

Luigi DelBianco Dies, Memorial Stone Carver



LUIGI DELBIANCO

Luigi DelBianco, 76, of 68 Grant St., Port Chester, who was head stone carver at the Four Presidents National Memorial at Mount Rushmore in South Dakota, died yesterday after a long illness at New Rochelle Hospital.

He was born in May, 1892 near LeHarvre, France, on a ship on which his parents, the late Vincent and Osvalda Del Bianco were returning to their home in Italy from the United States.

In 1933 Mr. DelBianco was named head carver at the Mount Rushmore Memorial. "Bianco" as he was affectionately called by the noted sculptor who designed the colossal memorial in stone in the Black Hills, Gutzon Borglum, went to work at the Borglum studios in North Stamford in the 1920s. He worked with Borglum throughout the controversial Stone Mountain Memorial project as well as the Mount Rushmore era and the association continued until Borglum's death in 1941.

Mr. DelBianco had his own stone cutting business on Clinton Street in Port Chester for some years. About 500 gravestones in St. Mary's Cemetery were carved by him from rough Vermont marble.

Many of the larger statues in Port Chester parks were placed by Mr. DelBianco. He was an artist, sculptor, carver, and worker in stone in a wide variety of forms. The Port Chester Library held an exhibition of some of his smaller pieces. Although the Presidents were a favorite subject, he made carvings of Indians and other people he saw in the Black Hills area. In later years he made a large mosaic of Lincoln's head.

Luigi DelBianco was the descendant of a long line of wood carvers at Meduno, Udine Province Italy. When he was 11 his father took him to study carving with a master carver in Austria. He later studied the art in Vienna and Venice.

While in his teens, he came to the United States but he returned home to fight with the Italian Army during World War I. After returning to the United States at the end of the war, he worked for a time as a stone cutter in Barre, Vt. When a brother-in-law, the late Alfonso Scafa who was a Port Chester stone cutter, introduced him to Gutzon Borglum he was hired at once by the sculptor. In 1922 after Mr. DelBianco married Nicoletta Cardarelli of Port Chester, the newlyweds lived for a while in a cottage on the Borglum Estate in Stamford. Mrs. DelBianco died in July.

Mr. Del Bianco was a communicant of Corpus Christi Church.

He is survived by three sons Silvio and Caesar of the home address, and Vincent of Port Chester; a daughter Gloria of Los Angeles; and seven grandchildren.