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1940-1945", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QP4Y-1X7C> : Tue Apr 08 03:30:18 UTC 2025), Entry for Louis Marius Prevost and Student, 16 Feb 1942.

<sup>4</sup>"United States, Census, 1950", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6X1V-92WR> : Fri May 09 07:33:33 UTC 2025), Entry for John R Prevost and Suzanne L Prevost, 10 April 1950.

<sup>5</sup>"United States, Social Security Numerical Identification Files (NUMIDENT), 1936-2007", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6K3T-NXRT> : Sat Apr 26 03:43:54 UTC 2025), Entry for John R Prevost.

<sup>6</sup>"U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007," database, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 14 May 2025) database entry for John Centi Prevost, born 23 July 1917, SSN 329246987; citing "Social Security Administration."

<sup>7</sup>"Illinois, World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1940-1945", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QPJP-T489> : Tue Apr 08 02:26:14 UTC 2025), Entry for John C Prevost and University Of Chicago Library, 16 Oct 1940.

<sup>8</sup>*Newspapers.com* (<https://www.newspapers.com> : 14 May 2025), 124 results, search terms, keyword > "Riggitano-Prevost", location > Illinois

in the 1950 census.<sup>9</sup> Investigating the Riggitano-Prevost School yielded an earlier Riggitano School, named after Salvatore Riggitano, also a romance language teacher.<sup>10</sup> Further investigation into Salvatore Riggitano led to the discovery of a World War I draft registration for a “Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano”, which reported a birth date of 24 June 1876.<sup>11</sup> This is identical to the date of birth given by John Prevost’s death certificate and social security application.<sup>12</sup> Given the strong similarities between key details in the lives of both men and scarcity of early-life records for John Prevost, we decided to investigate whether John R. Prevost and Salvatore Riggitano were the same person.

## Riggitano-Prevost School

Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano, founder of the Riggitano-Prevost School of Languages, was widely known through newspaper advertisements as “Signor Riggitano” or “Professor Riggitano.” A native of Italy, he was fluent in French, Italian, and Spanish, and became a prominent figure in language instruction in the Midwest.<sup>13</sup>

His teaching career in the United States began in 1906 at the Felt School of Music, where he offered courses in French and Italian.<sup>14</sup> By 1907, he had been appointed Spanish professor at Quincy High School, praised for using the “Scuola di Firenze” method developed in Florence.<sup>15</sup> He expanded his work to conservatories, including the Quincy Conservatory of Music, and soon began offering lessons in multiple cities including Keokuk, Burlington, and Galesburg.<sup>16</sup>

By 1910, he brought his method to Chicago, where the Chicago Tribune ran advertisements for “The Riggitano Method,” taught personally by Professor Riggitano.<sup>17</sup> His innovative approach gained attention, and by 1922 he officially established the Riggitano School of Languages at 306 S. Wabash Ave and 75 E. Jackson Blvd., now part of DePaul University.<sup>18</sup> The school was featured again in the 1923 Chicago City Directory.<sup>19</sup>

As the success of his method grew, Riggitano expanded his teaching to other locations, including Hammond, Indiana, where he taught Parisian French and was affiliated with the Chicago Piano College.<sup>20</sup> His reputation led to testimonials from former students and mentions in publications such as *The Italians in Chicago: A Study in Americanization*, where he was noted as a well-known educator in the Kimball Building.<sup>21</sup>

In 1934, the school was rebranded as the “Riggitano-Prevost School,” still operating out of Kimball Hall.<sup>22</sup> Based on his active presence in Chicago and the surrounding states, it is likely that his unique teaching method left a lasting impact on students in the region.

## Salvatore Riggitano Marriage and Affair

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<sup>9</sup>“United States, Census, 1950”, Entry for John R Prevost and Suzanne L Prevost

<sup>10</sup>*Newspapers.com* (<https://www.newspapers.com> : 14 May 2025), 94 results, search terms, keyword > "Riggitano School", location > Illinois

<sup>11</sup>“United States, World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918”, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K6DF-J2D> : Mon Apr 28 23:07:59 UTC 2025), Entry for Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano, from 1917 to 1918.

<sup>12</sup>Social Security Numerical Identification Files, entry for John R. Prevost.

<sup>13</sup>“Teaching in Chicago”, *The Quincy Daily Herald* (Quincy, Illinois), 12 September 1914, page 12, col. 5.

<sup>14</sup>“Local News Stories Told in Sentences”, *The Quincy Daily Herald* (Quincy, Illinois), 17 Oct 1906, page 6, col. 7.

<sup>15</sup>“Spanish in Schools”, *The Quincy Daily Herald* (Quincy, Illinois), 5 September 1907, page 3, col. 1.

<sup>16</sup>For his lessons in Keokuk, see: “Keokuk’s Opportunity”, *The Daily Gate City* (Keokuk, Iowa), 24 November 1908, page 3, col. 5.

<sup>17</sup>“Instruction. ”, *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), 8 October 1910, page 19, col. 4.

<sup>18</sup>“U.S., City Directories, 1822-1995,” *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 14 May 2025) > Illinois > Chicago > 1922 > Chicago, Illinois, City Directory, 1922 > image 384, page 738, column 2, Giovanni Riggitano, 1534 306 S Wabash av Wab 5388.

<sup>19</sup>“U.S., City Directories, 1822-1995,” *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 14 May 2025) > Illinois > Chicago > 1923 > Chicago, Illinois, City Directory, 1923 > image 368, page 707, column 4, Giovanni Riggitano, 1530 306 S Wabash av Har 9277.

<sup>20</sup>“Interesting Teacher Comes to Hammond”, *The Times* (Hammond, Indiana), 5 March 1927, page 7, col. 1.

<sup>21</sup>Giovanni E. Schiavo, *The Italians in Chicago : A study in Americanization* (Chicago: Italian American Publishing Company, 1928), Page 69.

<sup>22</sup>“Neglected Education”, *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), 6 May 1934, page 50, col. 1.

On 14 April 1914, Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano married Daisy Hughes at the Immanuel Baptist Church in Chicago.<sup>23</sup> Salvatore Riggitano and Daisy Hughes are seen living together in the 1920 census, but no children are present.<sup>24</sup>

However, in 1917, scandal erupted in Quincy, Illinois when Daisy Riggitano sought the arrest of her husband, Giovanni Riggitano, along with a young woman named "Suzana Fountan," accusing them of being "improperly mixed up." The two were arrested at the home of Vincent Cento, Giovanni's brother-in-law. Although Suzana was described as well-educated in both Italian and English, she allegedly pretended to have limited understanding of English when officers ordered her to return to Chicago.<sup>25</sup> Further investigation revealed Suzana's true identity as Suzanne Louise Marie Fontaine, a French immigrant who departed from Le Havre, France, on 22 March 1915 and settled in New York City.<sup>26</sup> According to the 1915 New York State Census, she had been living at the Jeanne D'Arc Home for Friendless French Girls.<sup>27</sup> The article detailing the scandal also provides more context for Suzanne's presence in Illinois.

*[Vincent Cento] says. . . Suzana Fountan is an educated woman, a linguist, a teacher of languages, a member of a splendid family in her native land. . . she came to Chicago and met [Giovanni Riggitano], whom she knew. . . and the name of Vincenzo Cento was mentioned. . . Suzana decided to visit Cento. . .*

Cento denied Daisy's accusations, claiming there had been a misunderstanding, and said Suzanne was "shocked" by the charges. He expressed confidence that both Suzanne and Giovanni would be acquitted. The two were released on bail and returned to Chicago to defend themselves.<sup>28</sup>

Just two months later, in May 1917, a woman named Suzanne Fontaine—now listed as a governess—left Toronto, Canada, for Detroit, Michigan. Her only listed contact was Eugenie Schindeler, a nurse living at 1223 Fifth Street in Detroit.<sup>29</sup> Then, on 22 July 1917, a child named Jean Centi Prevost was born to Suzanne Fontaine and a man identified as "Jean Prevost" in Lackawanna, New York. The record, indexed on Archive.org and posted by researchers on Geneanet, notes that the birth took place at an infant home for unwed mothers. The father's occupation was listed as "Instructor."<sup>30</sup>

## Disappearance and Prevost Timeline

In her 1927 naturalization application, Daisy stated that she did not know where Salvatore was residing.<sup>31</sup> The last direct newspaper mention of Salvatore Riggitano is in February 1930.<sup>32</sup> He is also mentioned in a book in 1935.<sup>33</sup> Notably, the first transition of the Riggitano school to the Riggitano-Prevost school is in 1934.<sup>34</sup> After 1935, no mention of Salvatore Riggitano can be found.

## Alien Registration Form

<sup>23</sup> Illinois, Cook County Marriages, 1871-1969", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N7ZS-X4S> : Sun Jan 19 22:13:17 UTC 2025), Entry for Salvatore Riggitano and Daisy Hughes, 14 Apr 1914.

<sup>24</sup> "United States, Census, 1920", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MJQB-LGY> : Thu Jan 16 07:15:55 UTC 2025), Entry for Salvatore Riggitano and Daisy Riggitano, 1920.

<sup>25</sup> "Riggitano in Triangle", *The Quincy Daily Herald* (Quincy, Illinois), 19 March 1917, page 3, col. 3-6.

<sup>26</sup> "New York, Passenger Arrival Lists (Ellis Island), 1892-1925", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JJWH-2QM> : Fri May 09 18:28:49 UTC 2025), Entry for Suzanne Fontaine and Mrs Fontaine, 22 March 1915.

<sup>27</sup> "New York, State Census, 1915", , FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K92P-CMT> : 2 June 2022), Susana Fontaine in entry for Mary E Cosgrave, 1915.

<sup>28</sup> "Riggitano in Triangle", 19 March 1917.

<sup>29</sup> Vermont, Franklin, St. Albans, Canadian Border Crossings, 1895-1954", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QKQS-CQDB> : Mon Apr 28 23:55:25 UTC 2025), Entry for Suzaine Fontaine, 1917.

<sup>30</sup> Birth certificate for Jean Centi Prevost; Registration of Births, Lackawanna County, New York, 1917, Registered No. B-516; Received from Geneanet user gntstarxivleon; Obtained from NARA.

<sup>31</sup> Illinois, District and Circuit Court Naturalization Records, 1856-1991", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6BKG-19R5> : Mon Apr 07 20:53:07 UTC 2025), Entry for Mrs. Daisy Riggitano Formerly Daisy Hughes and Salvatore Riggitano, 23 Jun 1927.

<sup>32</sup> "Radio Programs", *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* (St. Louis, Missouri), 18 February 1930, page 24, col. 8.

<sup>33</sup> *Annual Summer Master School* (Chicago: American Conservatory of Music, 1935), Page 11.

<sup>34</sup> "Neglected Education", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), 6 May 1934, page 50, col. 1.

After establishing sufficient circumstantial evidence in the Prevost and Riggitano saga, researchers from Geneanet obtained Suzanne Fontaine and John Riggitano Prevost’s alien files. Alien files are official records of non-citizens in the United States documenting their communication with immigration and official government departments, such as Customs and Border Protection. Giovanni Riggitano’s file was listed under his alias, John Prevost, stating that his name upon immigration was “Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano Alioto,” and that he was self-employed at Riggitano Prevost School of Languages. This information, provided by Prevost himself, further confirms that Riggitano and Prevost are the same man.

## Riggitano Conclusion

The available evidence strongly supports the conclusion that John R. Prevost and Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano were the same person. Both men share the exact same birth date—24 June 1876—and were teachers of romance languages in Chicago with careers centered around private language instruction. The Riggitano School, founded by Salvatore, later became known as the Riggitano-Prevost School, directly linking both surnames to the same educational institution. This change occurred shortly after Salvatore’s disappearance from the public record and coincides with the emergence of John Prevost in official documents.

Further supporting this identification, Salvatore Riggitano was involved in a 1917 scandal with a French woman named Suzanne Foutan—later revealed to be Suzanne Fontaine—who subsequently appears as the wife of John Prevost. Their child, Jean (John) Prevost, was born just months after the scandal, and the family reemerges decades later as the Prevost family of Chicago.

In addition, the Alien Registration Form explicitly lists him as “John Riggitano Prevost,” directly linking both surnames to one individual. The absence of any death record, emigration, or continued presence for Salvatore Riggitano after the 1930s, combined with the emergence of John Prevost—bearing identical traits, timeline, and associations—makes it clear that John R. Prevost was, in fact, born Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano.

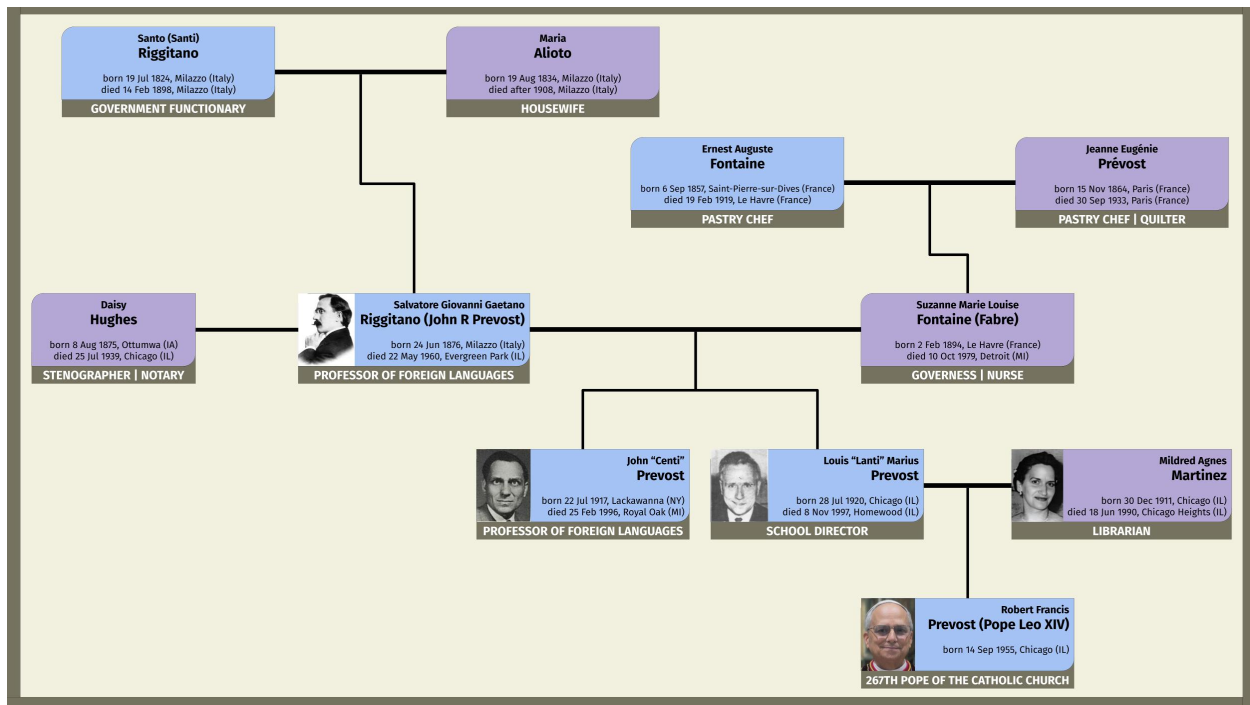


Figure 1: Pope Leo XIV - Family Tree

## SALVATORE RIGGITANO - EARLY LIFE



Figure 2:

Salvatore Riggitano - Clipped from an advertisement published in the Chicago Tribune, 8 October 1910.

Salvatore Giovanni Gaetano Riggitano was born on 24 June 1876 on Via Ottaviano in Milazzo, a large town in Messina province on the northern coast of Sicily, in what was then the Kingdom of Italy. He was the youngest child of Santi Riggitano (1824-1898), a judicial officer or government functionary (*usciere*) and Maria Alioto (1834-after 1908).<sup>35</sup> His parents married in 1853 and were both children of middle/upper-class families: Santi's father was a clerk in a government office and Maria's father was a merchant.<sup>36</sup> Salvatore received his diploma in languages, history, and mathematics on 22 February 1895. After graduation, he entered the service of the Italian government in connection with the civil courts. In teaching modern languages, he employed the method of the Scuola di Firenze.<sup>37</sup>

Salvatore Riggitano arrived in New York from Milazzo on 5 June 1903.<sup>38</sup> Shortly after his arrival, he traveled from New York to Quincy, Illinois, to meet with Mrs. V. Cento, his sister, who lived at 934 Maine Street. A local newspaper reported on his arrival on 9 March 1904 and discussed the possibility that "John Riggitano" might stay.<sup>39</sup> The newspaper report was correct: between 1904 and 1907, John was enrolled at St. Francis Solanus College in Quincy, Illinois, with records stating he was Italian.<sup>40</sup> However, a 1904 purchase of a plot of land in Chicago suggests that he may have temporarily left Quincy during this period.<sup>41</sup>

Not long after this, John Riggitano's career began to take off. On 17 October 1906, The Quincy Daily Herald published a brief story about The Felt Studio of Music hiring a new professor, Signor Riggitano, "to teach French and Italian."<sup>42</sup> Shortly afterward, on 5 September 1905, Signor Riggitano was named the Spanish teacher for Quincy High School.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>35</sup>"Italia, Messina, Messina, Stato Civile (Tribunale), 1866-1939," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GTNK-HGJ?cc=1887904&wc=93L7-PTP%3A179052701%2C179298701> : 20 May 2014), Milazzo > Nati 1866-1881 > image 1183 of 2072; Ufficio di Comune di Messina (Messina City Offices).

<sup>36</sup>Portale Antenati, Atti di Matrimonio, Marriage of Santi Riggitano and Maria Alioto. Source: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile della restaurazione - Milazzo - 1853 - Matrimoni - Atto 67 - image 134 di 147 • pag. 134.

<sup>37</sup>"In the Real Estate World", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), 7 September 1904, page 7, col. 3.

<sup>38</sup>"New York, Passenger Arrival Lists (Ellis Island), 1892-1925," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-L16Y-1BF?cc=1368704&wc=4FMB-76T%3A1600272359> : 26 January 2018), Roll 363, vol 634-634A, 2 Jun 1903-4 Jun 1903 > image 571 of 735; citing NARA microfilm publication T715

<sup>39</sup>"City News", *The Quincy Daily Journal* (Quincy, Illinois), 9 March 1904, page 5, col. 4.

<sup>40</sup>For the 1904 catalogue, see: *Catalogue of St. Francis Solanus College 1904-1905* (Quincy, Illinois: Cadogan-Hatcher Manufacturing Co. Printers, 1905), Page 36.

<sup>41</sup>"In the Real Estate World", *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), 7 September 1904, page 7, col. 3.

<sup>42</sup>"Local News Stories Told in Sentences", *The Quincy Daily Herald* (Quincy, Illinois), 17 Oct 1906, page 6, col. 7.

<sup>43</sup>"Spanish in Schools", *The Quincy Daily Herald* (Quincy, Illinois), 5 September 1907, page 3, col. 1.

By 1908, Riggitano was listed in the Quincy, Illinois City Directory as a teacher at the Quincy Conservatory of Music. He lived on the same street where his sister, Mrs. V. Cento, had lived just a few years earlier—836 Maine Street.<sup>44</sup> Around this time, when his career was looking up, the young Professor Riggitano became engaged to a young woman named Frances Christ, who sadly passed away in March 1908. Miss Christ was a musician at the Conservatory of Music, where Riggitano also worked.<sup>45</sup>

Just across the river, nearly 36 miles away, Riggitano saw a new opportunity: expanding his teachings to Keokuk, Iowa. This is where we learn his birth name—Giovanni Riggitano, teacher of Italian, French, and Spanish. On 24 November 1908, Giovanni was cited in Keokuk, Iowa, as “spending a few days” away from the Quincy Conservatory of Music to teach local residents each week.<sup>46</sup> These weekly classes continued well into 1909, as Giovanni Riggitano regularly published advertisements in the Keokuk newspaper. That year, his practice moved to the Bruhl Conservatory of Music, and he was cited as teaching in the Fort Madison area for \$1.00 per lesson.<sup>47</sup> By the summer of 1910, he was also teaching in Galesburg, Illinois; Burlington, Iowa; and Keokuk, Iowa.<sup>48</sup> At this point, Giovanni had refined his teaching methods and set his sights on a new horizon: Chicago. By October 1910, the Chicago Tribune was running advertisements for “the Riggitano Method,” taught by “Prof. Riggitano himself” at 239 S. Wood Street.<sup>49</sup>

Giovanni Riggitano appeared in his first United States Census record in 1910. He was listed as a lodger, born in Italy, having emigrated in 1904, and living in Fort Madison, Lee County, Iowa, in the household of John and Mary A. Ballard. His occupation—Teacher of Languages—marks the first recorded evidence of a career that would soon grow into a local sensation.<sup>50</sup>

By 19 February 1913, Giovanni had gained enough prominence to be invited to the Illinois Congress to read a chapter of Francesco in Italian on Mother’s Day.<sup>51</sup> Having spent so much of his time teaching in Iowa, it was no surprise that he eventually met and married a young woman there. On 14 April 1914, at the Immanuel Baptist Church in Chicago, Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano married Daisy Hughes, a native of Iowa.<sup>52</sup> His new place of employment, the Spry School of Music in Chicago, was conducted by Walter Spry, a former resident of Quincy, Illinois. According to an article in *The Quincy Daily Herald*, Giovanni was employed by the “Lovers of Italy” club to promote and encourage the Italian language.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>“U.S., City Directories, 1822-1995,” *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 14 May 2025) > Illinois > Quincy > 1908 > Quincy, Illinois, City Directory, 1908 > image 309, page 516, column 1, Giovanni Riggitano, tchr Q Conservatory of Music r 836 Maine.

<sup>45</sup>“The News in a Nutshell”, *The Quincy Daily Journal* (Quincy, Illinois), 20 March 1908, page 8, col. 2.

<sup>46</sup>“Keokuks Opportunity”, *The Daily Gate City* (Keokuk, Iowa), 24 November 1908, page 3, col. 5.

<sup>47</sup>“Bruhl Conservatory of Music”, *The Daily Gate City* (Keokuk, Iowa), 7 August 1909, page 5, col.5.

<sup>48</sup>“Giovanni Riggitano”, *The Daily Gate City* (Keokuk, Iowa), 8 July 1910, page 3, col. 6.

<sup>49</sup>“Instruction”, *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois), 8 October 1910, page 19, col. 4.

<sup>50</sup>“United States, Census, 1910”, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MGMX-3HK> : Sun Mar 10 17:05:01 UTC 2024), Entry for John Ballard and Mary A Ballard, 1910.

<sup>51</sup>“Teaching in Chicago”, *The Quincy Daily Herald* (Quincy, Illinois), 12 September 1914, page 12, col. 5.

<sup>52</sup>“Illinois, Cook County Marriages, 1871-1969”, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N7ZS-X4S> : Sun Jan 19 22:17 UTC 2025), Entry for Salvatore Riggitano and Daisy Hughes, 14 Apr 1914.

<sup>53</sup>“With the Club Women”, *The Inter Ocean* (Chicago, Illinois), 19 February 1913, page 4, col. 6.

# EXTENDED FAMILY

## Generation One

- **Santo (Santi) Riggitano**, born 19 July 1824 in Milazzo, Province of Messina, Kingdom of Two Sicilies, to Giuseppe Riggitano and Concetta Buccafusca. He married on 6 Nov 1853 in Milazzo **Maria Alioto**, who was born 19 Aug 1834 in Milazzo to Francesco Alioto and Vittoria Trusiano, and died after 1908 in Milazzo. Santi died 14 February 1898 in Milazzo. He was a functionary (*usciera*) at the town council.
  - Portale Antenati, Atti di Nascita, Birth of Santi Riggitano. Accessed on 14 May 2025 from <https://antenati.san.beniculturali.it> Source: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile della restaurazione - Milazzo - 1824 - Nati - Atto 123 - image 141 di 287 • pag. 141
  - Portale Antenati, Atti di Nascita, Birth of Maria Alioto. Same site and date. Source: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile della restaurazione - Milazzo - 1834 - Nati - Atto 237 - image 240 di 385 • pag. 240
  - Portale Antenati, Atti di Matrimonio, Marriage of Santi Riggitano and Maria Alioto. Source: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile della restaurazione - Milazzo - 1853 - Matrimoni - Atto 67 - image 134 di 147 • pag. 134
  - *Italia, Messina, Messina, Stato Civile (Tribunale), 1866-1939*, FamilySearch: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X3WF-W1T1>
- **Children of Santi Riggitano and Maria Alioto:**
  - **Concetta Maria Francesca** (Milazzo, 9 Sep 1854).  
Birth record: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile della restaurazione - Milazzo - 1854 - Nati - Atto 254 - image 256 di 356 • pag. 256.
  - **Giuseppe** (Milazzo, 15 May 1856); married 16 Oct 1886 Marianna Scibilia in Milazzo.  
Birth: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile della restaurazione - Milazzo - 1856 - Nati - Atto 183 - image 185 di 394 • pag. 185.  
Marriage: FamilySearch (Milazzo > Matrimoni 1869-1887 > image 1028 of 1134 (1886 marriage #122): <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9TVQ-931P>
  - **Francesco Paolo Stefano** (Milazzo, 22 Jul 1858).  
Birth: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile della restaurazione - Milazzo - 1858 - Nati - Atto 225 - image 227 di 414 • pag. 227.
  - **Vittoria Maria Carmela** (Milazzo, 17 Mar 1860 – Quincy, Illinois, 27 Dec 1949); married 23 Apr 1903 Vincenzo Cento (Milazzo, 7 Sep 1852 – Peoria, Illinois, 9 May 1929).  
Birth: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile della restaurazione - Milazzo - 1860 - Nati - Atto 99 - image 102 di 423 • pag. 102.  
Marriage: FamilySearch Milazzo > Matrimoni 1888-1910 > image 1306 of 1943 (1903 marriage #53): <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9TNK-96Q6>
  - **Giuseppa** (Milazzo, 15 Oct 1862).  
Birth: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile italiano - Milazzo - 1862 - Nati - 03/01/1862-16/11/1862 - Atto 378 - image 380 di 431 • pag. 380.
  - **Gaetano** (Milazzo, 18 Nov 1864 – Milazzo, 26 Jul 1875).  
Birth: Archivio di Stato di Messina - Stato civile italiano - Milazzo - 1864 - Nati - Atto 381 - image 383 di 457 • pag. 383.  
Death: FamilySearch Milazzo > Morti 1869-1882 > image 473 of 1039 (1875 death #164): <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9TNK-94V8>
  - **Clotilde** (Milazzo, 16 Oct 1866).  
Birth: FamilySearch Milazzo > Nati 1866-1881 > image 27 of 2072 (1866 birth #287): <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GTNK-6Z8>

- **Antonino** (Milazzo, 10 Sep 1869 – Rome?, after 27 Dec 1949); mentioned in Vittoria’s obituary. Birth: FamilySearch Milazzo > Nati 1866-1881 > image 359 of 2072 (1869 birth #247): <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GTNK-8Y7>
- **Rosa** (Milazzo, 18 Jan 1872 – Adams, Illinois, 13 Feb 1958); married Vincenzo Chillemi (Milazzo, 8 Nov 1870 – Quincy, Illinois, 28 Jan 1936). Birth: FamilySearch Milazzo > Nati 1866-1881 > image 634 of 2072 (1872 birth #35): <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9TNK-4YD>
- **Salvatore Giovanni Gaetano**, who follows (2).

## Generation Two

- **Salvatore Giovanni Gaetano Riggitano (Prevost)**, born 24 June 1876 in Milazzo, to Santi Riggitano and Maria Alioto. He died 22 May 1960 in Evergreen Park, Illinois. Married in Chicago, Illinois, 14 April 1914, **Daisy Hughes**, born 8 August 1875 in Ottumwa, Iowa, to Stephen Franklin Hughes and Charlotte Simpson. Died 25 July 1939 in Chicago. Later, Salvatore became known as **John R. Prevost**. He was a professor of Romance languages.
  - Birth: FamilySearch: <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GTNK-HGJ>
  - Marriage: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N7ZS-X4S>
  - Death of Daisy: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:Q2MK-QFD3>
  - Death of John R. Prevost: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:Q2MC-QMVV>
- **Children of John R. Prevost and Suzanne Fontaine:**
  - **John Centi (Santi)**, who follows (3).
  - **Louis Lanti (Santi) Marius**, who follows (4).

# ATTACHMENTS

## REGISTRATION CARD

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>SERIAL NUMBER</b>  | 1687  | <b>ORDER NUMBER</b>  | 1704                                   |
| 1 <b>NAME</b><br>Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano<br><small>(First name) (Middle name) (Last name)</small>  |   |  |  |
| 2 <b>PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS:</b><br>1716-18 Greenleaf ave Chgo Cook Ill<br><small>(No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (County) (State)</small>    |   |  |  |
| 3 <b>Age in Years</b><br>42   | 4 <b>Date of Birth</b><br>June 24 1876<br><small>(Month) (Day) (Year)</small> |  |  |
| <b>RACE</b>   |   |  |  |
| White   | Negro   | Oriental   | Indian                                 |
| 5   | 6   | 7  | 8                                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   |   |  | 9                                      |
| <b>U. S. CITIZEN</b>  |   |  | <b>ALIEN</b>                           |
| Native Born   | Naturalized   | Citizen by Father's Naturalization Before Registrant's Majority  | Declarant                              |
| 10  | 11  | 12   | 13                                     |
|   |   |  | 14 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 15 <b>If not a citizen of the U. S., of what nation are you a citizen or subject?</b> Italy   |   |  |  |
| <b>PRESENT OCCUPATION</b>   |   | <b>EMPLOYER'S NAME</b>   |  |
| 16 Teacher of Language  |   | 17 Gordon-Detwiler Institute of Languages  |  |
| 18 <b>PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS:</b><br>116 So Mich Chicago Cook Ill<br><small>(No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (County) (State)</small> |   |  |  |
| <b>NEAREST RELATIVE</b>   | Name  | 19 Daisy Hughes Riggitano Wife   |  |
|   | Address   | 20 1716-18 Greenleaf Ave Cook Ill<br><small>(No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.) (City or town) (County) (State)</small> |  |
| I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE  |   |  |  |
| P. M. C. G.<br>Form No. 1 (Red)   |   | Salvatore Giovanni Riggitano<br><small>(Registrant's signature or mark) (PRINT)</small>                            |  |
| Made at<br>1716-18 Greenleaf ave  |   |  |  |

Figure 3: Salvatore Riggitano - WWI Draft Registration Card

## RIGGITANO KNOWN HERE

Man in Chicago Triangle Taught Music and Languages in Quincy.

Giovinna Riggiano, the man in the eternal triangle in Chicago which led to the arrest here this week of Suzana Fountan, a young Italian girl, while visiting at the home of Vincent Cento, fruit dealer at 934 Main street, at one time is said to have studied for the priesthood, and taught music and languages here in the Quincy Conservatory of Music, St. Francis college and the Quincy High school.

Charges by Riggiano's wife, Daisy, that he and Miss Fountan had an illicit relationship, were branded as false by Mr. Cento.

He knew the Fountan girl as a lass of less than 4 years in sunny Italy, nearly a quarter of a century ago. When Italy was involved in the European maelstrom, her father and two brothers went to the front and she came to New York. Knowing Riggiano she sought him in Chicago.

Since leaving here Riggiano, who is remembered here as a man of unusual intellect, became prominent in Chicago. He opened a studio in the Fine Arts building, and married. Miss Fountan is a teacher of languages in Chicago and Cento says her family was prominent in Italy. Her visit was cut short here by her arrest and she did not have time, Cento says, to review old family friendships with Cento, who knew her father well.

No word has been received here of any disposition of the charges in Chicago. Riggiano was arrested before Miss Fountan was taken in custody here by Chief Koch and Detectives Bumster and Scharnhorst.

THE QUINCY JOURNAL  
QUINCY, ILLINOIS, TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 1917.

Figure 4: Alleged relationship with 'Miss Fountan' - Published in The Quincy Journal, 20 March 1917.

ATTI DI NASCITA



*11/11/74*

1

L' Anno milleottocentosettanta *sei*, addì *ventisei* di *giugno*,  
a ore *sette* meridiane *dieci* e minuti \_\_\_\_\_, nella Casa comunale.

Avanti di me *Cavaliere Andrea Caluzaro* *Conte*  
*Giulio Siribice*

Ufficiale dello Stato Civile del Comune di *Milazzo*,

è comparso *Riggitano Santi*, di anni *cinquantatré* domiciliato  
in *Milazzo*, il quale mi ha dichiarato che alle ore *sette* meridiane *due* e  
minuti \_\_\_\_\_, del *ventiquattresimo* mese, nella casa posta in  
*Via Maria* al numero \_\_\_\_\_, da *Michele Maria* *civile*  
*la sua moglie*

è nato un bambino di sesso *maschile* che *ci* mi presenta, e a cui da' i nomi di  
*Salvatore Giovanni Gaetano*

A quanto sopra e a questo atto sono stati presenti quali testimoni *Michele*  
*Mecca*, di anni *ventinove*, *Giuseppe* *Amabile* *di* *quarantatré* di anni  
*quarantatré* *anni* entrambi residenti in questo Comune. *Sette* *il* *pre*  
*te* *alle* *gli* *inter* *venuti*, *è* *stato* *da* *me* *sotto* *scritto* *e*  
*dal* *licenziante*, *mentre* *i* *testimoni* *di* *vero* *non*  
*sapere* *scrivere*

*11 Riggitano Santi*  
*M. Siribice Ufficiale dello Stato Civile*  
*11 Caluzaro*

Numero *181*  
*Centottantasette*  
*Riggitano Salvatore*  
*11/11/74*

Figure 5: Civil Registration Birth Record for Salvatore Giovanni Gaetano Riggitano - Milazzo, Italy

# RIGGITANO IN TRIANGLE

FORMER HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER'S WIFE ACUSES HIM.

Second Chapter of Story of Affinity Who Fled to Quincy Where Man in the Case Once Taught Spanish.

There's a bit more to the story, "An Italian Wife," than was printed under this head in Saturday's Herald. The second chapter developed after the first had been given publication.

### What First Story Told.

Chapter 1 told of the arrival a week ago yesterday, from Chicago, of Suzana Fountain, 28, teacher of languages; of the arrival Saturday morning of a Chicago detective with a warrant for the young woman's arrest; of finding her with the assistance of Chief Koch and Detectives Bumster and Scharnhorst at the home of Vincent Cento, fruit dealer, 934 Maine street, and of her going back with the detective at noon. The officer had a warrant for Miss Fountain's arrest and it charged her with being mixed up improperly with Daisy Rigatana's husband. It was Daisy who swore out the warrant and she not only wanted Suzana arrested, but her husband as well. The detective who came after Suzana told that Rigatana had been arrested and was awaiting trial but Suzana on being given a tip on what

was happening packed her trunk and came to Quincy. It was only after the lapse of nearly a week that the fact of the trunk being shipped to Quincy was learned, thus explaining the delay in the arrest of the woman sought.

### The Development.

Chapter 2, developed after the publication of Chapter 1, recalls to mind Giovanni Riggitano, or Rigatana of the Suzana Fountain episode and Giovanni Riggitano turn out to be one and the same. In 1908 and for a year or two on either side of then Giovanni Riggitano was a resident of Quincy, at different times a member of the faculty of the Conservatory of Music and of St. Francis college, a teacher of the Romance languages. He was also, it will be recalled, a teacher of Spanish as a member of the High school faculty and as a private tutor. Giovanni was a scholar, and he was dapper and polished, and made many friends, quickly becoming a favorite. He did excellent work both in institutions and as private tutor and those with whom he came in contact as students and in a social way have of him only the kindest recollection.

### Had Studio in Chicago.

When Riggitano left Quincy he went to Chicago, where he opened a studio in the Fine Arts building. He had a classical education, and once in conversation with one of his friends here, said that he had been educated for the priesthood, but felt that he could not take the vows, and ran away from the school. In Chicago he was taken up by the society called "The Lovers of Italy" to which some of the wealthy and aristocratic women of Chicago belong, and because of his wide knowledge was made much of. He taught Ital-

ian, and read with them some of the classics of that country. His education was broad, and embraced a knowledge not only of the literature and art of his native land, but of that of other European countries and of America. When he left Quincy he was not married.

### Cento Says Nothing Wrong.

There may be no stain on his name at this time, in spite of the warrant and the arrest and the charge Vincent Cento says there isn't and that a mistake has been made by somebody somewhere. Cento doesn't believe there's a word of truth in the story of Giovanni Riggitano's infidelity to the vows made when Daisy became his bride. Cento scouted the idea of Suzana Fountain being a naughty young woman. He says, as the detective did, that Suzana Fountain is an educated woman, a linguist, a teacher of languages, a member of a splendid family in her native land.

### Before War Flame Burst.

Cento knew Suzana's father intimately and he knew Suzana as a bright child of between 2 and 3 years of age. This was in Italy upwards of a quarter of a century ago. With the breaking out of the pan-European war Suzana's father and her two handsome brothers donned their uniforms, shouldered their rifles and went forth to battle. America beckoned to Suzana and she managed to answer the call. At New York she inquired for Giovanni Riggitano, whom she knew, and learned he was in Chicago. She came to Chicago and met him and they talked of old times and incidentally the name of Vincent Cento was mentioned. Suzana had only the faintest recollection of Cento but she knew he was a friend of her father for she had often heard him speak of his friend who

had come to America. And Riggitano told Suzana all about Cento, a relative of his, and that he was in Quincy. Suzana decided to visit Cento and came down a week ago yesterday and spent a pleasant week as a guest of the family of her father's old friend. Then the visit was cut short by the arrival of the detective with a warrant for her arrest.

### Miss Fountain Shocked.

Cento declares that Suzana Fountain was shocked when she learned of the charge that had been made against her and was more than willing to return to Chicago to make answer to the charge in the warrant. It was because she was astounded by the news that such a charge had been made against her that she, a teacher of languages, appeared unable to understand the English language. Cento is certain the matter will be cleared up and both Giovanni and Suzana acquitted of the charge against them when the case comes to hearing in court.

While residing in Quincy Giovanni Riggitano made his home with the family of Vincent G. Chilmeni, fruit dealer and barber, 835 Maine street.

Figure 6: Salvatore Riggitano accused of affair - The Quincy Daily Herald, 19 March 1917

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
Division of Vital Statistics

HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S RECORD  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**Certificate of Birth**

1. PLACE OF BIRTH  
County of **COOK**  
City of **CHICAGO**

Registration Dist. No. **3104**  
Primary Dist. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Registered No. **26804**

† No. **6037 Blackstone Ave** St.; \_\_\_\_\_ Ward

2. FULL NAME OF CHILD **Louis Louis Omerus Prevost** { If child is not yet named, make supplemental report, as directed.

3. Sex of Child **Male** 4. Twin, triplets, or other? \_\_\_\_\_ (To be answered only in event of plural births) 5. Date of birth **July 28** 19**20** (Month) (Day) (Year)

| FATHER  |                            | MOTHER   |                                   |
|---|----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 6. FULL NAME  | <b>Jean Louis Prevost</b>  | 12. FULL MAIDEN NAME                             | <b>Susanne Louise Marie Fabre</b> |
| 7. RESIDENCE  | <b>6037 Blackstone Ave</b> | 13. RESIDENCE                                    | <b>6037 Blackstone Ave</b>        |
| 8. COLOR  | <b>white</b>               | 14. COLOR  | <b>white</b>                      |
| 9. AGE AT LAST BIRTHDAY   | <b>42</b> Years            | 15. AGE AT LAST BIRTHDAY                         | <b>28</b> Years                   |
| 10. BIRTHPLACE (State or Country)                                   | <b>France</b>              | 16. BIRTHPLACE (State or Country)                | <b>France</b>                     |
| 11. OCCUPATION  | <b>Salesman</b>            | 17. OCCUPATION                                   | <b>Housewife</b>                  |
| 18. Number of children born to this mother, including present birth | <b>2</b>                   | 19. Number of children of this mother now living | <b>1</b>                          |

20. CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN OR MIDWIFE.\*

I hereby certify that I attended the birth of this child, who was born alive at **2** M., on the date above stated.

\* When there was no attending physician or midwife, then the father, mother, householder, etc., shall make this return. See Sec. 12 of vital statistics law.

21. (Signature) **Lena Hatfield** M. D. Midwife  
(Physician or Midwife)

22. Give name added from a supplemental report \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_

Address **1435 - E. 60<sup>th</sup> Blackstone** Telephone **7300**

23. Filed **Jul 31 1920** **M. O. Heckard** Registrar

Registrar

† If birth occurred in hospital or institution, give its name instead of street and number.

500  
H. D. V. 126A 50M. 1-20  
20 in each copy  
Deliver where 20 in each copy

Figure 7: Louis Prevost (father of Pope Leo XIV) Certificate of Birth

1. (a) My name is **John** **Reggitano** **Prevost**  
(FIRST NAME) (MIDDLE NAME) (LAST NAME)

1. (b) I entered the United States under the name of **Salvatore Giovanni Reggitano Alloto**

1. (c) I have also been known by the following names **none**  
(include maiden name if a married woman, professional names, nicknames, and aliases)

Figure 8: Alien Registration Form for "John Reggitano Prevost". This is the only record to include both the Prevost and Reggitano surnames together.