CONVERSIONS

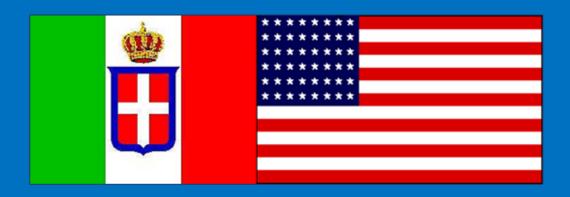
PART TWO

BETWEEN THE WARS

MICHAEL L. SENA

May 2018

ITALIAN OR AMERICAN



How Mussolini's transformation of Italy from ally to enemy between the First and Second World Wars affected the lives of Italian immigrants in the United States

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CONVERSIONS: PART TWO
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ITALIAN OR AMERICAN

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TO MY TEACHERS

**PROLOGUE **

OUR MOTHER'S HOPE CHEST was large and full of treasures. When our parents moved into their first home on the street where my father had lived most of his life, the cherry wood chest was among the first pieces of furniture they bought. It was from that time on a permanent part of their bedroom. Every now and then Mom would show my sister and me what was inside. When she opened the heavy lid, the smell of cedar filled the bedroom. Most of its large volume was taken up with pillow cases, sheets and napkins that had been carefully embroidered by our mother with her initials, MAR, her dowry. She would take out a packet of letters that she had tied together with a thick string. They were the letters she and our father had written to each other during the twenty months they were separated by the war.

Over the years, new treasures would be placed in the hope chest and some would come out. We were each given our first knitted booties and baptism caps at some appropriate time. The same with the linen. When my father died, our mother gave me my father's war trophies which my father had shown me only once. Our mother passed away at the age of 98, fifteen years after our father's death, and she told us that she occupied her days during those last years sorting out what she would leave behind from her and our father's life and what she would not. After a bad fall, our mother entered a full-care facility and we sold her house. When it was time for my sister to open the hope chest and smell the cedar for the last time, she saw that the packet of letters was gone, but a large manila envelope we had never seen before lay at the bottom of the chest.

When I came home for a visit a few weeks later, my sister, her husband and I sat at their dining room table. On the table was the manila envelope she had found. She said they did not know what to make of its contents and did not know what to do with it. They thought of throwing it away, but felt I should see it first. I opened the envelope and took out a book, or something that looked like a book with a soft cover. The thick paper cover and the pages were yellowed with age. Along the top I could recognize the words 'Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi' and 'East Brooklyn'. Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi was the name of the town in Italy from where our father's parents had emigrated as teenagers, before they were married. At the bottom of the cover, in small

capital letters was printed LAWRENCE SENA, my father's name. In large letters was the title '*Natale di Roma*'. My sister said it meant 'The Birth of Rome'.

I turned to the first page and immediately saw the source of my sister's concern. S.E. BENITO MUSSOLINI called out from the middle of the page. Something happened on Sunday, the 23rd of April, 1933 at the Elks Club in Brooklyn, New York that had something to do with Benito Mussolini, and our father had produced the program for this event. A few pages later there was a photograph if *Il Duce* and a letter from him on the facing page. Further on was a full-page photo of our father with LORENZO SENA beneath it.

Except for one page which was a tribute to the flag of the United States of America, all the text was in Italian. Neither of us could read Italian well enough to understand what this was all about. I could see the question on my sister's face, the one she could not ask: "Was our father a Fascist?" If he was, he wouldn't have been very good at it, I thought. He was an artist. The caption under his photo had the words "Ha ventuno anni ed ha frequentato il Pratt Institute", which we figured meant that he had studied at Pratt Institute since he was twenty-one. That was one thing we did know for a fact. He had turned twenty-two just before this event occurred, he studied art at Pratt when he produced this program, and he was living during this time with his Uncle Nicola Sena, his Aunt Pasqualina and their seven children, his cousins, on Bedford Avenue in Brooklyn.

I was certain that this book held the key to many of the locked doors in my father's history, the ones he had never opened for us. Maybe if I had known what questions to ask before his mind was lost to Alzheimer's disease he would have opened them. We knew about Brooklyn and Pratt and the fact that he did not graduate with a degree because his father told him he had to come home and help support the family during the depth of the Great Depression. We knew that his dream, which was never fulfilled, had been to move to California and work for Walt Disney. We knew that he left for Europe in June, 1944 on a troop ship that sailed from the Brooklyn Navy Yard when our mother was four months pregnant with my sister, and he did not return home until early 1946 carrying his treasures and a very large, brown Teddy Bear for his fifteen-month-old daughter. We heard his nightmares caused by the bombs falling in his head that continued until his Alzheimer's, which erases memory in reverse order, had wiped clean everything after June, 1944.



But the *Natale di Roma* program opened a broader question about the context in which it was produced. Half of the program contained small and large advertisements that had been placed and paid for by doctors, lawyers, funeral home proprietors and tradesmen, like my great uncle, who was an interior house painter. Most of the ads bore names that were of Italian descent, but not all of them. The event was held in an Elk's Club, an organization that in 1919 had passed what was called the 'Flag Day Resolution', which stated that "...membership (in the Elks Club) was barred to even passive sympathizers of the Bolsheviki, Anarchists, the Industrial Workers of the World or kindred organizations, or who does not give undivided allegiance to the flag and the Constitution of the United States." Could one be a Fascist and still give

'undivided allegiance' to the U.S.? If they could, then there must have been a different view of Fascists at the time the event was held versus the one that prevailed just prior to the outbreak of World War II. I decided that the program provided my best opportunity to learn more about my family by studying what was going on with Italian-Americans in general, particularly during the time between the end of WWI and the beginning of WWII.

For some Italian-Americans during this period of Italy's time in the public limelight, the process of Americanization stood still or even went into reverse as they questioned whether they or their parents should have left their native country. Beginning with the rise of Mussolini and the Fascists, they would all experience first-hand the transition of Italy following the end of World War I from being a country regarded by other Americans with indifference—if it was regarded at all—to a country which in the last half of the 1920s and first half of the 1930s was viewed with wonder. It was praised by Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, the editors of the New York Times and many others. However, as Mussolini drew his country closer to Hitler's Germany, and when finally Italy declared war against the United States, won-

der turned to hostility, and the hostility toward Italy was transferred to Italians, including those who had lived most or all of their lives in America. Italian-Americans would struggle through this period to decide if they were Italians or Americans or if they could be both.

The elders in my father's family had all emigrated from the same village, *Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi*, just before or just after the turn of the 20th Century and settled in Scranton, Pennsylvania and Brooklyn, New York. Except for one, all of their children were born in America before the end of the First World War. I was five years old when my grandfather died and twenty years old when the last member of the elder generation passed away. In this book, I have brought the members of my family, their friends and neighbors to life and given them a voice in what was happening around and to them. All the family members in this book are therefore real people. The voice of the narrator is my father's. During the last fifteen years of his life, after he had retired, when he could have relaxed and reflected, his progressive memory loss made it difficult for him to have a conversation. Even though his long-term memory was intact, his loss of short-term memory caused him to lose his train of thought. This book is his chance to tell the stories he might have told if he had those last years to do so.

Dad begins his narrative following a short Preface on the state of affairs in Italy and the United States between the end of the war to end all wars and the beginning of the war that was supposed to finish what the previous one had started. He is eleven-and-a-half when the story begins after the end of World War I. In each chapter, he will speak in the present tense of that chapter and will move progressively through events in his life as he remembers them. He will end his story while on a train from Hoboken, New Jersey that will take him to Scranton after his honorable discharge from almost four years of active duty in World War II. Along the way I have inserted historical notes that are marked with these three symbols: \###.



** Preface

ITALY BECAME A united country for the second time on the 20th of September, 1870 when 50,000 Italian government forces under the command of General Raffaele Cadorna advanced on the Aurelian Walls of Rome. The city, as the last bastion of the Papal States, was defended by the papal army comprised of Swiss Guards and volunteers totaling 13,157 men. Until the start of the Franco-Prussian War in July 1870, Emperor Napoleon III had kept a sufficient number of soldiers in Rome to protect the last vestige of the Papal States from invasion by the hostile forces of Italy. When the war with Prussia began, Napoleon felt compelled to remove his troops. On the 2nd of September, at the Battle of Sedan, the French Emperor and most of his troops were captured, and the war was effectively lost. Rome no longer had a protector.

Based on what happened next, it appears that the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel II, was convinced that this provided the opening to a peaceful and quick end to the standoff between Italy and the Pope. On the 10th of September, the King sent Count Gustavo Ponza di San Martino to the Pope with a letter suggesting that he, the Pope, allow the Italian Army to enter Rome in order to provide him and the Church with protection. The Pope became enraged when he read the letter. "You are all a set of vipers, of whited sepulchers, and wanting in faith," he roared. "I am no prophet, nor son of a prophet, but I tell you, you will never enter Rome!"

Italy declared war on the Papal States on the 10th of September. The forces under General Cadorna moved slowly, reportedly believing a peaceful solution could be negotiated. When the Italian force arrived in Rome, they proceeded to take the city by force. Following a one-day siege and a three-hour bombardment, Pope Pius IX gave the order to capitulate, at which point the *Bersaglieri Corp* of *Piemontese* infantry entered the Eternal City. The Pope was proved right: he was no prophet. Rome became the new capital of the Kingdom of Italy that had been declared nine years earlier following the defeat the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies by the army of the *Piemontese* King, Victor Emmanuel II of the House of Savoy. The *Palazzo del Quirinale*, which had been the official residence of the Pope, became the Royal Palace of the King. Pope Pius refused the King's offer to retain control of the Leonine City on the west bank of the Tiber. He withdrew into the Vatican and declared himself a prisoner.

The last time Italy had been united was as the center of the Roman Empire, 1,394 years earlier. Since the Germanic King of the Torcilingi, Odoacer, deposed Romulus Augustus, the last Western Roman Emperor, the peninsula was divided into states that were won and lost and won again by the Visigoths, Ostrogoths and the Longobardi, by the Moors, the Normans, Spain, France, Austria and Germany, by the Pope, by the city-states' powerful families and by kings who ruled kingdoms from *Napoli* and *Torino*.

Following full unification in 1870, or as it is called in Italian, *Risorgimento*, the people inhabiting the *Penisola Italiana* were ungovernable, as indicated by the serial failures of representatives from all of its regions to establish a stable governing body that could implement the policies necessary to build a sound economy. This resulted in a lack of hope among its people for a future in the newly established country, and is given as one of the causes of a diaspora of approximately nine million Italians, or twenty-five percent of the country's population, from the time of unification until the start of World War I. Another indication of systemic dysfunction was Italy's disastrous participation in this war. An army made up of conscripts taken from all of the country's regions speaking hundreds of different dialects was unleadable, as was clearly shown by the catastrophic loss of life and the miserable battlefield results. Although it was on the winning side of the conflict, it won little respect from its wartime allies.

In the aftermath of the war, none of the political parties could present a workable plan for improving life for those people who would not or could not leave, or for establishing a stable economic foundation for businesses to operate and basic services to be delivered. Enter Mussolini. He seems to have understood a simple fact that had escaped all of the brilliant minds of the *Risorgimento*: You cannot make Italy a country until you make the people who live in the country Italians. Benito Amilcare Andrea Mussolini was born in 1883 in Forli, Romagna. His father was a blacksmith and part-time Socialist journalist, and his mother was a school teacher. The name Benito came from the Mexican Socialist president Benito Juárez, who was also the first Latin American country leader with native Latin American background. At the age of eighteen, Benito moved to Switzerland. Some say it was to find work, others say it was to avoid the draft, and still others say it was to escape imprisonment for his political activism. It was there he became involved in Socialist politics. He returned to Italy in 1904 where he worked as a journalist

and eventually became editor of the daily Socialist newspaper *Avanti!*. He spent some time in prison for his anti-war activities during the 1911-1912 Tripolitan War with Turkey. He broke with the Socialist Party and left the newspaper in 1914 when the Italian government failed to join the war on the side of its Triple Alliance partners, Germany and Austria-Hungary, and the Socialists advocated support for the Triple Entente. He had earlier been a critic of Italy's involvement in all wars and all interventions. Suddenly, almost overnight, it appears he simply changed his mind.

Mussolini was drafted into the Italian army in September 1915, apparently reconciled to the fact that he would be fighting against the countries he had wanted as Italy's confederates. He was assigned to a corps of sharpshooters called bersaglieri, achieving the rank of corporal before he was wounded on the 22nd of February, 2017 by the accidental explosion of a mortar bomb and he returned to civilian life in Milan. He began to edit a right-wing newspaper called *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 'The People of Italy', which he used to rail against what he viewed as an ineffective government and incompetent military. His conversion from Socialist to Nationalist was now complete. He began to see himself as the natural leader—not guide, but leader: the difference would become important—of his country, who could reestablish its former glory as a world power. He established the Fascist Party in 1919, orating to increasingly large numbers of followers, particularly disaffected and unemployed war veterans, criticizing Italy's demeaning treatment by its former allies at the Paris Peace Conference and the total lack of achievement of Italy's objectives in the eventual Treaty of Versailles. His Blackshirts, Squadristi, intimidated, often brutally, all opposition. By May 1921, the Fascist Party, with Mussolini as its leader, was part of a government coalition. In the autumn of the following year, he was Prime Minister.

In 1922, he and his fellow Fascists became the lawful government of the country, albeit by devious and unlawful means. He consolidated his power because he was delivering the stability that the other political parties could not. WWI and the American quota laws of 1924 that followed stopped the flow of emigrants, so there was not a constant stream of Italian sources of news to tell the story of repression that lay behind the veneer of stability. Mussolini saw to it that the information which reached the international community, particularly to those who had left their homeland, painted a positive picture of a dynamic and successful country that would retake its rightful

place among the world's great countries. Resolving the conflict with the Pope and allowing the establishment of the Vatican state in 1929 only enhanced his image.

For ten years, Mussolini had the stage to himself, and he used it well. Business and government leaders in Europe and America publicly congratulated him, recommended him for praise and admiration for how well he was leading his country. His enemies, the Socialists, Communists and Anarchists, seethed, but these were also the sworn enemies of America's business and governmental leaders. Having shared adversaries reinforced a common bond between the officialdoms in the two countries and further increased the stature of Italy in the eyes of many of the immigrants to America from Italy.

Italians who came to America were not a homogeneous group. Some of those who came had fled from their homeland because of their ideology, and continued to hold their views because they found in America the same conditions of repression of the poor that existed in Italy. Others had been poor, illiterate and destitute when they left Italy, found that life was equally hard in America and adopted the ideologies of class warfare. Still others thrived as tradesmen, artisans, shop owners, educators and even politicians. Whichever group they belonged to, there were those who longed to return to their homeland, those who left thoughts of Italy behind and wished only to be assimilated into their new country, and those who tried to live in a middle ground, selecting the sweet memories of their former lives and discarding the bitter ones.

After Mussolini ascended to the position of ultimate ruler of Italy, the country was presented as a paragon of a success. Those who were happy in their new homeland wondered if they should have remained in Italy rather than emigrating to America. Would they have been happier and more successful there? Should they return? What should they tell their children who were born in America or who came with them as young children without any memories? Should they encourage them to rediscover their former homeland?

Those who were both unhappy <u>and</u> anti-Fascists had a different view. They continued their struggle to discredit Mussolini, who, they argued, had taken the country from its people. They fought for their cause in the press, in demonstrations and in direct verbal and physical combat against those who

either supported the Fascists openly or, by not taking a stand for or against the dictatorship, supported them tacitly.

Once Hitler acquired power over the government in Germany on the 30th of January, 1933, in a similar way as Mussolini had obtained his position a little over ten years earlier in Italy, he stole *Il Duce's* narrative and adopted all of the trappings that Mussolini had acquired from Gabriele d'Annunzio and perfected to new heights. The symbols, uniforms, gestures and ways of speaking were all part of the choreography to present the image of a robust leader of an unconquerable nation. However, it gradually became clear that Hitler and Germany had the force behind the symbols, while Mussolini and Italy simply had the symbols. As the mentor became the follower who tried to please his former pupil by invading Ethiopia and persecuting Jews, his stature in America, and that of Italy, diminished. His traits that had been neglected by those who had praised him during the period of his rise, such as his disdain for democracy, were now highlighted. Both dictators would now be demonized in preparation for the inevitable and inescapable conflict, the Second World War.

After Italy's declarations of war against first the United Kingdom and France, and then against the United States following the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on the 7th of December, 1941, Italy and its citizens became the enemy of all Americans. Those who had chosen to remain Italian citizens while living in America were especially vulnerable, but everyone who could be identified as 'Italian' was a suspected spy. Those who continued to admire Mussolini were wise to do so in private. Although some Italian-Americans tried to become invisible, to melt into the American stew and shed their heritage, most understood that they had to 'stick together' and stand up for each other when their political loyalties were questioned. Non-Italian-Americans could never distinguish between a *Siciliano*, a *Napoletano* or a *Genovese*, and now the Italians had to learn to be *cieco per la regione*, to become 'blind to the region'. It was only when the war began in earnest, when the young men of Italian heritage showed up at the draft induction centers as first in line that questions about where their loyalties lay began to dissipate.



The 5^{TH} of November, 1922

"ITALY GOT A NEW PRIME MINISTER this week," said Zio Nicola without looking up from his paper.

"Benito Mussolini," declared Pa in a tone that sounded like he was not interested. "I guess it was only a matter of time. What does that have to do with us?"

"It has everything to do with us, right Patsy?" shot back Zio Nicola.

"Right. Everything."

Zio Nicola and Pa were brothers. Zio Patsy was their brother-in-law, married to their younger sister, Zia Assunta. Zio Patsy's real name was Pasquale De Santo, but he was known to everyone, including us kids, as 'Patsy'. We sat in the living room on the first floor of Zio Nicola's and Zia Pasqualina's four-storey house at 831 Bedford Avenue in Brooklyn on Sunday morning, the 5th of November, 1922. It was after mass but before Sunday dinner which was being prepared one floor below in the kitchen by the women and the girls. Zia Pasqualina was in charge. She was a double aunt because she was Ma's sister. Zio Nicola and Zia Pasqualina had three daughters, Rosa, Filomena and Lucia, and they had four sons, Giacomo, Francesco, Giuseppe and Michele. Giacomo, or Jimmy, was older. He was born in Italy before Zio and Zia came to America. He was outside on the sidewalk with other boys from the neighborhood. Franky, Joey, Mikey and I were sitting on a sofa, listening to the conversation and not saying a word.



Pa had come to New York on Saturday morning with me and my two older sisters, Venzina and Rosa, or Vee and Rosie as they preferred to be called, to go to the Metropolitan Opera on Saturday afternoon. I was eleven now, and this was my first time to go with Pa to the opera. Vee was sixteen and Rosie was fourteen, and they had already been to the opera with Pa a couple of times. It would be another year before Fannie was old enough to come, and four more for Franky. They were at home with Ma. The opera was Puccini's *La Bohéme* with Beniamino Gigli in the role of Rodolfo. "Gigli was good, quite good," Pa had said after the performance,

"but not as good as Caruso had been." As far as Pa was concerned, no one would ever be as good as *Il Tenore Napoletano*, Enrico Caruso, who had died the year before. Pa lit a candle at mass every Sunday for him. We had all stayed over at Zio's and Zia's home, and would take the late afternoon train back to Scranton from Hoboken, New Jersey after dinner.

The kitchen was half a level below the sidewalk, and the living room was half a level above with a high ceiling and large windows facing onto the street. Heavy velvet fabric drapes and lace curtains reduced the light entering the room and the deep wine-colored wall paper absorbed whatever light found its way in. All the furniture was in dark oak with tapestry fabrics. Zia explained that it was the fashion at the time when we visited a few years earlier and saw the new wall paper. Zio Nicola was in the house painting and interior decorating business, and Cousin Jimmy was his helper, so they had done all the work on fixing up their new home. Pa had said to Ma after that visit that he hoped she didn't get any ideas of having the same wall paper as her sister.

Zio Nicola, Pa and Zio Patsy were each reading their own copy of the day's IL PROGRESSO ITALO-AMERICANO newspaper. Pa read the regular American newspapers during the week, but he bought IL PROGRESSO on Sundays. He said he liked to read about what other Italian-Americans were doing. He skipped over the parts that were about Italy.

"Barsotti says here Mussolini's promised to make the trains run on time," continued Zio Nicola. Carlo Barsotti was the owner and publisher of IL PROGRESSO, whispered Franky to us on the couch. I knew that already. After mass on Sundays, when Frankie and I sat in the living room and Pa read the newspaper, he would sometimes read out loud. 'Listen to this,' he would say. 'Barsotti thinks we should talk to our congressman and tell him to stop doing one thing or another.' I was used to these discussions about politics, and it looked like my cousins were too.

"He'll beat the trains like his henchmen, the *squadristi*, beat the opposition if they don't keep to the timetables," sneered Pa. "Does it say that too?"

"Imagine Italy getting a new Pope and a new Prime Minister in the same year," exclaimed Zio Nicola, ignoring Pa's comments. "It's an historical event."

"Italy has had a new prime minister almost every year in the last twenty years," offered Pa. "Maybe it's time that they got one who isn't going to be so easy to get rid of."

"Susie says he has only one job and that's to free the Pope," replied Patsy. Everyone called Zia Assunta 'Susie', but not us kids. Zio Patsy and Zia Assunta lived on the top floor of the brownstone that Zio Nicola bought after The War and they all moved there together.

"The Pope has always been free," said Pa. "He's holding out to get his country back."

"I think the Pope should move to Brooklyn," exclaimed Zio Patsy. "He could run for Borough President. I'll bet there are enough Catholics to get him elected."

We all started giggling and Zio Nicola looked at us sternly and shushed us. "If you can't sit there quietly you'll have to go down with the girls," he said.

"They could build a new St. Peters next to Ebbets Field so we can go to mass and then to the ball games directly," continued Zio Patsy. I thought it sounded like a great idea but did my best not to show any change in my expression.

"Hell will freeze over before the Pope leaves Rome," said Pa, "just to spite the King. And he couldn't count on getting votes from the Irish."

"How did Mussolini get to be Prime Minister?" asked Zio Patsy, changing the subject. He seemed to do that a lot. "One day he was a nobody and the next he's in charge. It doesn't make any sense."

"He got enough votes to make it into the parliament a year ago," answered Pa, "and then it just went from there."

"The veterans voted for him," added Zio Nicola, "and they are the ones who are beating up people who say bad things against Mussolini. Then there are a lot of people who don't like the Communists and those who think the government isn't doing what they should to make the Germans and Austrians pay for the damage they did during The War. You add them all up and Mussolini has more support than it looks like by the number of Fascists in the parliament. The King and the people who are really running the government

must have figured after the march the Fascists made on Rome that if they didn't make him Prime Minister he would eventually take it himself."

"We can read in our newspaper about what's going on over there," said Pa, "but the Italians are going to have to live with him every day and obey the laws he'll make. I'm happy we're here and not there, that's all I have to say about it. I wish all of our family had left years ago. Now it may be too late."

"What about the Pope?" interjected Zio Patsy. "What do we think Mussolini is going to do about him?"

"My guess is that Mussolini will use the Pope to make himself more powerful," offered Zio Nicola. "It's better to have the Pope on your side than against you. That's one thing the Communists don't understand."

"We'll just have to wait and see," said Pa, and they all returned to reading their own papers. Then Pa broke the silence again.

"You know, Nicola, since we came here to America, you and Pasqualina have lived your lives like you never left Italy, and Giovanna and I have lived ours like Italy never existed. My only connection to Italy is the opera."

"And your fig tree in the back yard, Michele," interjected Zio Patsy.

"And your wine press and your Parodi cigars," added Zio Nicola, laughing.

"O.K., but you have your Society, and you're always sending money over there and new people from *Sant'Angelo* are coming over here giving you the latest news. Even during The War, no one came into the shop to say it was good we were fighting on the same side. To my neighbors, we are just as American as they are. I don't think that most of them even knew that Italy was an ally of America."

I didn't know what 'ally' meant and whether it was a good thing or a bad thing. One of the Irish kids at school called me *dago* and the other kids laughed. I didn't know what a *dago* was, but I didn't like the feeling of being called one. When I came home, I asked Pa what it meant. He said it didn't mean anything and if someone called me names like that I should ignore them, but if anyone called my little sister or brother names, I should tell the principal.

"America lost around fifty thousand men in The War," said Zio Nicola. "Italy lost six hundred and fifty thousand soldiers, six hundred thousand civilians and a million more were wounded. The fact that America treated Italy like a second-rate partner after The War is one of the reasons—maybe the main reason—Mussolini is now the prime minister."

"That's Barsotti and IL PROGRESSO talking, Nicola. Italy got what it deserved out of The War, no more and no less. But I think we have travelled over this territory more than enough times to know that we are not going to agree, so we should leave it there."

They all returned to their newspapers. A few minutes later, my sevenyear-old cousin, Lucia, knocked on the door and then peaked her head in to tell us that dinner was ready. Zio Nicola opened the window and shouted down to Giacomo to come into the house, then we all walked down the stairs to the kitchen where Sunday dinner was waiting on the table.

I think that was the first time I heard people talking about Italy as a place which had a connection to me that was more than as a place where Ma and Pa and their families had once lived. The only country leaders I had heard about were President Harding and the one who came before him, Woodrow Wilson. I was too young to understand anything about what was going on with the war, only that people were fighting somewhere far away. I remember that Ma got a letter once and she was very sad. A cousin of hers had been



killed in the war. There were posters on the streets with Uncle Sam telling people he wanted them to join the army. Pa was too old and I was too young, but there were neighbors who went away and most of them came back. Nobody talked about fighting in Italy, and like Pa said, nobody ever said anything about what Italy was doing in the war.

What was different now? Why did it matter that this person they were talking about, Mussolini, was the new leader of Italy? Zio Nicola and Zio Patsy seemed to think it was important, but maybe it was only because they wanted him to help the Pope. I have never understood what the Pope was doing in Italy anyway. I looked on a map once that showed the whole world and saw that Rome was a long way from the places where Jesus grew up and was crucified. Why

isn't the Pope there instead? I asked the nun who was giving us religious lessons this question, and she said that Peter was the first Pope and he left Judea to go to Rome because that was where the Roman Emperor was and he had to convince him to follow the teachings of Jesus. But he ended up getting himself crucified too, along with St. Paul, and then the next in line to take over the job was a Roman bishop named Linus. So then it just continued to be the place where the Popes lived.

There wasn't any more talk about Italy, Mussolini or the Pope during dinner. Zia Pasqualina and Zia Assunta made sure all the plates were full and Zio Nicola kept the wine glasses of the adults filled. Us kids got a little wine in our water. Jimmy's glass was mostly wine and a little water. He had turned eighteen. I thought that one day I would be old enough to have a full glass of wine and if there was a war, I would have to fight.

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Figure 1: Sitting on left, Michele Sena and on the right Vincent Ricciardi, brother-in-law to Michele and Nicola Sena; standing on right, Nicola Sena and on the left Pasquale De Santo. Approximate year: 1920

When the Great War began in July, 1914, Italy was part of the Triple Alliance, allied with Germany and Austria-Hungary. These three countries signed a pact in May, 1882, promising mutual support in the event of attack by an aggressor. Its reasons for aligning itself with one of its foremost enemies, Austria-Hungary, a country that had actively worked against Italian unification, was as protection from invasion by France or Great Britain. Their agreement was periodically renewed up until the start of The Great War, when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria by the Yugoslav nationalist Gavrilo Princip in Sarajevo. Russia rushed to Serbia's aid while Germany invaded Belgium and Luxembourg on its way toward France, resulting in the United Kingdom declaring war on Germany. Russia, France and the United Kingdom were bound by a pact called the Triple Entente, and they would be known as the 'Allied Powers' during The War. Germany and Austria-Hungary became known as the Central Powers, and were joined by the Ottoman Empire in November and Bulgaria in 1915.



Italy? Antonio Salandra was Prime Minister of Italy when The War began in 1914. He had taken over in March from his mentor, Giovanni Giolitti. Their party, *Unione Liberale*, had been founded by Giolitti in 1913. The party decided that Italy would not honor the *Triple Alliance* agreement because

Austria-Hungary had declared war and Germany had invaded its neighbors, actions which the Italians argued countermanded the treaty. Giolitti was in favor of neutrality, but Salandra wanted to join the hostilities on the side of the Allies. This was Italy's chance to acquire the provinces of Trentino and Trieste from Austria-Hungary, Salandra argued, both of which were heavily populated by Italians. It was Salandra's view that prevailed.

Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary on the 23rd of May, 1915. In April, it had signed the *Treaty of London*, which set the terms of its engagement on the side of the Allies. According to the *Treaty*, should the Allies prevail, Italy would receive the territory it desired in the north, Trentino and Alto Adige, and north east, the Littoral region which includes Trieste and the Istrian Peninsula, along with the Italian portions of Dalmatia, the Albanian port city of Valona and land in the Ottoman Empire.

Italian politicians were initially enthusiastic about their chances of a quick surprise victory against their Austro-Hungarian adversaries. They outnumbered them three-to-one. But their opponents positioned themselves on higher ground and built formidable fortifications before the Italians could attack. The Napoleonic lightning advances that had been used so effectively by the French against the Austrians in the same geography a little over a century earlier, which the Italian generals had dreamed of replicating, quickly became a series of attacks and retreats between the Isonzo and Piave rivers. For three years in mountainous terrain, the two sides killed each other in great numbers. In the meantime, governments in the Italian capital fell, one after the other.

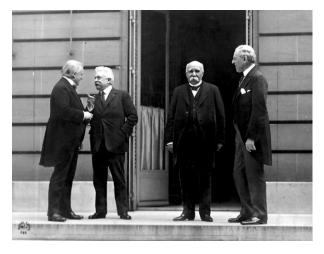
Prime Minister Salandra resigned in June, 1916, following the Battle of Asiago. Italy suffered 12,000 dead, 80,000 wounded and 50,000 taken prisoner. Austria-Hungary lost 15,000 men and 75,000 were wounded. Even though the Austro-Hungarians were positioned to break through the Italian lines, they eventually had to retreat and move their troops to a more critical area requiring defense against a Russian offensive. Paolo Boselli, also a member of the *Unione Liberale*, replaced Salandra. He held his position until October, 2017, when another major battle took place, the Battle of Caporetto, or Kobarid as it was known to the Slovenians where the town was located. It was officially the Twelfth Battle of the Isonzo. German units reinforced the Austro-Hungarians, and it was due to the German's use of poison gas and the 'Stormtrooper' techniques they had perfected, that the Italian forces were

routed. Although the Italians outnumber their opponents by over two-to-one, 10,000 of them were killed, 70,000 were wounded and 265,000 were captured.

On the 30th of October, 1917, Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, Minister of the Interior in Boselli's government and member of *Unione Liberale*, became the third Italian Prime Minister during The War. He served in this post until the end of The Great War on the 11th of November, 1918. Shortly before The War ended, Italy won the Battle of Vittorio Veneto, an achievement that the politicians and generals argued made up for all of the embarrassing defeats at the hands of the Austrian-Hungarian Army during the previous three years. It earned Orlando the title "Premier of Victory". But his adoration by his Italian constituents was short-lived.

Treaty negotiations to finalize the terms to end The War took place in Paris in the *Salle de l'Horloge* at the French Foreign Ministry on the Quai d'Orsay beginning on the 18th of January, 1919. The defeated countries, Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, were not allowed to be present. The new government in Russia had signed a separate treaty with Germany in March, 1918, called the *Treaty of Brest-Litovsk*, so it was not invited to take part in the treaty negotiations either. Initially, Japan was part of the Council of Ten, but it left the negotiations when it was clear that its requests and its viewpoints were being ignored. The result of these negotiations is called the *Treaty of Versailles* because that is where it was signed on the 28th of June, 1919.

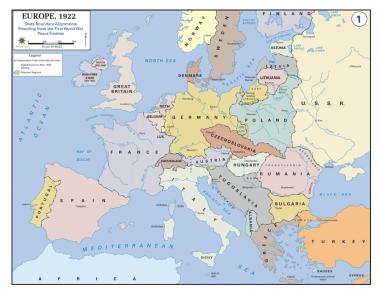
Prime Minister Orlando and Baron Sidney Sonnino, Italy's foreign minister, led the Italian delegation. They were determined to use the *Treaty of London* as the starting point for Italy's position and then to demand additional concessions from the other Allies. It seems that the French and British delegates, particularly Britain's foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour, profoundly regretted having made such generous offers of territory to Italy as part of the *Treaty of London*, but they were prepared to honor most of their promises. However, this was not the view held by President Woodrow Wilson and the United States' delegates. Wilson said that the U.S. would not recognize "secret treaties" to which it was not a party. Privately, the three other Allies were disappointed with Italy's contribution to the war effort, in spite of the huge loss of life and injuries suffered by its soldiers and civilians.



Orlando is seen in this photo taken at the peace negotiations in Versailles, France, second from the left, talking with David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. George Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France and Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, are to Orlando's left. What happened—or, more correctly, what didn't happen in Versailles—determined Italy's fate in the following two-and-a-half decades.

A planned six-day meeting addressing specifically the Italian issues began on Saturday, the 19th of April, one day before Easter. On the 23rd of April, President Wilson issued a statement declaring that the *Treaty of London* should be ignored and Italy should receive no more than the territory of Trentino and Tyrol because these areas had populations that were mostly Italian. Wilson strongly supported the formation of the new country of Yugoslavia and rejected all Italian claims to areas along the Adriatic that would become part of this country. The following day, the Italian delegation quit the negotiations and repaired to Rome. They were greeted with patriotic demonstrations railing against the ill-treatment by the Allies, particularly the Americans.

For ten days, the fate of the peace conference hung in the balance. While Italy's war allies did not miss the Italians' presence because they contributed little to the entire process, focusing only on what Italy would receive, it was necessary for them to be present to conclude the treaty with Germany. Drafters of the treaty began a process of removing all references of Italy in case they did not return. After ten days, the Italian delegation arrived back in Paris on the 5th of May. The Germans were already in place to receive their terms from the Allies. The *Treaty of Versailles*, the first of six treaties, was signed with Germany on the 28th of June. Prime Minister Orlando had resigned five days earlier. He was replaced by Francesco Saverio Nitti, leader of the Radical Party, but neither he nor his predecessor were present at the signing of the Treaty. The names on the *Treaty* for Italy included Baron Sonnino, Marquis G. Imperiali, Ambassador of the King of Italy at London, and Mr. S. Crespi.



Europe's map was redrawn following The War. Austria became a shadow of its former self, with Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania and the new state of Yugoslavia carving off large swaths of territory. Finland gained independence from Russia; Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were established on former Russian territory; and both Poland and Rumania expanded into areas that had been part of Russia as well. Italy rounded off its northern boundaries with

Trentino and Alto Adige, and in the northeast with the Littoral region, including Trieste and the Istrian Peninsula. A permanent seat on the League of Nations and a share of German reparations were added to Italy's reward for being on the winning side.

There are those who say that Italy should have remained neutral and stayed out of The Great War. Italy's army was ill-prepared and ill-equipped for fighting in rugged terrain at high altitude, especially not in the freezing winters. Its men in arms, conscripted from all of the country's relatively recently united regions, spoke hundreds of different dialects, not the language of the officers who were leading them. In the first four battles along the Isonzo River between June and November 1915, 60,000 Italian soldiers were killed and 150,000 were wounded. At this point, Italy could have called for an armistice and left the field. But what do the politicians say to the families of those who died or to those who are permanently maimed? "We are sorry, but you have fought in vain." No. Like the amateur gambler who bets his last coin on the next roll of the dice, believing that it is luck that decides which numbers face up, the politicians kept telling the people that the tides would shift in their favor and victory would be theirs.

The tides turned at the very end, after the enemy was already defeated. Italy was on the winning side. Nevertheless, the politicians had promised much and no matter what was received, it would never have been enough to compensate for the losses of life. It was easier for the Italian politicians to blame their partners, in particular the Americans, for the dreams of expansion that went unfulfilled, rather than accepting the simple truth that lands are won

and lost in battle, not in the halls of negotiation, and the Italian army was not successful in battle.

In the years that followed, chaos reigned. Communists, anarchists and Fascists battled each other and all waged war with the government. The Fascists, who were fierce nationalists, blamed the communists for not supporting the War and for aiding the enemy. Fascism has an ideological history that dates back to the late nineteenth century, but the term 'Fascism' was used for the first time in 1915 by members of a movement founded by Benito Mussolini, Fasci d'Azione Rivoluzionaria (Fasci of Revolutionary Action). Prime Minister Nitti lasted for a year, until June 1920. During that time, beginning in September 1919, he had to contend with the rash actions of super-nationalist Gabriele D'Annunzio, who together with his loyal supporters, seized the Adriatic port of Fiume. The city was just outside of the area of Istria that had just been ceded to Italy. D'Annunzio refused to leave, and neither the Italian government nor the new government of Yugoslavia were able to decide what to do about him and his forces. In November 1920, the two governments reached an agreement to make Fiume a free state, and Italy declared that it would no longer claim Dalmatia as part of its sphere of influence. In January 1921, D'Annunzio and his forces were driven from Fiume by the Italian army, but he left as a hero.

By this time, the Liberal Union party had returned to power with Giovanni Giolitti as prime minister. It was his fifth term; his first was 1892-1893. He held the post, which would be his last, for just over a year, until the 4th of July, 1921. It was at the height of the *Biennio Rosso*, the Two Red Years, when the Communists organized massive strikes, occupied factories and fields and led union efforts to obtain recognition of worker participation in factory councils. This agitation on the left was met with armed aggression by factions on the right and with the anarchists. Giolitti did nothing to stop the Fascist *squadrismo* from committing violent acts against their political opponents nor from forcefully taking over city governments that the Socialist Party had been elected to run. Giolitti called for elections in May 1921 in a coalition that included the Italian *Fasci Italiani di Combattimento*, led by Mussolini. Giolitti's coalition received only 19% of the vote and he was forced to resign.

Ivanoe Bonomi, leader of the Italian Reformist Socialist Party, succeeded Giolitti. His party was a social-democratic political party that had been

formed when its leaders split from the Italian Socialist Party in 1912. Nevertheless, he was the first Socialist Prime Minister of Italy. He could not hold together his coalition and he relinquished the post to Luigi Facta in February 1922. At this point, the Fascists controlled the country through their terror tactics, and it would only be a matter of eight months before Facta would hand over his duties as prime minister to Benito Mussolini following the March on Rome in October 1922. Facta tried to stop the march by having martial law declared, but he needed the King, Victor Emmanuel III, to sign the order. The King refused, and Facta, along with his government, resigned in protest at the King's refusal. The King then invited Mussolini to Rome and requested that he form a new government. The date was the 31st of October, 1922.

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Although Woodrow Wilson was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1919, principally for his efforts to establish the League of Nations, the United States never ratified the *Treaty of Versailles* and never joined the League of Nations. It was the U.S. Senate that opposed both the *Treaty* and the League on the basis of opposition to Article 10 of the *Treaty*, which concerned collective security and the League of Nations. This Article, its opponents argued, ceded the war powers of the U.S. Government to the League's Council. There were two groups in the Senate who led the opposition: the "Irreconcilables," who refused to join the League of Nations under any circumstances, and the "Reservationists," who were led by Henry Cabot Lodge, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Senator Lodge wanted amendments made to the *Treaty* before the Senate would ratify it. Lodge's attempt to pass amendments to the *Treaty* was unsuccessful in September, but he managed to attach 14 "reservations" to it in November 1919. In a final vote on the 19th of March, 1920, the Treaty of Versailles was defeated by a seven vote margin. By this time, President Wilson was completely sidelined. He had suffered a stroke in October 1919 while touring the country to gain support for joining the League of Nations. He served out his term, but Vice President Marshall took over many of the President's duties. The U.S. Government, with Warren G. Harding as President since March 1921, signed a separate peace treaty with Germany, the Treaty of Berlin, on the 25th of August, 1921. This treaty stipulated that the United States would "enjoy all rights, privileges, indemnities, reparations or advantages" conferred to it by the *Treaty of Versailles*, but it left out any mention of the League of Nations.

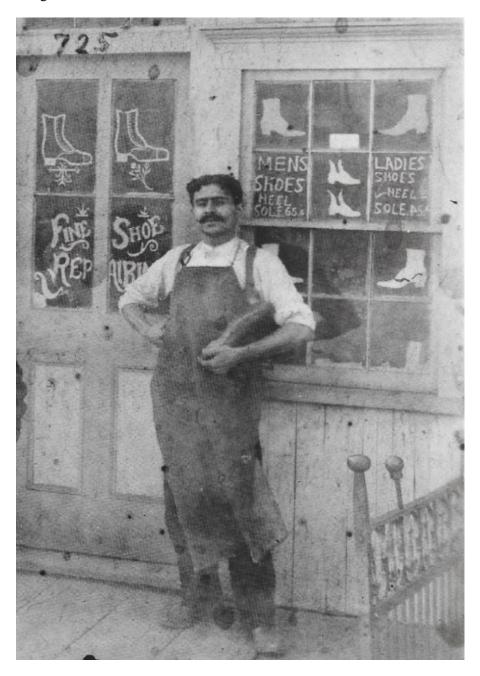


Figure 2: Twenty-three-year-old Michele Sena in 1901 stands in front of his first shoe repair shop at 725 Scranton Street in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He and Giovanna Ricciardi would marry in 1904, and their first three children would be born here before they moved to South Seventh Avenue at the bottom of the Scranton Street hill.

\mathbb{X} The 25th of May, 1924 \mathbb{X}

"IN 1896, THE YEAR I came to America, there were 60,000 others who came from Italy," declared Pa.

"Were you standing at the gangplank on Ellis Island counting them all as they walked off the boats?" joked Zio Nicola. Everyone laughed, including Pa. He was used to his older brother's ribbing.

"There was a list in THE TIMES yesterday along with the article about what was going to happen after the new immigration law is passed tomorrow. When Jenny came in ninety-four, there were 43,000. The year you and Lena and Jimmy came over in 1904, there were over 190,000."

"What happens starting tomorrow?" asked Zio Patsy.

"The people who make the laws in Washington take the number of Italians who were in America in 1890 and do something with it to come up with the number of our *paisani* who can come over here every year from now on."

"They multiply the number by two percent, Pa," added Vee. "That means there can't be more than four thousand from Italy each year because there were not more than two hundred thousand Italians living in America in 1890. I read that four hundred thousand came, but half of them went back."

"How do you know this stuff?" asked Zio Patsy.

"Because she's a smart girl who does her homework," interjected Zi'Assunta. Vee was her favorite and she took every chance to shine her star. Vee blushed. Ma beamed. Pa smiled like he always smiled, with his lips closed, and he nodded his head.

We had all been in Brooklyn a month before for Easter. Zio Nicola, Zi'Assunta and Zio Patsy had come for the weekend and a christening of Pa's, Zio Nicola's and Zia's cousin's granddaughter. Zia Pasqualina stayed at home in Brooklyn to watch over the family. Cousins Jimmy and Rosie were old enough to take care of the house, but Zia didn't really like to leave the family, the house or the neighborhood. It's a wonder that Zio was able to convince her to leave Sant'Angelo to come to America.

"We had only one or two new members at the Society during the war," said Zio Nicola, "but then we got a big boost from all the *Santangiolesi* who came over just before they passed that last law in 1921."

"We won't see numbers like that again, I can tell you," offered Pa. "It's getting very crowded in the Cabrini School at mass. We need to hurry up with the church building."

"Why don't they like us?" It was little sister Fannie asking the question.

"Who doesn't like us?" asked Ma.

"The people who make these laws that want to keep us from coming here."

It was quiet for what seemed like a long time. Then Pa spoke.

"Think of a country like a neighborhood, our neighborhood. You have people living in the neighborhood who have been there for a long time. Maybe they were born there and have grown up with the same friends, like all of you. Then, all of a sudden, new people move in, people who come from another place who don't speak the same language or wear the same kinds of clothes and maybe don't even worship the same God. What do you think? You probably don't like it because now everything isn't the same as it was before. If a lot of new people come at the same time you feel even worse. The main reason we moved to this neighborhood, instead of finding a place in Hyde Park, is that everyone here is a stranger. They're all from somewhere else. We fit right in."

"When we came here to America," added Zia Assunta, "it was to find a new life, away from the Iprinia earthquakes that kill you in your bed and away from the cruel treatment by the Italian government who take everything and give nothing back. But many of our countrymen come here to earn money and then go back to Italy, just like Venzina said. Half of them went back to Italy. It's the same with men from other countries. They don't settle here. It's not a good life. So maybe the law makers want to discourage that kind of living. I don't know. What do I know?"

"The people running the government are still mostly from families that came over here from England a couple of hundred years ago," added Zio Nicola. "Look at the new President. I read that his father's family came over in 1630. Can you imagine what kind of boats they had back then, what, three hundred years ago!"

"Don't forget it was an Italian who discovered this place a couple of hundred years before all of those Englishmen came over. He had good Italian

boats, the Nino, the Pinto and the Santa Maria," added Zio Patsy.

I think it was the Nina and the Pinta, Zio," corrected Rosie.

"They don't like Catholics," declared Zia. "All of those people on the Mayflower were Protestants. They're what they call anti-Popes. You don't find any Catholic members of the KKK, do you?"

"Our cousin's granddaughter is going to be living in a country when she grows up that's a lot different from the one we're living in today," declared Pa. "Maybe she'll run for President."

"We just got the vote, Pa!" exclaimed Vee.

"Yeah, imagine that," said Zio Nicola. "And it doesn't say that only Mayflower women can vote. All women can vote, even *Santangiolesi*."

"You see, Fannie," said Zi'Assunta. "That means they like us after all."

"Maybe I'll run for President," declared Fannie, with a big smile.

I looked around the table and everyone had a smile and they were looking at my little sister, nodding like they approved of what she was saying. Was it really possible? Could we have a woman who was President before we have priests who are women? Could we have someone from parents born in Italy become President? Just at that moment, anything seemed possible.

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On the 26th of May, 1924, President Calvin Coolidge signed the *Immigration Act of 1924*, also known as the *Johnson-Reed Act*, named after the two men who were responsible for drafting the legislation, Congressman Albert Johnson and Senator David Reed. In the photo, President Coolidge is seen signing the *Act* on the White House South Lawn. Support for the bill was almost unanimous in the House. There were nine dissenting votes

in the Senate. The Office of the Historian for the U.S. Department of State officially declared that the main purpose of the *Act* was "to preserve the ideal of American homogeneity." Those in favor of the *Act* believed that they were reinforcing "a distinct American identity by favoring native-born Americans

over Jews, Southern and Eastern Europeans in order to maintain the racial preponderance of the basic strain on our people and thereby stabilize the ethnic composition of the population."

One of the strongest proponents of immigration restrictions was Henry Cabot Lodge, a Republican Senator from Massachusetts and Senate Majority Leader at the time of his death in November, 1924. A tragic and disgraceful event occurred in 1891 in New Orleans, and his reaction to this event revealed his true colors on the issue of immigration which he espoused for the remainder of his career. The event was the killing of eleven Italian-Americans by a mob who broke into the jail where the Italian-Americans were being held following the trial of nine of them for murder, for which none were found guilty. At the time, Lodge was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. He published an article in the *The North American Review* (Vol. 152, No. 414, May, 1891, pp. 602-612) blaming the victims and making a strident claim that restrictions on Italian immigration were necessary to prevent the need for such acts in the future. He wrote:

"Americans are a law-abiding people, and an act of lawlessness like the lynching of these Italians is sure to meet with their utmost disapproval. There is no doubt that every intelligent man deplores the lawless act of the New Orleans mob. But to stop there would be the reverse of intelligent. To visit on the heads of the mob all our reprobation, and to find in its act alone matter of anxiety and regret, would not only be unjust, but would show a very slight apprehension of the gravity and meaning of this event. Such acts as the killing of these eleven Italians do not spring from nothing without reason or provocation. The mob would have been impossible if there had not been a large body of public opinion behind it and if it had not been recognized that it was not mere riot, but rather that revenge which Lord Bacon says is a kind of wild justice. The mob was deplorable, but the public sentiment which created it was more deplorable still, and deserves to have the reasons for its existence gravely and carefully considered....

"The killing of the prisoners at New Orleans was due chiefly to the fact that they were supposed to be members of the Mafia, but it would be a great mistake to suppose that the Mafia stands alone. Societies or political organizations which regard assassination as legitimate have been the product of repressive government on the continent of Europe. They are the offspring of

conditions and of ideas wholly alien to the people of the United States. Nevertheless, to certain minds they present a permanent attraction, and there are classes of men sufficiently illiterate and sufficiently criminal to reproduce them wherever they may happen to be, even when there is no repressive government to serve as an excuse."

The date of the 'act of lawlessness' (i.e., when the murders were committed) was the 14th of March, 1891, the day after the end of a trial in which nine men of Italian heritage—almost all of whom were Sicilian—were acquitted of killing the New Orleans police chief, David Hennessy, in October of the previous year. Several gunmen shot Hennessy while he was on his way home. He returned the fire but collapsed while giving pursuit. He was taken to a hospital and was conscious long enough to say that the shooters were 'Dagoes', but could not give any positive identifications to the men before he died the following day. The mayor of the city, Joseph A. Shakespeare, ordered the police to "scour the whole neighborhood. Arrest every Italian you come across." Within twenty-four hours, over two hundred people had been detained and forty-five people were arrested. Nineteen men were charged and jailed, and nine of them were put on trial. Six of these defendants were acquitted and a mistrial was declared for the other three because the jury could not agree on their verdicts.

To understand how this happened, we need to understand what all of those Italian-Americans were doing in New Orleans in the first place and how the people in their host city felt about them being there. The South had lost its cheap labor when it lost the Civil War. Conditions for the people in the former KINGDOM OF THE TWO SICILIES, and particularly in Sicily, were even more desperate than for the former slaves in the South. They left their homes in the 1890s in search of something better, and they were lured with jobs as sharecroppers in Louisiana. Many of them settled in the French Quarter, which became known as 'Little Sicily'. Their backs were welcomed, but not their persons. The mayor, Shakespeare, was quoted as saying that his city had attracted "the worst classes of Europe: Southern Italians and Sicilians...filthy in their persons and homes, without courage, honor, truth, pride, religion, or any quality that goes to make a good citizen."

Two Sicilian families, the Provenzano and Mantranga, were vying for dominance on the New Orleans waterfront, and pushing the edges of the law in the process. Hennessey seems to have been trying to put both families behind bars, but the Mantrangas believed that he was favoring their rivals. They had the motive, and with Hennessey's deathbed statement that it was 'Dagoes' who shot him, there was no way to convince anyone that it was otherwise. The Mayor gave a speech after Hennessey's death, declaring that the police chief had been "the victim of Sicilian vengeance." He called upon the citizens of the city to "teach these people a lesson they will never forget." He appointed a committee, called the *Committee of Fifty*, to investigate whether there were secret societies operating in the city. On the 23rd of October, the *Committee* published an open letter to the Italian community, urging them to inform on the law-breakers among them. The letter ended as follows:

"We hope this appeal will be met by you in the same spirit in which we issue it, and that this community will not be driven to harsh and stringent methods outside of the law, which may involve the innocent and guilty alike...Upon you and your willingness to give information depends which of these courses shall be pursued."

The trial of the nine suspects lasted from the 16th of February until the 13th of March. The presiding judge was Joshua G. Baker. None of the jurors were of Italian descent, and none of them were openly anti-Italian. There was no evidence that was conclusive, and the person who had said he was told by Hennessey that it was 'Dagoes' who shot him was not called to testify. The nine men were returned to prison after the verdicts because there was still a charge against them of 'lying in wait' with intent to commit murder.

Another self-declared committee totaling one hundred fifty men met that evening to plan a response to what they felt was a miscarriage of justice. A local newspaper carried the following editorial the next day:

Rise, people of New Orleans! Alien hands of oath-bound assassins have set the blot of a martyr's blood upon your vaunted civilization! Your laws, in the very Temple of Justice, have been bought off, and suborners have caused to be turned loose upon your streets the midnight murderers of David C. Hennessy, in whose premature grave the very majesty of our American law lies buried with his mangled corpse — the corpse of him who in life was the representative, the conservator of your peace and dignity.

The Italian Consul in New Orleans, Pasquale Corte, tried to get the Governor of Louisiana, Francis T. Nicholls, to intervene to break up the mob that

had gathered at the New Orleans prison. The Governor replied that it was up to the Mayor to take action, but the Mayor was having his breakfast and was not reachable. The mob broke through the door as the prison warden let the nineteen men out of their cells and told them to hide as best they could. Eight of them were successful, eleven were not. Two of them were taken out of the prison, hanged and shot. The other nine were shot or clubbed to death inside the prison. On the 17th of March, a grand jury was convened to determine what had occurred and whether anyone should be charged with the murders. The grand jury declared that the gathering comprised "several thousand of the first, best and even the most law-abiding of the citizens of the city." No indictments were made.

Pasquale Corte left the city in protest in May. The NEW YORK TIMES published his statement in which he accused the city of New Orleans for the murders. His government demanded that the murderers be arrested and prosecuted and that reparations be paid to the families of the victims. When no action was forth coming, Italy recalled its ambassador from Washington, and the U.S. recalled its ambassador from Rome. A year passed, and Italy fumed. President Benjamin Harrison attempted to break the deadlock by agreeing to pay \$25,000 to be shared among the victims. Congress attempted to stop him, but he prevailed. Each of the eleven families received \$2,211.90. Shake-speare lost the next mayoral election.

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On the 6th of April, 1924, the Fascists won the elections with a two-thirds majority. In the summer of 1923, Mussolini had introduced a law to ensure a permanent Fascist majority in parliament. The law stated that whichever party wins the greatest number of votes in an election, that party would automatically receive two-thirds of the seats in the Parliament. When elections were held in April, six parties stood in opposition, diluting their effectiveness. The Fascists won 65% of the votes on their own. The success of the Fascists was apparently due to the belief by the middle classes that a strong government would restore order to a country that was overly prone to anarchy and strikes. Liberals believed that Mussolini and his Fascists would eventually show their inadequacies to lead the country and would be voted out of the parliament. The Fascists did restore order at the expense of personal liberty by the populace, and once they had the power to rule without opposition, their inadequacies were no longer a reason for their removal.

THE 23RD OF AUGUST, 1927

MA WAS SITTING in the garden with Venzina, Rosa and Filomena. I was on the porch with my sketch pad. It was early evening in late August when the days were growing shorter and the air still had that warm and moist feeling of the summer. The persistent smells in the air were gas, sulfur and sew-



Figure 3: Children to Michele and Giovanna Sena, Scranton, PA. Back row: Venzina, Rosa and Lorenzo; front row: Filomena and Francesco (circa 1920)

age, but we had all grown used to it. We didn't think about it. Ma and the girls sat together on a bench in front of the high wooden fence Pa, Franky and I had built to block the view on the other side. Ma didn't like that view. There was a long, steep embankment down to the New Jersey Central Railroad tracks, and another steep embankment down to the totally polluted Lackawanna River, the source of the smell of sewage. The river was so black you could hardly tell it was moving, but it flowed fast. If you fell in you were dead, killed by the poisons it carried. During my sixteen years, I had never known anyone who had fallen in, but Pa talked about someone who once lived on the street in one of the tenements. He was always drunk, Pa said. One day, a neighbor came into the shop and told Pa he had to look out the back to see the drunk floating down the river on his back. They got to the fence just in time to see him take a few last strokes, and then he disappeared into the black river, never to be found.

On the other side of the river was the Gas House stretching along the entire straight length of the river mirroring Seventh Avenue. It was the source of the sulfur and gas smells. The large storage tank that rose and fell inside the iron lattice supports was at one end and the coal hopper that belched flames every several minutes was at the other. Behind the gas works ran the Delaware and Hudson tracks, then there was another very steep embankment up to the plateau of the city with the United Silk Mills perched along the edge. The fence we had built was now covered with ivy that had reached its deep green summer color. In another month it would be a blaze of orange and red. In the garden there were trellises made of wood painted white and covered

with red, yellow and white roses, and flower beds with viola, iris, hosta, daylily, dahlia, pansey as well as more rose bushes. In the middle of the beds was the fig tree that Pa had brought back from New York the year after they bought our house on South Seventh Avenue. Along with his love of Italian opera, it was his one other reminder of what he appreciated about where he and Ma came from. As Ma and the girls sat talking in the garden, we could all hear the voice of Enrico Caruso coming from Pa's Victrola. He was sitting in the kitchen with his brother-in-law, Vincenzo. I could smell the smoke from their Parodis coming through the screen door. Caruso was singing *Vesti la giubba* from *Pagliacci*. Pa was proud of the fact that this song was written and composed by Ruggero Leoncavallo, who, like Caruso, was also *Napolitano*.

"I ate lunch with Elena and a new friend of hers today, Angelina di Rossi," said Rosa. Elena Gallo worked with Rosa at W.T. Grants and was one of her best friends. Her father was from Milano and her mother was from Genoa. "Angelina's family came from a town near Bologna just before the war. They live in Old Forge. Her father works in the mines in Pittston. You know that Elena's father doesn't go to church. Well, Angelina's father doesn't either, but for different reasons. Anna says her father is a Nationalist and Angelina says her father is a Socialist. You and Pa both go to church. What are we?"

"We are Americans," answered Ma without hesitation, "and we have been Americans since the days we landed here. Getting our citizenship only made it more official. You are Americans and nothing else. All of you were born here, and your Pa and I were married here."

"But they are Americans, too," continued Rosa. "Angelina's father and mother got their citizenship papers last year."

Even though I was only sixteen, I was old enough to know that Ma was a quiet woman who did not often offer an opinion in a conversation unless she was asked. She always had a certain expression on her face as she went about her daily chores in the house and in the neighborhood. It was like she was thinking about something else while she was doing what she was doing. I looked up words in the dictionary to describe it and found the word 'pensive'. It was not unusual for us kids to arrive home from school or work and find her sitting alone in the kitchen or in the garden with her hands folded in

her lap and her eyes focused on something far in the distance. We thought it was because she lost little Joey, who died at the age of two, but Pa once told me that he knew that this was her nature. He knew her for as long as he had a memory. He knew how to make her smile, even laugh, but he used his unique skill sparingly because Ma reacted to please him, not to please herself. So what Ma was now about to say and how she would say it really surprised us.

"Having citizenship papers doesn't make you an American. That's one thing I have learned in the thirty-three years I have lived in this country. Another thing we have tried to teach all of you is that going to church doesn't make you a good person, just like not going to church doesn't make you a bad person, no matter what the Church says about that. You know, your father doesn't like to talk about what is happening in our old country. He gets upset when he hears or reads about bombings and killings by one group or another. I do too. Elena's father and Angelina's father are acting like they are still living in Italia. They have brought their anger and politics over here, and as far as I am concerned, they should go back to Italia and fight amongst themselves. Elena is a nice girl, so her father hasn't spoiled her with his ideas. I



Figure 4: Giovanna Sena with her daughter Rosa on the back porch of their house at 135 South Seventh Avenue, Scranton, PA. (circa 1931)

am sure that Angelina is a nice girl too. The next time they want to talk politics, tell them that we women in America have been able to vote in elections since 1920. They can tell their fathers that even if people vote in Italy or in Russia, their votes don't count. Tell them too that you don't have to show you are a member of a church to be able to vote, only that you are a citizen of America. I know that's true because I vote."

I had never heard our mother talk for so long or with such passion on any subject. I'm sure my sisters felt the same way. I felt really proud of her. She wasn't only a good mother; she was a good person.

The regions, provinces and towns continued to define the identities of Italians. On top of that were layers of religious, anti-religious, political and ideological loyalties. Italians from the different regions, who were also Nationalists, Fascists, Royalists, Socialists, Anarchists, Papists or Atheists, brought their prejudices with them to America from Italy. Either they tried to create an idealized version of their homeland, one that was impossible for them to find in reality, or they tried to reproduce a copy of what they had left. They brought their foods and ways of eating, clothes and ways of dressing, dialects and ways of talking, feast days and ways of praying, grudges and ways of fighting, and vendettas and ways of killing.

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Following the end of The Great War, there were three main groups fighting for political power in Italy until the end of 1926. One was the Nationalists, who included the king and the Fascist government. The second was the Communists led by Amadeo Bordiga and Antonio Gramsci. The third was the Anarchists with Enrico Malatesta as their leader. A fourth group called *Arditi del Popolo* (People's Militia) and led by Guido Picelli, was a coalition of anti-Fascists groups, including the Anarchists and Communists as well as Futurists, Republicans and Syndicalists. The Futurists, led by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, idolized everything new and despised all that was traditional, including a parliamentary form of government. They were absorbed into the Fascist movement. The Republicans favored a government without a king. The Syndicalists proposed an economic system as a replacement for capitalism that would be owned and managed by workers organized into confederations or syndicates. The movement was epitomized by the *Unione Sindacale Italiana*, the largest Italian syndicalist trade union.

All of these factions believed they alone had the answer to all of Italy's ills, real or imagined. They demonstrated in public and schemed in private to wrest power from the government that in their eyes was ineffective or irrelevant. Most of Italy's citizens knew nothing of these movements, but the unrest and political strife they caused deeply affected their lives. Fascists and Communists fought openly during this period as the two largest factions competed to gain power in Italy. On the 15th of April, 1919, the Fascists attacked the offices of the Italian Socialist Party's newspaper *Avanti*!, the very newspaper Mussolini had been editor of in his former life as a Socialist, before The War. In 1921, Italian army officers began to take sides and helped the Fascists in their battles with the Communists and Socialists. This led to greater cooperation among all the anti-Fascists groups and calls for a general

strike as a protest against the rise of Fascism. The March on Rome in October 1922 was a move by the Fascists to counter the strike, and Mussolini's appointment as Prime Minister by King Victor Emmanuel III was the beginning of the end for the opponents of Fascism.

Not satisfied with their political victory, the Fascist *squadristi* were determined to eradicate all traces of opposition. In December, large numbers of them attacked workers in Torino who supported Socialist principles and resistance to Fascism in what became known as *Strage di Torino*, or the Turin Massacre. Officially, eleven people were killed and ten were seriously wounded, but the unofficial counts were much higher. The events began with the Fascists burning down the local union headquarters and attacking two clubs of the Italian Socialist Party. The *squadristi* then took as hostages a number of the editors of the COMMUNIST PARTY OF ITALY newspaper and threatened to execute them in the center of Torino.

Within a year of Mussolini's ascension to the position of Prime Minister, around forty so-called *Fasci* clubs had been started in America. These were groups who wanted to show support for the rejuvenation of Italy by the Fascists after decades of humiliation and subordination to European powers and to what was viewed as ill-treatment by America following The War. At first, there was no control over these organizations exerted by the Italian Fascists. This changed when the Italian National Fascist Party established *Fasci Italiani all'Estero*, or Fascists Abroad. Its leader was Paolo Ignazio Maria Thaon di Revel, son of a count and a gold medal winner in the 1920 Olympics in fencing. He was sent to America in 1924 by Mussolini to create an umbrella association into which all of the *Fasci* clubs were incorporated. It was called the Fascist League of North America (FLNA).

Two Italian-American newspapers in particular supported the formation of FLNA: IL GRIDO DELLA STIRPE in New York with its anti-Semitic founder and editor, Domenico Trombetta, and GIOVINEZZA in Boston led by Francesco Macaluso. *Giovinezza* means 'youth' in Italian and is also the name of the Fascist national anthem.

The FLNA served as a lightning rod for anti-Fascist Italian Americans. The Anti-Fascist Alliance of North America (AFANA), which had been initiated in 1923, but which failed to mobilize support, was re-established in October 1925 at a meeting on East 15th Street in New York City led by Carlo

Tresca. It created an executive committee of eighteen members that included the gamut of non-Fascist political views, but the main factions were the Communists and the Social Democrats/Labor. It was these two factions' newspapers, IL LAVORATORE for the Communists and IL NUOVO MONDO for the Social Democrats/Labor that carried the brunt of the battle to Italian-Americans against the Fascists and FLNA. The AFANA and FLNA engaged in open warfare resulting in a dozen or so deaths.

What did the United States government think of these organizations operating for and against a foreign power on its soil? The ancient proverb applied: *The enemy of my enemy is my friend*. Communism and Socialism, as well as Anarchism, were viewed as the major threats to the well-being of America. The FLNA had the appearance of an organization that favored law and order and was fervently against radical politics espoused by the members of the AFANA. Naturally, FLNA was preferred by the American government authorities to AFANA.

A high profile criminal case that played out in the 1920s and came to a conclusion on the 23rd of August, 1927, illustrates how the justice system in America may have been influenced by the political views of the defendants and their country of origin, Italy. Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti arrived in America in 1908, Sacco from Apulia and Vanzetti from Piemonte. They met for the first time in 1917 at a strike in Massachusetts. They discovered that they were both followers of Luigi Galleani, the Italian Anarchist who was a proponent of bombing and assassination to support the revolution. The American government listed his group among the most dangerous threats to the country. Galleani and a number of his associates were deported in 1919, but his followers continued their violent activities. Sacco and Vanzetti were among these followers. They were both arrested for a robbery and the murder of two men that occurred in Braintree, Massachusetts on the 15th of April, 1920 at the Slater-Morrill Shoe Company. They were also charged for a robbery and related murders that had taken place the previous year in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, also at a shoe factory.

Their Bridgewater trial began in June, 1920 and lasted for one week. The accused pair's main defense consisted of sixteen witnesses who said that they had seen one or the other of the men during the time the robbery had taken place. Many of the men spoke only Italian and their testimony required trans-

lation. A court-appointed translator spoke Italian, but could neither understand nor speak the dialects of the witnesses. As a result, the witnesses' testimonies seemed to the jury confused or unreliable. The prosecution had confiscated weapons and ammunition from the men that the police claimed had been used in the robbery, and this was the principal evidence used against the two men. Guilty verdicts were returned for both men on counts of robbery and first-degree murder. Later, the verdict was changed by the judge to only robbery for Vanzetti because evidence related to him had been tampered with by the jury.

Almost one year later, on the 31st of May, 1921, the trial for the Braintree robbery and murders was held. After a seven-week trial, on the 14th of July, 1921, both men were convicted of robbery and first-degree murder. At the time, first-degree murder was punishable by death. Following the first trial, there were protests by Anarchists in cities as far away as Paris, and for the next six years as the men awaited their final sentencing, bombings and assassination attempts occurred regularly in many places. One bombing, in New York City, killed thirty-eight people and wounded one hundred thirty-four. Sacco and Vanzetti were sentenced on the 9th of April, 1927 to die in the electric chair. Following a review of their case by a special three-member advisory panel appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts comprised of the President of Harvard University, the President of MIT and a judge, and a finding that no new evidence had been found that could be used to overturn their convictions, Sacco and Vanzetti were executed in the electric chair at Charlestown State Prison on the 22nd of August, 1927.

Before he died, Bartolomeo Vanzetti said this to a journalist: "If it had not been for this thing, I might have lived out my life talking at street corners to scorning men. I might have died, unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. This is our career and our triumph. Never in our full life can we hope to do such work for tolerance, justice, for man's understanding of man, as now we do by accident. Our words - our lives - our pains - nothing! The taking of our lives - lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler - all! That last moment belong to us - that agony is our triumph."

Between the convictions of Sacco and Vanzetti and their executions, much had happened in Italy that affected the views of both Italians in Italy and in America about the guilt or innocence of the men. When they were convicted, Italy was still a parliamentary monarchy with an elected Prime

Minister and a King. Ivanoe Bonomi, and Italian Reformist Socialist, had become the Prime Minister on the 4th of July, 1921. Bonomi's government, and that of Luigi Facta, the Liberal Union Prime Minister who replaced him in early 1922, did nothing of substance to help the two Italian-Americans. When Mussolini became Prime Minister, he declared that the men were innocent and said that they were convicted of the crime because they were Italian anarchists, but he did not intervene in their case nor petition for leniency.

On the 24th of June, 1924, Amerigo Dumini, an American born to Italian parents, headed the group who kidnapped and then killed Giacomo Matteotti, the leader of the Italian Socialists. Earlier in that month, Matteotti had declared in a speech in the Italian Parliament that the Fascists had committed fraud in the recent elections and used violence to gain votes. Dumini was sixteen when he left America to join the Fascist movement. After the killing, he was tried and convicted and given a five-year prison term. He served only eleven months, spending the rest of his life either in jail or living on pensions provided by Italian government.

On the 3rd of January, 1925, following the most recent election in which the Fascists won the majority of seats, Mussolini appointed himself *Il Duce*, 'The Leader' of Italy, declaring himself a dictator. At the end of 1926, only the Fascist party was allowed and all of the opposition newspapers were closed. Mussolini had the Italian constitution changed so that he and the King were the two political heads of state. It was called a *diarchy*.

During the next two years he was the object of assassination attempts by a sundry group of would-be killers. On the 7th of April, 1926, he survived a first assassination attempt by Violet Gibson, an Irish woman and daughter of Lord Ashbourne, who was deported after her arrest. The most notorious assassination attempt was carried out by Gino Lucetti on the 11th of September, 1926. He was an Italian war veteran from World War I who had emigrated to France, became an Anarchist and decided it was his fate to rid the world of *Il Duce*. He threw a bomb at Mussolini's car as it drove through Porta Pia in Rome. The bomb did not detonate. Lucetti was arrested, tried and convicted to thirty years in prison. On the 31st of October,1926, fifteen-year-old Anteo Zamboni, who claimed he was an Anarchist, attempted to shoot Mussolini in Bologna. He was lynched by the *squadristi*. His father and aunt were sentenced to prison for having influenced the boy.

On the 9th of November, 1926, the Fascist government declared the imposition of emergency powers which resulted in the arrests of anti-Fascists, including Communist leader Antonio Gramsci. After this, all serious opposition to the Fascist regime disintegrated. Then, in 1927, Mussolini ordered anti-emigration policies with the aim of stopping the flow of Italians leaving the country.

In 1928, the Fascist Grand Council was set up and it had to be consulted on all issues regarding the constitution.

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I walked into the kitchen where Pa and Zio Vincenzo were enjoying the voice of Enrico Caruso while smoking their evening cigars, and I sat down with them at the table.

"What do you think about these two guys?" Zio asked Pa, holding up a copy of the IL PROGRESSO from the day before. On the front page of the newspaper was a photo of Sacco and Vanzetti who had been executed at midnight.

"For what it's worth, Vincenzo, I think if they had not gotten mixed up with those people who want to blow everything and everybody up, they wouldn't have gotten themselves arrested."

"I agree. If they weren't mixed up with them, and they did commit the crimes they died for last night, they would have been dead a long time ago."

Pa continued, "They're trying to make them into martyrs for their causes, whatever they are. Fascists? Socialists? Communists?"

"Anarchists," interjected Zio. "I heard an Anarchist give a talk a couple of years ago. He came to Scranton and I went to listen to him. He was talking about America like it was Italy, saying we should shoot all the land owners and politicians and blow up all the government buildings. He was bragging about how his friend, Gaetano Bresci, assassinated King Umberto. Somebody threw a tomato at him and hit him right in the face. Then all hell broke loose. I got out of there as fast as I could."

"I tell my two boys that if I find out they are involved with any of those groups, whether it's the ones fighting against the government or the gangsters, I'll turn them into the police myself," declared Pa, and he turned to me with that look he used when I should understand there was nothing to add and

no questions to ask. I was sixteen now, and I did have my own ideas about things. When Pa and Ma were finished reading IL PROGRESSO I would pick it up and read the words silently so I could do the translation in my head. I understood that the newspaper was promoting Mussolini and that there were groups like the Socialists and Anarchists who were against him and trying to assassinate him. But Pa never asked me for my opinion. Would it be like getting a full glass of wine, that when I am older, Pa will think my ideas are worth listening to? I wasn't sure.

"We both have a trade, Michele," said Zio, trying to offer an explanation for the actions of some of their countrymen, "and as soon as we came over here we could start our own businesses. Many of our *paisani* didn't have that advantage. They came over expecting to find a job and a better life and they got the same shit thrown in their faces like back in Italia. I think they join these groups out of frustration and anger. Then I think some of them had these ideas before they came over, and when things didn't work out, they brought them out. You know the old saying: "Coloro che attraversano il mare cambiano il luogo in cui vivono, ma non il luogo in cui vive la loro anima."

I made the translation: Those who cross the sea change the place where they live, but not the place where their soul lives.

"I can tell you, Vincenzo, my soul is right here with me," declared Pa, unwilling to give any ground on this issue, "and when I die, it is going to go to the place in heaven or hell where they put Americans. If it's hell, I hope they put me with the atheists because they have the most fun."

Then they both laughed. I wasn't sure it was a joke that I should laugh at as well, so I just looked down at my sketchbook. I was working on a portrait of the Mayor of New York, Jimmy John Walker. When I finished it I planned to send it to him.

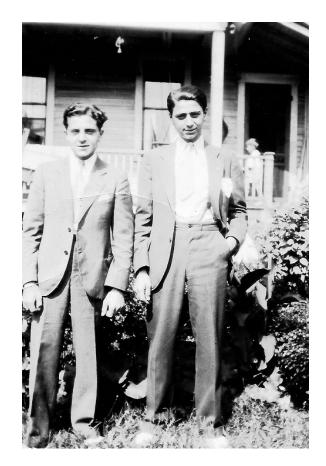


Figure 5: Larry and Frankie in the back yard of 135 South Seventh Avenue.

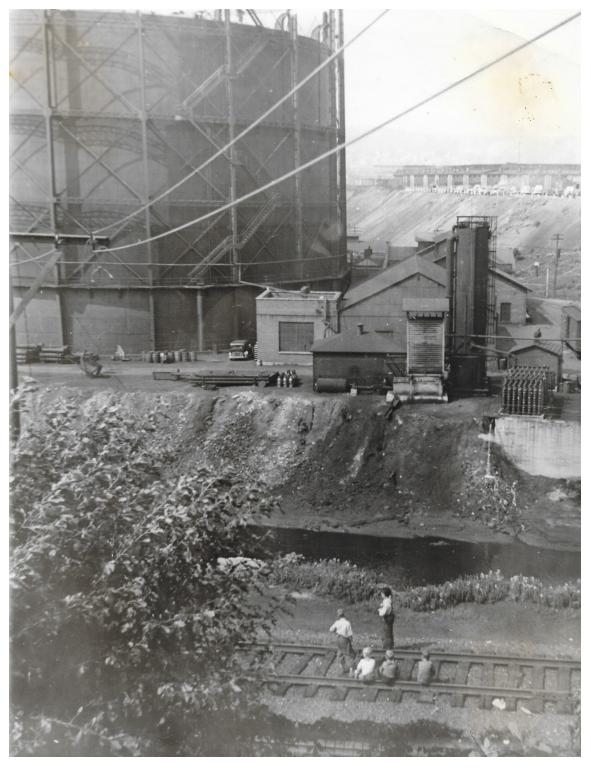


Figure 6: This is the view in the 1920s and 1930s from the back of 135 South Seventh Avenue to the Central Railroad of New Jersey Tracks, Lackawanna River, the Gas House and DL&W Locomotive Shops

\mathbb{X} The 28^{TH} of April, 1928

FILOMENA AND I were in the cloakroom putting on our coats and getting ready to leave the Friday evening dance at Scranton Technical High School when we heard the explosion. I was a junior and she was a freshman. Fannie had worked hard to convince Ma to convince Pa to let her come to the dance with me. She had been on her feet all evening since the time we came into the gym where the dances were held. Everyone wanted to dance with her. It was 11.30 p.m., already much later than we had planned to leave. Suddenly, I could feel the building shaking. At first, there was a deadly silence, then screams. It wasn't an explosion in the school, but it seemed to be very close. Everyone rushed out of the gym as quickly as they could. We heard the wailing of sirens from fire trucks, ambulances and police cars, all with their distinct tones and pitches. We were swept along with the crowd down East Gibson Street to Wyoming Avenue. When we turned the corner we could see smoke rising in the area around the wholesale block.

"Maybe the Gas House has blown up," cried out one of the students.

"Don't be crazy," yelled another. "The whole city would be wiped out."

The crowd split into two, one along each side of Wyoming Avenue. We crossed over to the north side. When we reached Mulberry Street we could see the smoke and flames more clearly and they were rising higher. The crowd had to stop to wait for the last of the fire trucks from the central fire house at City Hall to pass through the intersection. We followed the fire trucks down Mulberry, which turned left on Penn Avenue. When we got to



Linden Street, we could see it was closed to traffic and there were fire trucks in the intersection with Franklin. But this was not where the explosion had occurred. "There must have been another fire here earlier," I said to Fannie. The crowd got as far as Spruce Street, but then it came to a stop. Police barriers had already been set up.

Within minutes the news of what had happened spread from the policemen at the barricades to the crowd. "The Fascist newspaper's headquarters had been bombed,"

was the message. The Italian-Americans in the crowd knew that the Fascist newspaper was LA VOCE ITALIANA, which meant 'THE ITALIAN VOICE'.

"Hey, Sena!" I turned to see one of my classmates, Johnny Connors. "You're a *goombah*, right? What's the beef against these guys?"

I heard Pa's voice in my head telling me that if anyone called me a 'dago' or a 'guinea' or 'wop' or a 'goombah' like this 'mick' I should ignore it. Zio Nicola had told his boys something different, to size up the situation and figure out what the chances were for winning a fight, and then decide whether to throw the first punch. Pa said I should not call an Irishman a 'paddy' or 'mick' or use any other slurs. The Irish, Poles, Ukrainians and all the others were his customers, he said, and they could always take their business elsewhere.

"Let's go home," urged Fannie. "Ma and Pa will be worried."

Don't know, Johnny. My family reads the Irish newspaper, the one that's printed right over there. Maybe THE TIMES did it to get rid of a competitor.

Johnny Connors was the only one in the crowd who was not amused by my come-back. The major newspaper in town was THE SCRANTON TIMES, and we were standing right in front of it. The building was less than a year old. Everyone knew that its owner, Edward J. Lynett, had his roots in Ireland, specifically County Sligo.

Fannie and I turned and left. Lackawanna Avenue was closed, which meant that we had to back-track to Mulberry Street and then walk along Mifflin Avenue to the Linden Street Bridge in order to get home. We pushed through the crowds. Along the way we heard that the earlier fire was in the school on Franklin Street. We walked hurriedly across the bridge to North Seventh Avenue where the E. ROBINSON'S SONS' BREWERY building loomed on the corner. I looked at my watch. It was 12.30 a.m. "We're going to get a licking when we get home" said Fannie. We crossed Lackawanna Avenue and ran past the mills and under the rail viaduct. We could see Pa waiting outside the shop as soon as we came to Flannery's Tavern at the bottom of Scranton Street, the burning ash from his cigar shining like a little red beacon in a lighthouse. He hugged us both when we reached him. Maybe the licking would come later.

"Your mother has been worried sick. We have been looking at the smoke and flames from the back yard. Do you know what happened?"

Somebody blew up LA VOCE ITALIANA's office on Franklin Avenue.



"It was awful, Pa," added Fannie. "We were coming out of the dance when we heard the explosion. All the streets around the place were closed and we had to use the Linden Street Bridge to get home."

Ma, Vee, Rosie and Franky were sitting at the kitchen table when we came in. They all rose up at once and surrounded us. Ma's eyes were red from crying.

"We let you two go to the dance and look what happens," said Ma. "That's the last time."

Ma, it wasn't our fault. Somebody decided to settle a score with the Fascist newspaper.

"So that's what it was!" exclaimed Vee.

"What's a Fascist?" asked Franky, innocently.

"We'll talk about this tomorrow," declared Pa. "Now everybody go to bed. It's late and I have to open the shop tomorrow morning."

I sat at the top of the stairs waiting for everyone else to use the bathroom. I could hear Ma and Pa talking.

"Didn't you tell me that Vito Strivale was in the shop asking you to buy an advertisement in their newspaper?"

"It was two weeks ago. I told him no, that I couldn't afford it. The real reason was that if I bought an advertisement it would be like I was supporting Mussolini and I didn't want to do that. He said he could offer the space on credit and I could pay in small installments. I told him I didn't buy anything on credit. Then he threatened me and said if I knew what was good for me and my family I shouldn't look like I was a disloyal Italian. I told him we were Americans, not Italians. Then he got real mad and I told him he should leave. We talked about it at the shoemaker's meeting on Monday, and everyone said that they had the same visit."

"Did anyone pay?"

"No."

"Do you think this has anything to do with why they were bombed?"

"No. Pietro Forgione said he thinks it has everything to do with what's been going on in *Italia* for the last couple of years in Sicily with Mori. We all agreed."

"You pay the other ones, don't you?"

"Not so much. They're reasonable. Sometimes I fix a pair of shoes. Anyway, if I don't pay, we wake up one morning with the sound of the fire trucks outside, and that's if we're lucky."

"It's gotten worse since Mussolini decided to get rid of them over there. Mori did a good job by getting rid of most of them, but we are paying the price."

"The rats that could swim came over here."

I imagined that they both smiled at Pa's joke.

"The police should do something. Why don't they?" asked Ma.

"They're just as happy to see us Italians shooting at each other and the crooks taking our savings so we stay poor. The politicians get paid off, too. It'll be different when our kids grow up and all the crooks are dead."

I hope Pa's right. What were they doing with a Fascist newspaper in Scranton? Who needs to read about what the politicians are doing in Italy? Isn't it enough that IL PROGRESSO is read by most of the Italian-Americans? I don't find anything in that newspaper that I'm interested in. Why should I care about what the government of Italy wants me to know? And what right do they have to ask for money? If the government in Italy is doing such a good job, why can't they afford to pay for the newspaper? The other ones take money because they are crooks. Maybe the Italian government is a bunch of crooks as well. That's not what a lot of Americans believe. Everyone seems to think Mussolini is a swell guy and a great leader. That's what it says in IL PROGRESSO. Pa doesn't think so and neither does Ma. I think they can do whatever they want over there, but they shouldn't bother us over here.

LA VOCE ITALIANA was part of Fascist Italy's propaganda apparatus. Its editor, Philip Bocchini, was the leader of the Fascist League of North America. Vito Strivale, its advertising manager, was the head of Lackawanna County's Fascist Party. Vito Bianco, the paper's treasurer and secretary, was the leader of Mussolini Forces in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Like similar newspapers printed everywhere there was an Italian community in America, Canada, Australia, Argentina—anywhere, it was used to deliver Il Duce's message, both to all people with an Italian heritage and to the governments of the countries where they were living. Italy's message to governments was that Italy was a strong country, politically, militarily and economically, and it would be well to treat Italy as an equal partner in all matters. The message to Italians outside of Italy was that in spite of the fact that they had left their homeland, and even if they had become citizens of their adopted country, they were still Italians first. At the most extreme, Fascist leaders in America tried to persuade Italian-Americans to abandon their loyalties to the United States and actively support Mussolini's political initiatives.

Not everyone appreciated this view, even those who may have had sympathetic and nostalgic feelings about Italy or the region where they had lived. Parents of boys who had been born in Italy, or who were born elsewhere but had their births registered in Italy, did not especially like to see a letter arriving around the time of their sons' eighteenth birthday calling him into the Italian Army. Perhaps, a distraught father, who was an expert coal miner and specialist in dynamiting planted the explosives at the LA VOCE ITALIANA. Anarchists and Socialists were dedicated opponents to everything that Fascism stood for. Although they were not named specifically as the culprits at the time, they were the prime suspects and the implication was clear that one of them had been the doer of the deed.

There was another, and perhaps more likely candidate, a group that had definite reasons to hold a grudge against the Italian dictator or anyone who supported him. If there were suspicions about them being involved in the bombing, those who held them remained silent. While the Fascists did not live by the code of *Omertà*, they understood it and knew what it implied for members of the *Cosa Nostra*, those who had sworn an oath of silence, non-cooperation with authorities and non-interference in the illegal actions of oth-

ers. The leaders of LA VOCE would take their revenge themselves on whoever they found to be the culprits. They would do so in due time without involving police.

The *Cosa Nostra*, or *Mafia*, were blamed by each successive Italian government following *Risorgimento* for preventing the full integration into the new country of the areas in southern Italy, in what had been the Kingdom of Naples and then the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Sicilia was foremost among these areas, but there was large-scale resistance to the government in Campagna, Basilicata, Calabria, Puglia and Molise. The landowners in these areas saw few if any benefits returning to the region for the taxes they paid, and their bitterness only escalated following The Great War in which their laborers were forced to fight and be slaughtered. For them, Mussolini was just another leader of a hated government, nothing more.

In May of 1924, before he had taken full dictatorial powers, Mussolini made a tour of the Sicilia and passed through a town called Piana dei Greci. The town had been founded in the late 15th century by a large group of Albanians who were fleeing from the Ottoman invasion and conquest of their country. The word Greci, meaning 'Greek' derives from their Greek Orthodox Christian faith. Everyone in the town spoke Albanian. Italian was a second language for those who were able to study. The mayor of the town was Francesco Cuccia. He was also the Sicilian Mafia boss, known as Don Ciccio. As the story is told, he was apparently surprised that Mussolini was not aware of 'The Code' since he allowed himself to be accompanied by a police escort. He told *Il Duce* that in his town all of his guests were under his protection. It is said that Mussolini did not appreciate being told how he should conduct himself, and expressed this to Don Ciccio in no uncertain terms. Don Ciccio naturally took offense at this public humiliation. His revenge was to keep all of the citizens from attending Mussolini's speech, except a rag-tag group of a few dozen.

Revenge is a two-edged sword. Mussolini had been humiliated but he controlled an apparatus that would prove to be at least the equal of the Sicilian Mafia. His immediate action was to have Cuccia arrested and imprisoned, where he died. As soon as Mussolini eliminated all constitutional restrictions to his power, signaled by his speech to the Italian Parliament on the 3rd of January, 1925, he set in motion his war on the Mafia. Luigi Federzoni, the Minister of the Interior, knew just the man to lead the campaign: *Prefetto di*

Ferro, the 'Iron Prefect', Cesare Primo Mori. Mori was born in Lombardia and studied at the military academy in Torino to become an officer in the military, but he joined the police instead. His first assignment was in Ravenna. He moved to Castelvetrano in Trapani, Sicilia, where he made his reputation by capturing a notorious bandit named Paolo Grisalfi before returning to Firenze in 1915. He was deployed to Sicilia after the war as part of a special force to combat the criminal gangs that were strengthened by returning war veterans who had no way of making a living because of the dire economic situation.

Mori was the Prefect of Bologna when the Fascist *squadrismo* began their brutal attacks on opponents. He voiced his opposition to their very existence, and was removed from his position for his efforts. He had officially retired from active service when Luigi Federzoni requested that he return to Sicilia and once again become the Prefect of Trapani. He joined the Fascist party, and the following year Mussolini made him Prefect of Palermo with special powers over the entire island with the mission of eradicating the Mafia. Mussolini wrote to Mori in a telegram:

"Your Excellency has carte blanche, the authority of the State must absolutely, I repeat absolutely, be re-established in Sicilia. If the laws still in force hinder you, this will be no problem, as we will draw up new laws."

Mori approached this assignment with the vigor of a missionary and the fierceness of a crusader, determined to convert those who would renounce 'The Code', and kill all who would not. He formed an army comprised of local policemen, militiamen and members of the national police force called *carabinieri*. Their methods were ruthless. Suspects' families were taken hostage, their properties were confiscated and their livestock publicly slaughtered in order to convince them to give themselves up to Mori's forces. When they did, they were beaten and tortured to obtain confessions. Mori's long experience with how *La Cosa Nostra* worked led him to understand that it succeeded in disintermediating the public authorities, consistently showing that only the Mafia could help normal citizens to obtain what was rightfully theirs by allowing the Mafia to conduct business on their behalf with the authorities. Mori and his men determined that in order to break the Mafia they had to break the bond between the Mafia and the people. Their most effective tool was to humiliate the criminals. It worked.

Those members of the Mafia who saw what was coming left before it got started. Giuseppe Carlo Bonanno was one of them. He had the nickname 'Joe Bananas' and became Don Peppino as the boss of the Bonanno crime family in America. He had lived in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn from the age of three until he was thirteen, from 1908 until 1918, when he returned to his hometown of Castellammare del Golfo on Sicilia. In 1924, he and a number of other Castellammarese Mafiosi fled to America.

Mori had enemies within the party. Two of them were Alfredo Cucco, the leader of the Fascists in Palermo, and General Antonio Di Giorgio, the military commander on the island of Sicilia. Defeating them became an obsession. He accused them of Mafia connections, and they were convicted, even though evidence against them was very thin. It started to become clear that any further actions against the Mafia would simply reinforce the belief that the Mafia was too strong to be defeated. Mussolini wanted all to believe that his efforts to eliminate it had been completely successful, and to do that he needed to end Mori's initiatives. His campaign was brought to a close in June 1929. He was recalled to Rome and made a Senator by Mussolini. He did not defeat the Mafia, but he severely curbed their activities. Without the Mafia's thumb on all financial activities, the economy on the island improved dramatically during the 1930s.



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\mathbb{X} The 11^{TH} of August, 1929 \mathbb{X}

I WAS STRETCHING MY neck to look out of the train car's window over the steep embankment and down to Roaring Brook a few hundred feet below. Great clouds of dark grey smoke belching from the locomotive and billowing past the windows, combined with the pounding rain, made seeing difficult, but I was determined. There was a memory down there for me. Pa and I were on our way to Brooklyn. Our family had made this journey from Scranton many times before to visit Zio Nicola and Zia Pasqualina and their family and Zia Assunta and Zio Patsy. They all lived on Franklin Avenue and then they moved to Bedford Avenue. But this trip was special. Pa and I were going to visit Pratt Institute and see if I could become a student there.

It was Sunday, the 11th of August, 1929. As we sat down in our seats Pa said that it was just two weeks from the date when he had boarded the steamship *Italia* in the port of Napoli to make the two-week crossing to America. "When I stepped off the ship at the end of that journey all those years ago, I had nothing of value, except the new pair of shoes I had made as an apprentice to Signore Usiglio. In a wallet strapped to my body inside my shirt was the one hundred dollars I had gotten from Signore Di Sangue on board the ship



to New York in exchange for the Italian Lira I had saved. The Lira were worth less than half of what I had received in dollars from the elderly gentleman. As we had agreed, I placed one-half of the money in the bank and used the rest to make my way from New York to Scranton and set up my shoemaking and repair shop, first on Scranton Street where you were born and then on South Seventh Avenue. I owe so much to Signore Di Sangue."

I had heard this story many, many times before, but his telling it was a way for him to show his gratitude. Ma and Pa grew up in Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi, a village in the Irpinia Mountains, which are part of the Apennines. Their families had lived there for centuries. They could never really say for certain why they ended up in Scranton. The DELAWARE, LACKAWANNA AND WESTERN RAILROAD Station from where we had just departed was not here when either of them had first arrived in Scranton. It was opened in 1908.

"What a life I have had during these last thirty-three years," said Pa. "To-day I own the building where we live and I have my shoe repair shop. Your mother and I became citizens in 1915, and we bought that building as soon after that as we could. We're saving to buy the big duplex next door where you and Franky will live when you grow up."

There were three families renting there now, including Zio Frank and Zia Anna Poppoli. Zio Frank was Pa's cousin. We were the only Italians on the block. I had not dared to mention my plans to move to California and work for Walt Disney when I finished art college.

The DL&W train glided slowly up the incline along Roaring Brook and underneath one of the two smaller side arches in the three-arched Harrison Avenue Bridge that connects Scranton's Hill Section to South Side. It was still early morning. We had attended the day's first mass in St. Lucy's Church and had walked to the station in the pouring rain. We were both soaking wet, but our seats were close to the passenger wagon's pot belly stove, and the heat from it was beginning to have an effect. The train would take us to Hoboken Terminal where we would board a ferry to cross the Hudson River to Manhattan. Then we would take a streetcar across Manhattan, over the Williamsburg Bridge and into Brooklyn. We would change to another streetcar that runs the length of Bedford Avenue. Zio and Zia had bought a four-storey brownstone on Bedford Avenue just two blocks away from the apartment they had rented for many years on Franklin Avenue. Zio Nicola's painting business was doing well, and he was putting his profits into property just like his younger brother was doing in the Belleview section of Scranton where we lived. Pa said both of their friends had told them to buy stock. The stock market had been rising steadily for several years. It was a sure bet, they said. Pa said that the Sena brothers knew there were no sure bets when it came to investments. Pa said they had learned that lesson from centuries of Irpinian earthquakes and wars, and finally the Italian Risorgimento, which left their family in Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi with nothing more than shelter.

I graduated from Scranton Technical High School in June and wanted to attend Pratt Institute in Brooklyn to study art. My first application was rejected. They sent me a letter telling me I needed to take more courses that had not been offered at Tech, and I needed to show more artwork to convince them that I would be a worthwhile student. Pa thought it was a good idea to go there and talk with them so I didn't waste time doing something that might

not lead anywhere. Pa was happy that I wanted to go to college, but he wished I would study to be a doctor or lawyer or an architect like the kids of some of his friends at St. Lucy's. "Why do you have to go to college to study art?"

Pa, you know being an artist is the only thing I've been interested in doing since I was old enough to hold a pencil. There isn't any point in studying something else. Zi'Nigol said I could live with them if I get into Pratt.



"You'll have to find a job to earn your keep, but I know I will be making lots of trips carrying baskets of food and my wine."

I wonder if Joey would have wanted to go to college. Ma said he was always sick and then he died just after he turned two. Vee is already working as a bookkeeper, and Rosie now has a job in the bookkeeping department at W.T. Grants on Lackawanna Avenue. Fannie is still in high school, but she doesn't talk about going to college, and Franky has already left school and is helping Pa in the shop. Even at the age of thirteen, Franky is able to work the machines and put on new soles and heels, but what he really wants to do is work with cars.

Figure 7: Michele and Giovanna Sena in early 1910 with their three children at the time. Standing in front of her father is Venzina, born in 1906. Seated on the arm of Giovanna's chair is Rosa, born in 1908, and on Giovanna's lap is Giuseppe, born in 1909.

It was still raining heavily as the train slowed down to stop at Mount Pocono Station. We had passed through some of the most beautiful country-side that I had ever seen, and I was filled with the same sense of awe every time I made this journey. It's not the height of the mountains or the depth of the gorges that inspires, but the feeling that the hills have existed from the beginning of time. They are old, and the bulging muscles they must have had when they were young are now soft and smooth, but they are not withered or weakened. The Delaware Water Gap, with its Indian Profile Rock on Mt. Tammany, still lay ahead.

The smell of wet wool saturated the air in the car as new passengers filed into fill empty seats. Pa had dozed off shortly after we had made the climb out of the city. The day before, after he had closed the shop in the afternoon, we had sat together there for a while. He said he was worrying about one problem he had with me living with his brother and his family.

"We raised you kids to be Americans first and then Italian-Americans. You should never be ashamed of your heritage, but it belongs to your mother's and my past, not your past and not your future. We speak Italian to each other in the house, but we all speak English outside. I have no interest in what is happening in Italy. When I left Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi in 1896, I left Italy. It was the same for your mother. This was also the advice Signore Di Sangue gave me, to embrace my new country and forget the old one. I took this advice it to heart. We're in America and that's where we will stay."

So what's the problem, Pa?

"My brother is very active in Italian-American activities, especially the Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi Society of East Brooklyn, and he's been involved in it from the time that he arrived in 1904 with his Pasqualina and Giacomo. Your uncle considers himself Santangiolesi first, Avellinesi second, Napoletani third and American last. Nicola and Pasqualina did not consider themselves Italians, at least not until recently. Italians in their eyes were the criminals—Garibaldi, Cavour and the Savoia—from the north who conquered our country, the Kingdom of Naples, in 1861 and imprisoned our Pope, Pius IX, in 1870. Every year since 1870, the Italians celebrate September 20th, the day that General Raffaele Cadorna led the Italian army into Rome, bombed the city, declared it to be the capital of the unified Italy and escorted the Pope from the Quirinale Palace to the Vatican. This celebration is a stick in the eye to Napoletani. But now he is talking about Italia like the Kingdom never existed. Your mother and I don't want you coming back to Scranton waving il Tricolore."

I don't think there's any chance of that, Pa.

"Then there is all this business with the Pope. My sister and sister-in-law are a little too religious for my taste. Assunta should have been a nun. Now she has gotten Pasqualina to join her. Every day is a fast day for them, and every day they go to mass together. They dress in black all the time, like my brother and Patsy are already dead. Now they think *Il Duce* is a hero."

Well, I don't think Mussolini is a hero. They don't have elections over there anymore. That's what my history teacher Mr. Jones said. That can't be good.

"Your history teacher is right, and it's not good."

We left the conversation there, but I could see that Pa was not convinced that it would be a good idea for me to live in Brooklyn. I would get a chance to see all of this for myself since I would be staying with my uncle's family for two weeks, until just after Labor Day on the 1st of September.

It was late afternoon when Pa and I arrived at Bedford Avenue. Zia Pasqualina had kept two plates of food warm for us, and we were both hungry after the long trip. The big kitchen in the basement was always welcoming, and there was never a shortage of food and wine. It was growing dark when we finished and climbed the stairs to the first floor living room where we would sit and talk until it was time for bed. We had a meeting arranged with the admissions officer at Pratt tomorrow, and then Pa would take the train home to Scranton. When we were all seated, Zia Pasqualina opened the conversation.

"They should make him a saint," exclaimed Zia. "The man's a saint for freeing the Pope."

"From what I have heard about him, that would be the only claim he could make for sainthood," replied Pa with a laugh. "You see what I told you," he said to me. "He's not only a hero. Now he's a saint as well!"

"He did the right thing," offered Zio Nicola, "even though it took him six years to get around to it."

"The Italians kept the Pope a prisoner for over fifty years before the Fascists took over," retorted Zia Pasqualina.

"The Pope could go to the Castel Gandolfo whenever he needed a break from his imprisonment," joked Pa, "and where does it say anything in the bible about the Pope having to have his own country?"

"Always with the jokes, Michele," huffed Zia Pasqualina. "Be careful you don't get yourself excommunicated. The Pope needs to have his own country so that the country he's in can't start making laws to change our religion, like the Italians were doing."

"My brother is not going to get excommunicated. He's a pillar of the Church, Lena," said Zio Nicola, winking at his brother. "You've seen how the priests shake his hand when he walks into Santa Lucia."

Just then, Zia Assunta walked through the door with Zio Patsy. She was wearing a black veil over her head. She never went out of their apartment

without her head covered, even if it was just to walk down the stairs from their apartment on the top floor to visit her brother and his family below. She kissed Pa and then hugged and kissed me. After she told me how handsome I am getting, she made the sign of the cross three times to ward off the *malocchio*, the 'evil eye'.

"Your brother doesn't think that *Il Duce* is a saint," snapped Zia Pasqualina.

"Oh, he's a saint, alright," retorted Zia Assunta, "at least for now. He had better keep all of his promises if he knows what's good for him."

"We'll make sure he does, right Nicola?" interjected Patsy.

"Right, Patsy. We are going to adopt him."

"What do you mean, 'adopt him'?" questioned Pa, puzzled.

"It was Father Patricelli's idea," answered Zio Patsy. "All of the societies will make him an honorary member. He will be the protector of the Catholic Church in America."

"We'll send letters to him each week telling him how much we appreciate all he is doing to make the Catholic religion the one that everyone wants to belong to over here," chimed in Zio Nicola, "and we'll tell him that every Catholic will thank him every day for his support and say prayers to make his government strong. Then the leaders of other countries, especially the United States, will admire him and look up to him for leadership."

"And then his gangsters will stop beating up priests like they have kept on doing all the while he has been talking to the Pope. Is that the idea?" asked Pa, with a good deal of irony in his voice.

"Michele!" cried both of my aunts in unison.

"That's the basic idea," replied Zio Patsy.

Wherever there were Italians in America at this time, there were societies. Some of the societies were formed in the early 1900s to help the new immigrants learn English along with learning the laws so that they didn't get themselves into trouble and end up in jail or worse, sent back to Italy. These societies helped them to find jobs as well. The idea behind these clubs was to

turn Italian immigrants into Americans. One such society was the Victor Alfieri Literary Society in Hyde Park, Scranton, named after Count Vittorio Alfieri, an eighteenth century Italian play writer whose works in praise of liberty inspired the Italian nationalists. The society was started in 1908 as the *Victor* Alfieri Club by eight men, some of whom were Michele's friends: Michael Cetta, Angelo Martelaro, Pasquale Brishese, William Colangelo, Vito Castelgrande, Pasquale Cinquegrani, Pasquale Calabrese and Vincent Russoniello, Most of these men were members of St. Lucy's parish as well. Russoniello had been the architect for the church. The Society was not affiliated with the church, but in the early days they usually had a priest as a chaplain who could help with the English lessons, since there were few others besides priests who could speak, read and write in both English and Italian. In 1911, the Victor Alfieri Club was chartered, officers were elected and bylaws were adopted. The name was changed to the Victor Alfieri Literary Society. When the Society first took in members, it was only unmarried men with 'good morals' who were accepted. A new member had to be recommended for membership by two current members. As time went on, married men were accepted for membership as well.

A second type of society was formed to provide a place to be buried for immigrants from Italy who could not or would not be buried in a Catholic cemetery, and who did not want to lie beside non-Italians. The Catholic Church in America would not allow a person to be buried in a consecrated Catholic cemetery unless the person was a member of a parish. Many of the men who came from Italy at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century were anti-clerical, agnostic or atheist. They wanted nothing to do with the Catholic Church—except to baptize their children and marry them when it was time. One of these cemetery societies was the *Roma Society* in Plains, Pennsylvania. They purchased land in West Wyoming, on the other side of the Susquehanna River from Plains, where they founded the Italian Independent Cemetery.

Another type of Italian society was intended to keep the spirit of Italy alive in those who had left. This was the purpose of the *Mutual Aid Society* of Citizens of Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi of East Brooklyn. In Italian it is La Societá di Mutuo Soccorso Cittadini di Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi di East Brooklyn. This was the club to which Zio Nicola belonged. According to its official by-laws, it was founded on August 14, 1900 "with the purpose of

educating the members to worship their native land; to protect their rights of citizenship; to recall the duty of fraternity and national solidarity; to gather them under the same name, so that they can serve with greater usefulness and devotion their homeland and the great country that hosts them." The by-laws further state that the Society "has no religious character or political color, is essentially and profoundly Italian, and that the aim of all its public activities—in addition to the fundamental internal mutual aid—is to bring honor to the Society, to Italy and to Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi." Included in its charity projects are "deeds on behalf of the native city."

Zio Nicola knew of this society even before he and Zia Pasqualina and their infant son Giacomo left for America in 1904, and he became a member soon after they arrived. It was his age group that dominated the membership rolls in 1929. New members were culled principally from the families of current members. This was because the flow of immigrants from Italy had slowed appreciably since the beginning of the Great War in July 1914. During 1914, 283,738 Italian immigrants entered the United States. Only in 1907 had more arrived, two thousand more. In 1915, the number dropped to 49,688. Beginning in the spring of 1915, Italian passenger ships were targeted by German U-boats, along with the ships from its other Allied nations. The United States would not enter the War until the 6th of April, 1917, but ships travelling to and from America were being sunk as well by the Germans nevertheless because American ships were carrying supplies to America's eventual allies. In 1918, immigration from Italy was down to 5,250 and in 1919, after The War had ended, but the aftermaths were still being felt, it was a mere 1,884.

It was in 1920 that the United States began to prepare to restrict immigration. High post-war unemployment and growing resentment toward immigrants who were changing the cultural complexion of America put pressure on politicians to take action. On the 19th of May, 1921, President Warren G. Harding signed the first *Emergency Quota Law* that restricted immigrants coming to America from any country to not more than three percent of the number of people from that country living in America in 1910. The law was meant to favor the early immigrants from Great Britain and northern European countries, and discriminate against everyone else, including—and especially—Italians. A virtual flood of Italians, over 200,000, managed to enter the United States that year before the law took effect. The *Quota Law* was

passed just a few days after the Italian election that brought victory to *Blocco Nazionale* and the *Fascisti*. Now, as a politician, Mussolini declared that America was adding further insults after its humiliating treatment of Italy following the War.

After enjoying a taste of the political life, by 1922 Mussolini was prepared to take an even larger slice of the governmental pie. The situation in the country was bordering on chaos, with riots and strikes organized by the Socialists and with the government refusing to take firm action. He claimed that only the Fascists could restore and maintain order. On the 24th of October, 1922, at the Fascist Congress in Naples, Mussolini declared before 60,000 people: "Our program is simple: we want to rule Italy." Two days later he demanded that the Prime Minister, Luigi Facta, resign and turn over the government to him and the Fascists. Facta attempted to convince the King to sign a military order to repress the Fascists. Instead, the King sent word to Mussolini in Milan to become the new Prime Minister and form a government.

All of these events were dutifully reported in IL PROGRESSO, the Italian language daily newspaper published in New York City starting in 1880. Generoso Pope had bought it in 1928 from Carlo Barsotti, its founder. It was read by the Italian immigrants who could read, like brothers Michele and Nicola Sena. The picture that was being painted of *Il Duce* was of a hero, the savior of Italy. The American newspapers also sang his praises. The *New York Times* wrote in November 1923: "Mussolini's conception of power and authority has many points in common with that of the men who inspired our own constitution—John Adams, Hamilton and Washington." American veterans of the First World War praised him as the ultimate patriot. Alvin Owsley, National Commander of the American Legion, said in 1923: "If ever needed, the American Legion stands ready to protect our country's institutions and ideals as the *Fascisti* dealt with the destructionists who menaced Italy...Do not forget that the *Fascisti* are to Italy what the American Legion is to the United States."

With the signing of the *Lateran Accords* in 1929, 'Champion of the Catholic Church' was added to his credentials. He was becoming a favorite of those Italian immigrants who cherished the memory of their homeland and the Pope. This was not by any means all or even most of the Italian men in America at the end of the 1920s, but his detractors were less vocal, possibly

because they feared for reprisals against their relatives who remained behind. For Nicola and Patsy, what was important was to keep him as a benefactor of the Church, even though they were fully aware that his support for Catholicism was both cynical and self-serving.

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Ambrogio Damiano Achille Ratti was born on the 31st of May, 1857 and became *Pope Pius XI* on the 6th of February, 1922, the Catholic Church's 259th Pontiff of Rome.¹ His predecessor, *Benedictus XV*, died on the 22nd of January of pneumonia at the young age of 67. The new Pope's papal motto was *Pax Christi in Regno Christi*, 'The Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ'. Ratti was elected Pope on the conclave's fourteenth ballot, and took the name *Pius XI*. He explained his choice of name thusly: *Pius IX* was the pope of his youth, the last Pope of the Papal States, and *Pius X* had appointed him head of the Vatican Library. It is said that his first act as pope was to restore the traditional public

blessing from the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica, *Urbi et Orbi*, which means "for the city and for the world". This tradition had been abandoned by his predecessors because of the loss of Rome to the Italian state in 1870. His gesture is interpreted as an attempt at rapprochement with the government of Italy.



On the 11th of February, 1929, the Holy See and the Fascists signed the *Lateran Accords*. As a result of the *Accords*, the Vatican, shown to the left in a map from the Annex to the *Lateran Accords*, became an independent state, the smallest in the world, with the Pope as its temporal leader, just as he was the spiritual leader of the world's then 450 million Roman Catholics. The area of

the Vatican State was a tiny fraction of the Papal States, the lands that the

¹ "G. (Giuseppe) Felici (1839-1923), fotografo papale". This means, taken either by Giuseppe Felici (1839-1923) himself or (at this age more likely) by his son Alberto (1871-1950). - Francis Aidan Gasquet (1846-1929), His Holiness Pope Pius XI: a pen portrait, a small booklet published in London by D. O'Connor

popes controlled for a thousand years prior to the formation of Italy. Nevertheless, the Accords provided the Church with a far better situation than the one it had endured for the previous six decades. Catholicism would be restored as the national religion of Italy and crucifixes would be returned to the schools and public buildings. The Church also received financial compensation of around \$100 million for the seizures of church property that began in 1860. Most importantly, the Fascists promised that they would stop persecuting priests and members of Azione Cattolica, the Roman Catholic lay association in Italy, known as Catholic Action. Because Italy was still officially a kingdom, these agreements were between the Holy See and the King of Italy. This was a mere formality since Mussolini had declared himself Italy's dictator in 1925 and had full control of the government. Mussolini's representatives conducted all of the negotiations, and if King Vittorio Emanuele III was kept informed of their progress, it was at the discretion of *Il Duce*. The Italian parliament ratified the *Lateran Accords* on June 7th. Pasqualina's and Assunta's prayers were answered.

Having the Pope as an opponent was not in Mussolini's interest, and the Pope could give Mussolini something that the new Prime Minister did not have when he rose to the position of head of the Italian state, namely, legitimacy. In spite of six decades of attempts on the part of the Italian government to secularize the Italian people, they remained predominantly and profoundly religious, and overwhelmingly Catholic. They listened to their Pope. As long as the Italian government refused to address the Church's demand that the Pope be accepted as both a secular and religious leader, Catholics would continue to be half-hearted citizens of Italy, no matter who was the country's leader.

There are two ways to eliminate opposition: intimidate them into submission; or, convert them into ardent supporters. The former has never proved to be effective in the long term. If you kill the father, the son will live for revenge. The easiest course of action for Mussolini would have been to follow the practice of his predecessors, which was to ignore the Pope. It seems he decided at an early stage to take a different course. He would negotiate with the Pope to restore the Church's former status as a State, and he would use intimidation of the clergy and the Catholic political party, *Partito Popolare Italiano*, as his levers in those negotiations. He instructed his Black Shirts to keep a watchful eye on the priests and Catholic politicians to find

anyone who spoke out against the Fascists. If the Pope was proving to be difficult, a priest or politician would be beaten or worse. If the Pope did not press too hard for concessions, the beatings would stop.

It was Jesuit Father Pietro Tacchi Venturi, who was the originator of the negotiations between the Church and the Fascists and who served as the unofficial liaison between Mussolini and the Pope during the period up to the signing of the Lateran Treaty and afterwards. In 1922, Father Venturi began to serve as a confessor to Mussolini, and Mussolini developed a trusting relationship, even a friendship with him. The Pope, recognizing this bond between the two men, chose Venturi to negotiate the purchase of the Palazzo Chigi, which Venturi had convinced Mussolini to donate to the Church as a sign of good will. It was from these successful negotiations that the idea for a reconciliation between Italy and the Church arose, and Father Venturi was the logical person to manage the delicate discussions.

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When Mussolini and his Fascists took control of the government in 1922 and began to have contacts with the Pope's emissaries, Zia Pasqualina and Zia Assunta dared to become optimistic. Through the past six years of meetings, of progress and retrenchment, of hopes and then dashed hopes, all reported from the pulpit of their church, they continued to pray. Ma did not share this religious fervor with her sister and sister-in-law, and this was another worry for Pa with me becoming part of Zio Nicola's household.

"Father Patricelli has already written to the Italian Consul here in New York," said Zio Patsy. "We got a nice letter back saying he would send it down to the Ambassador in Washington. Then we'll see."

"How can he refuse our offer to make him our patron?" asked Zio Nicola. "All we asked him for is a signed photo to put in our programs."

"His autograph is probably worth a lot of money," said Pa. "Maybe he will expect a commission on every printing."

"Always with the jokes, Michele," sighed Assunta. "Always with the jokes."

The next day, Pa and I walked the few blocks to Pratt Institute. We had a nice talk with the registrar, and he repeated what had been in the letter they had sent. Pa asked him if I took the courses and got good grades, and if I

showed talent in the art I did, whether I could be guaranteed a place. The registrar answered that the chances were very good, but he could not give any guarantees. It would depend on the number of applicants they had and the qualifications of the other students, he said. That seemed to be good enough for Pa. We thanked the registrar for his time and walked back to Bedford Avenue. Pa said his good-byes to everyone. When he kissed me good-bye, he gave me a five-dollar bill and one of his warm smiles. "Write your mother a letter," he said. "Keep your return ticket safe, and don't cause your Zio or Zia any worries." Then he retraced his journey back to Hoboken and boarded the afternoon train to Scranton.

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August 28, 1929

Dear Ma and Pa,

Well, I have been here in Brooklyn now for almost four weeks and I am beginning to get the hang of things. I know Zio is your brother, Pa, and Zia is your sister, Ma, but they are very different from both of you. They are always talking, usually at the same time, and not always about the same thing. Then Zia will start to talk to little Mikey and Zio will start talking to Franky or Jimmy and then the girls will start talking to each other. You are both so quiet and that makes all of us kids quiet too. So, most of the time I just sit there in the middle of all the noise and laugh when one of them tells a joke. On Sundays, Zi'Assunta and Zio Patsy come down for dinner after everyone comes home from mass. Zio Patsy is always telling jokes and making everyone laugh. When Zi'Assunta and Zi'Pasqualina start laughing, there is no stopping them. Cousin Lucy is sick a lot and stays home from school. Zi'Assunta asked me to say a rosary every night to help her get better, so I do.

Zi'Nigol is very busy these days. Everybody wants to have their houses painted, both inside and out. He and Cousin Jimmy work six days a week and they have hired a few young men as apprentices. They are Santangiolesi, of course. They joined the Society as soon as they landed. Jimmy is saving his money so that he can get married. I worked with them this week. Zio said that if I can paint pictures in many colors I should be able to paint a wall in only one. I was offered a full-time job when I went with Zio and Joey to the Society. One of the members, Alfonso Benvenuto, owns a sign painting business and

Zio introduced me to him. His shop is on De Kalb, close to Downtown Brooklyn, so it would be an easy walk for me. Mr. Benvenuto said he had more work than he could manage and was thinking of expanding. I thanked him, but said I would be coming home to Scranton.

Cousin Joe said that his high school chemistry teacher works nights at the adult education center. The center is in the high school. If I wanted to, I could take chemistry and biology courses there. Pratt said that the chemistry course was important because I should know the make-up of the paints and inks I would be using as an artist. In biology I will learn about the different parts of plants and animals and people so I can draw them better. I think I can draw them pretty well already, but if I need the course to get into Pratt, I will take it. I'll start with the ones at ICS.

We have been to two games already at Ebbets Field. Zi'Nigol is a big fan of the Brooklyn Robins, but he says he wishes they would take back the name 'Dodgers' that they had when he first came to Brooklyn. He says the old name will bring them better luck. The field is a forty-five-minute walk if we go at Zio's pace. Zio and Zia are not as interested in opera as you are, Pa, since Caruso died, but I think I will save money and try to hear Titta Ruffo. I have been practicing my portraits and I have made one of him. Maybe I can meet him backstage or outside the door where the performers go in and out and have him sign it. Franky thinks it's a good idea, but he thinks I should sell them to make money.

When you are in New York, you feel like you are close to everything and you're first to hear about what's happening. Last week there was a lot of talk about the stock market. I don't even know what the stock market is, or I didn't know what it was until people started talking about it maybe crashing. Zio says it's only the rich people who would lose all their money if it did crash, but Mr. Benvenuto says that if the rich people can't invest in companies, then the workers will lose their jobs. Mr. Benvenuto says President Hoover promised to put "a chicken in every pot and a car in every garage," but it's going to be hard for him to live up to that promise now. I guess we'll just have to see how things work out.

At the Society meeting I went to there was a man who came over from Italy to talk about what is happening over there. He's going around to all of the societies and telling them how the Fascists are putting everyone to work and making everything run better. He said that the people look up to Musso-lini and trust him to make Italy a great power again. He said we were all welcome to come back to live in Italy now and there would be jobs for anyone who wanted to work. He encouraged us to donate to a fund for the widows of soldiers who died in the War. He had copies of Mussolini's biography that he was selling at a very low price, and I won one in a raffle. America's ambassador to Italy, Richard Child, has a lot of good things to say about Mussolini in the first pages of the book. He calls him 'both wise and humane' and a political leader of 'permanent greatness'.

After the man from Italy left, I talked to one of the men who had just arrived a few months ago. He spoke so that no one else could hear him, but he told a very different story about how all the people are afraid of spies and how anybody who says something against the Fascists, or especially about Mussolini, can be beaten or worse. He said he had gotten into an argument with a neighbor, who is a loyal Fascist, and he had been threatened by the Black Shirts. That was the reason he decided to leave for America. It's hard to know which story is true.

Well, it's time to get some sleep now. Tomorrow is another day.

Your loving son,

Lorenzo

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THE 29^{TH} OF OCTOBER, 1929

PA WAS SITTING in the barber's chair. Louie Daverne, who had taken over his father-in-law's barbershop when the older man passed away a few years back, was just getting started on Pa's haircut and the trimming of his moustache. It was Tuesday, the 29th of October, 1929. Pa was doing what he did every four weeks during lunchtime on Tuesday. Most of Louie's customers came in on Saturday, but since Pa's shop was open on Saturday, and we were only a five-minute slow walk away from Louie's barber shop, which was situated almost at the foot of Scranton Street, just up from Flannery's Tavern, we could get there during the week during the lunch break and avoid the crowd on Saturday. Every other Tuesday he had his hair cut by his brother-in-law, Zio Vincenzo Ricciardi, at his barber shop in the front room of their home on Railroad Avenue, a few blocks away. This arrangement solved two problems: Pa supported his family while he kept up good relations in the South Seventh Avenue neighborhood.

I was waiting my turn, sitting in one of the comfortable oak and green leather chairs. After we got home from Brooklyn and I understood what I needed to do to get accepted to Pratt, I started to look for a job in town. Rosie talked to her boss at GRANT's and asked him if he needed to have someone paint all the signs in the store. The signs in GRANT'S windows looked like they had been made by an amateur, which they were. Her boss was doing them himself. He said he could think about hiring me, but he couldn't pay me very much. I went in to meet him and took along samples of the signs I had made. I could see he was trying not to look too pleased so he wouldn't have to pay me more than a bare minimum, but I got the job. He said he would pay a little extra if I did the show windows as well. I set up a painting workshop in a corner of the basement and worked there during the days and fixed the show windows on some evenings. The rest of the time I took courses through the International Correspondence School to make up the credits I was missing.



Figure 8: Larry Sena in the show window of W.T. Grant Co. on Lackawanna Avenue, Scranton, PA in 1930.

Bob Hanlon, who lived a few houses away from us and liked to come in to read the paper and smoke a cigar, was also sitting in one of the oak chairs, reading the morning edition of THE SCRANTON REPUBLICAN. Since the Hanlons were Democrats, it would not do to have the Republican newspaper delivered to the house, but Mr. Hanlon knew that THE REPUBLICAN had the better economy section. All the news was about the stock market crashing.

"Do you own stocks, Michael?" Mr. Hanlon asked, without looking out from behind the newspaper he was reading. Pa was 'Michael' or 'Mike'—but never 'Mickey' or 'Mikey'—to all of the non-Italian men in the neighborhood who were around his age, and Mr. Sena to all the others.

"I never went near them," Pa replied, "but maybe it's a good time to buy with the prices so low."

"I bought some shares a few months ago, in August when the market peaked," said Louie, shaking his head. "My wife went nuts when she heard I had spent part of our savings on them. One of my customers—I won't name names—said they were a sure thing. That's what I told her, they're a sure thing. We'll triple our money by Christmas, I said. They're worthless now. She's started back at the silk mill to make up the loss."

"I guess he won't be coming in for a shave," joked Pa, swiping his right index finger across his throat.

"I haven't seen him since the stocks started going down," replied Louie.

"Just as well; he probably lost his shirt like the rest of us."

"They're calling it 'Black Monday'," said Mr. Hanlon from behind his paper, "and it's looking like it is going to be even blacker today. The paper says people have been jumping out of windows in Manhattan."

"Someone is sure to jump off the Harrison Avenue Bridge," added Louie.

"It's a long way down to Roaring Brook," said Pa, and I remembered that we had passed under the bridge just a few weeks before on our way to Brooklyn.

"People will still need to have their hair cut and their shoes mended," intoned Mr. Hanlon, "so you two businessmen should be able to ride through the rough waters that lie ahead. But you'll probably have to offer credit and lower your prices."

"There's been economic problems every couple of years since I came to America over thirty years ago," said Pa. "The best time was during the War, but then everything went bust right after it was over. It seemed like everyone was out of work. Do you think it will be worse this time?"

"If I had a crystal ball I'd join the circus," replied Mr. Hanlon with a laugh. "That's what I'd do, I'd hitch up my wagon to the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus the next time they're in town and the whole shebang marches down South Seventh Avenue."

"Make sure you don't hitch your wagon up behind an elephant," added Louie. "Remember how much elephant manure they left on the street the last time they passed through? The *babushkas* were out there first to shovel it up and put it on their vegetable beds."

Pa and Mr. Hanlon smiled and nodded. Mr. Hanlon returned to his reading and Louie continued clipping. Pa closed his eyes and I wondered what he was thinking about. Maybe it was the stock market. It struck me suddenly

that if there were bad economic times, I might not be able to keep my job or to go to Pratt.

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My letter from Brooklyn arrived after I got home. Ma thanked me for writing, and Pa said that I should stop wasting time on reading about Italy and Mussolini and concentrate on my studies and work. Pa said that he had read in *IL PROGRESSO* about young men, sons of immigrants like me, who had decided to return to Italy because they believed they would have a better future there under Fascism than in America's democracy. "They must be living their parents' dreams," said Pa, "parents who always keep the thought alive that one day they will return. What else could be the reason for leaving America to return to the country that so many had left?"

I could see that a shiver went through Pa. Maybe he was wondering whether I could be affected by this sort of thinking while being exposed to so many different types of people in New York. I was going to have to work hard to convince him that wasn't the case if he was going to let me go back. With bad economic times coming, I wasn't sure how long he would be able to help me financially if I did get to go to school. I carefully hid my copy of Mussolini's autobiography and spent all of my spare time, after working during the days, drawing portraits, attending courses at night school and doing my homework for the courses.

Herbert Hoover carried forty out of the forty-eight states in 1928. The only northern states that voted for Smith were Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and he didn't even carry his own state of New York. But Hoover was an unlucky president. Whoever was in office in October, 1929 was going to be given the blame for what was going to happen, not just in America but in most of the world. After WWI, the United States became the world's greatest economic power, and when its economy stumbled, as it did following the stock market crash, the economies of most countries would be affected. Hoover had been in charge of the relief efforts in Europe following the War. He oversaw the distribution of food and clothing to the people of Europe who were displaced by the tragedy that European leaders had brought about. American citizens wondered why the president could give food and shelter to foreigners but not to the poor and homeless in his own country left destitute

by The Great Depression. Their collective disappointment would cost him the Presidency after just one term.

In the 1932 election, when America was in the deepest depths of the Great Depression, Hoover lost to the Governor of New York, Franklin Delano Roosevelt—known as FDR—a fifth cousin to former Republican president Theodore Roosevelt, whose niece, Eleanor Roosevelt, became FDR's wife. Everyone was suffering from the Depression, and everyone felt that something more drastic had to be done than simply waiting for the wound to heal itself, as it seemed President Hoover and his administration were doing. By the time of the election, nearly thirty percent of the American workforce was unemployed and stocks were worth only about twenty percent of their value in the summer of 1929.

While America and its president were suffering through the Great Depression, Italy and *Il Duce* were being praised for doing an admirable job to strengthen the Italian economy and the welfare of its citizens. In May 1932, **Fortune Magazine** wrote: "In the world depression, marked by governmental wandering and uncertainty, Mussolini remains direct. He presents, too, the virtue of force and centralized government acting without conflict for the whole of the nation at once."

Roosevelt took over the presidency of the United States in March 1933. He began immediately to set in motion the forces of his New Deal for America, which Fortune Magazine in July of the previous year had compared to Fascist Italy's social policies. "The Corporate State is to Mussolini what the New Deal is to Roosevelt," it stated—and this was meant to be a compliment to Roosevelt. The President wrote about Mussolini to an American envoy in Italy that he was "...much interested and deeply impressed by what he has accomplished and by his evidenced honest purpose of restoring Italy and seeking to prevent general European trouble." He wrote a few weeks later: "I don't mind telling you in confidence that I am keeping in fairly close touch with the admirable Italian gentleman."

So, in spite of the brutal methods he used to take and keep absolute power over the people of Italy, he was praised in the press, glorified by the Catholic Church and lionized by noteworthy people in America, including the president himself. What were the sons and daughters of Italian immigrants to think? Their parents told them that they had left Italy because life there was

not worth living, or they had left so that they did not have to die in a useless war. Would Italy now be worth dying for if there was a war, or is life now worth living in a country where all control resides with one super-human man?

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Pa said that the price Italian people in Italy were paying for the glory of *Il Duce* was too high. He would rather be able to vote in a free election, and he wished that Italians should be able to do so as well. He had voted for Herbert Hoover in 1928 against the Democrat, Al Smith. Some of Pa's friends told him to vote for Smith because his father was half Italian. His father had just translated his Italian name, *Ferraro*, which means 'black-smith', to the English word, 'smith'. Pa didn't think that being part Italian with an English name really qualified someone to receive his vote. Hoover was a good man and a competent administrator, most everyone said. Pa had voted for the Republican candidates in the two previous elections as well, in 1920 for Warren Harding and in 1924 for Calvin Coolidge.

In the 1932 election, for the first time, Pa voted for the Democratic candidate. He knew nothing about FDR as a person, just as he had known nothing about Hoover or Coolidge or Harding when he voted for them. His vote was cast for the person whom those around him, like Louie Daverne and Bob Hanlon, and his customers and his co-members in the Holy Name Society in St. Lucy's Church, said would be the right person to vote for. It didn't hurt that Generoso Pope was writing a lot of positive things in IL PROGRESSO about Roosevelt either. It was no more complicated than that.

I sent President Roosevelt a portrait that I drew of him. I didn't get a nice letter back like the one I got from President Coolidge, even though I think the one I did of him was better than the one I did of President Coolidge. I guess he was very busy with all the problems he had.

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\mathbb{X} The 19TH of October, 1931 \mathbb{X}

ON THE MORNING of the third Monday in every month, the Italian-American shoemakers in Scranton met at different clubs in the city to talk about their businesses and anything else that interested them. Their shops were closed on Monday mornings. They needed to go to places where they could buy the materials they used in their work, and they needed to take care of those things they could not do before they opened their shops in the mornings and closed them in the evenings on the six days that customers could come in, including Saturdays. Naturally, they could not work on Sundays, even if they did not themselves attend mass. It would not look good for their customers who did. But most of them did attend mass. Pa said he liked going to mass on Sundays because it gave him time to just sit for an hour and think about other things than work, and he enjoyed spending time with us. He also liked going to his monthly meetings with his friends and fellow shoemakers.

There was Pietro Forgione. He lived in Tripp Park on Farr Street where he had his shop. He was a member of St. Anthony of Padua Church in Bulls Head, North Scranton. He had come to America in 1897 from Foggia in the northern part of Apulia. There were also Gaetano Catarino and Giovanni Falciglia. We weren't allowed to attend the meetings, but Pa told us about them when he came home. Lately, they had been meeting at the *Victor Alfieri Literary Society* on Main Street in West Side. He said they sat around a table that was usually covered with wine glasses where copies of the local newspapers were spread: THE SCRANTON TIMES, THE SCRANTONIAN and THE SCRANTON REPUBLICAN. A copy of Sunday's IL PROGRESSO was there as well. I imagined the scene today, the 19th of October, 1931. Somewhere on each newspaper's cover page would be a headline about an event that had happened on Saturday. Al Capone, one of the Mafia's most notorious gangsters, had been convicted in a federal court in Chicago of income tax evasion. He was going to jail, probably for a long time.

I had been living with Zio Nicola and his family since just after Labor Day. I needed one more course, in chemistry, and they didn't offer it at the ICS in Scranton. Joey brought me to his teacher and the next day I had started night classes. During the day I was working with Mr. Benvenuto. It was now dinner time, and at Zio Nicola's and Zia Pasqualina's table, everyone got to talk.

"They got Capone," said Joey after everyone had sat down at the table and while the large bowl of spaghetti was being passed around.

"I feel sorry for his mother, Teresa" said Zia Pasqualina. "Some of the eight kids turned out alright, but Alphonse was a handful since he was born. That whole business with the Irish girl hurt his mother and killed his father."

"He had it coming," said Zio Patsy, "after all the killings he's done."

"It was Alphonse who did the killing, Patsy," lectured Zia Assunta, "not the old man."

"I meant Alphonse had it coming."

"It was the Massacre that did him in," added Jimmy. "He had a good thing going, but then he messed it up."

The 'Massacre' was the Valentine's Day Massacre on the 14th of February of this year.

"They got married, didn't they?" added Zia Assunta.

"Who got married?" asked Zio Nicola.

"Alphonse and the Irish girl," answered Rosie.

"After the horse ran out of the barn," quipped Zia Pasqualina.

"Gabriele was a good barber," said Zio Nicola. "Remember he worked in the neighborhood on Park Avenue. Too bad they moved to the other side of Brooklyn."

"He went straight in Baltimore for a couple of years," added Patsy. "They say he was a bookkeeper. But then he started up again when Torrio set him up in Chicago."

"Did the old man go to Chicago?" wondered Zia Pasqualina.

"I meant Alphonse went to Chicago," replied Zio Patsy wearily.

"I heard he had the bleechers at Wrigley Field and Comiskey Park filled with his lackeys who started cheering whenever he came in," commented Franky. "He did some good things with his money. What about that soup kitchen he opened up?"

"I read it was opened just before his trial," said Jimmy. "Maybe he thought the judge would go light on him."

"I guess it didn't work," joked Zio Patsy, and everyone laughed.

"The papers made it sound like he was trying to get sympathy from the judge," continued Zio Patsy. "You know, he's a *Napolitano*. The family came from Castellamare di Stabia, south of Napoli."

"People like Al Capone give us a bad name," said Jimmy. "They walk around in their expensive suits like they own the place, and you have to be careful that you don't say or do something they'll take as an insult."

"Eddie Torino says it's the laws that make people criminals," added little Mikey. "If we didn't have the stupid Prohibition laws, it wouldn't be a crime to sell liquor."

"I told you to stay away from the Torinos," admonished Zio Nicola. "Those kids are going to wind up in jail like their father."

"I suppose if it wasn't a crime to shoot people, nobody would get shot," replied Zia Assunta. "Stupido."

"How come it's the Italians that go to jail?" continued Mikey. "There must be criminals from other countries."

"Siegel and Lansky are no Italians," replied Zio Patsy. "It's the Jews and the Italians who are smart enough to be in charge."

"If he was in Sicily," said Jimmy, "the *Fascisti* would have killed him by now along with the other ones who were unlucky enough to get caught. The ones who could escape are here in America filling the shoes of the ones who get sent to jail. That's what Berto Spagna says."

"He should know," quipped Zio Patsy.

"Where's Lucy?" asked Joey. Lucy was always so sickly and quiet that nobody had noticed that she was not at the table.

"She's not feeling good," answered Rosie. "She's upstairs in bed. Maybe we should call for a doctor."

With that, the table got very quiet. Zia Pasqualina and Zia Assunta got up and went upstairs. We continued eating. I thought about what Mr. Benvenuto said at the shop during the day. We talked about Capone. Mr. Benvenuto said that the 'Mayflower's—that's what he called the people who thought they were the real Americans and all the new immigrants were just scum and the Negroes were still slaves—he said that the Mayflowers were

jealous of Capone. They weren't jealous of all gangsters, just Capone, and that's why Hoover singled him out. "Get Capone!" Hoover told his new Treasury Secretary, Andrew Mellon. Italians are supposed to be stupid, lazy and poor. There are people who call themselves scientists who write books about how Italians are an inferior race, he said. Capone proved them wrong on all scores. Only the Mayflowers should be successful and make lots of money. Capone was richer than most of them. He employed thousands of people who might otherwise be out of work due to the Great Depression. Only the Mayflowers were supposed to have the privilege of giving away money to help the needy. Capone made them all look like misers. He was admired and looked up to as a hero. And to top it all off, he boasted about it. He flaunted his success and wealth, and really enjoyed the notoriety it gave him. This didn't look good for the government or for the big shot business people, like Rockefeller, Carnegie or the Mellons.

"You can do anything you like," said Mr. Benvenuto, "but don't make the Mayflowers look inferior."

So Al Capone is a good guy?

"No. He's no better than all the other *Mafiosi* who live off other people's hard work. They should all be locked up. All I'm saying is that Capone showed them that we're not a bunch of ignoramouses and they're going to have to start to make room for us here. You're going to do that the right way, Lorenzo, by going to college and getting an education."

I wasn't trying to go to college to prove that Italian-Americans were just as smart as other people. I saw in grade school and high school that it did't matter what your last name was or where your parents or grandparents came from when it came to getting an A or an F. Some kids had an easier time with math and others with history or English. Some kids did their homework and studied for the tests and others didn't. I wouldn't suddenly be smarter if I changed my name, but maybe people would treat me differently. Maybe they would think I was a Mayflower. I wasn't planning on finding out.

I wonder how many of the Mayflowers started out as something else and are just pretending to be in the club. Maybe they changed their name to Smith like that guy who ran against Hoover.

"Al Smith. You can bet there aren't any Smiths changing their names to Ferraro."

Or any Mr. Welcomes changing their names to Signore Benvenuto!

"That's funny, Lorenzo. That's a good one. You keep that good sense of humor and it will take you as far as you want to go."

Prohibition, it was called. Making and selling alcoholic beverages was made illegal with the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution that went into effect on the 16th of January, 1920. The legislation that enabled this Amendment was the Volstead Act, named after the House of Representatives Judiciary Chairman Andrew Volstead of Minnesota and passed on the 28th of October, 1919. The Republicans had a majority in the House and the law passed in the House with a vote of 287 to 100. President Wilson, a Democrat, vetoed it, but it was passed over his veto. The Act stated that "no person shall manufacture, sell, barter, transport, import, export, deliver, or furnish any intoxicating liquor (defined as beverage containing more than 0.5% alcohol by volume) except as authorized by this act." What had been legitimate business before the Act went into effect became the province of criminals who fought over control of markets where they could have monopolies over the production, importation, distribution and sale of alcoholic beverages.

The law did not make it illegal to consume alcohol, and it allowed the production of 200 gallons of "non-intoxicating cider and fruit juice." When the Bureau of Internal Revenue had the definition of 'intoxicating' changed in mid-1920 to allow home brewing and home consumption of beverages over the 0.5% limit, it meant that wine-making—but not beer—was now possible.

Johnny Torrio had been waiting for the Eighteenth Amendment to come into effect. He was a criminal visionary who saw the great commercial opportunities it held for those who understood its potential. He had moved to Chicago in 1919 to become part of 'Big Jim' Colosimo's organization, which managed brothels and casinos. Torrio was Colosimo's wife's nephew, and when his uncle asked him to help him with extortion demands from a rival gang, he felt obligated to go to Chicago. Torrio took care of the extortionists and then decided to stay on. He prepared for Prohibition by purchasing legal breweries in America and making agreements with Canadian suppliers. He also established the invaluable web of connections

with Chicago politicians and police that he would need to make himself untouchable. When Prohibition started, Torrio was ready, but his boss wasn't.

Since Torrio moved to Chicago, Colosimo had divorced Torrio's aunt and remarried. His new wife, an actress and singer (and not an Italian-American), wanted Big Jim to settle down and stay out of the limelight. Torrio realized that the only way he was going to profit from Prohibition as he had planned was to eliminate is former uncle. He called in a hit man from Brooklyn, Frankie Yale, who killed Colosimo in May, 1920. Torrio took over the gang and began his bootlegging operation and opening places called 'speakeasies' where people would pay a premium to buy and consume alcohol.

Al Capone was recruited to Chicago by Torrio in 1921. They had known each other from their Brooklyn days, and Torrio seems to have had a high regard for his protégé. Capone was initially his enforcer, then he became his second-in-command. After only five years into Prohibition, Torrio decided to retire and move to Italy with his wife and his mother. It had been a brutal five years. Competition among the gangs was fierce, and although Torrio tried to avoid gang wars, his hand was forced by a rival, Dean O'Banion, leader of the North Side Gang, who cost him half-a-million dollars and caused him to spend a year in jail. When he got out, he ordered O'Banion killed. Yale had a hand in this rub-out as well. North Siders Hymie Weiss, Vincent Drucci and Bugs Moran, made an attempt at assassinating Torrio with bullets, billy club and kicks to the body, but somehow he survived. That's when he decided to call it quits and turn over the gang to Capone.

Capone turned a profitable but modest operation into a colossus. The gang he inherited was now called 'The Chicago Outfit'. During the next seven years, he sold drugs, booze and prostitution to the people of Chicago who seemed both willing and able to pay for the privilege. He protected himself from prosecution in Chicago by putting local politicians, judges and policeman on his payroll. Chicago's chief of police, Charles Fitzmorris, summed up the situation: "Sixty percent of my police is in the bootleg business." Capone tried to avoid taking any risks that would put him within reach of the Federal law enforcement authorities. It was reported that his operation had earnings of \$100 million, around the same earnings as Standard Oil before its breakup in 1911. He could have led the quiet and secretive life of a righ gangster, but he decided that he would flaunt his wealth and his fame. He discovered that journalists were very happy to write about him

because the same people who were buying Capone's illicit products and services also bought their newspapers.

James Doherty, a crime reporter for the CHICAGO TRIBUNE wrote that there was a double standard when it came to Capone: "The reporters wrote their stories condemning violence, then went to their speakeasies to drink their bootleg booze to forget about it." Harry Read, City Editor of the CHICAGO EVENING AMERICAN, traded positive articles in his newspaper for lavish vacations. He also coached Capone in how to make himself even more popular with the people of Chicago by playing up his generousity and playing down the violence that was an important part of his tactics to gain market share. Capone became notorious for inviting the press to his home where he donned an apron and made spaghetti and meatballs for his guests and handed out expensive cigars, belts or other gifts. Apparently, Capone had a thing for expensive belts.

Capone understood that donations to schools and the Catholic Church, and the operation of soup kitchens, did as much to protect his business as payoffs to the police and politicians. In the court of public opinion, he had the jury on his side. People in Chicago were asked if they were in favor of Prohibition, and those who were against it outnumbered those who were in favor by five-to-one. People just did not believe that drinking alcohol should be a crime, so they did not view those who sold alcohol as criminals. Al Capone was a businessman. It was that simple. The mid-to-late '20s was a time when businessmen were idolized. A book with the title *The Man Nobody Knows*, written by Bruce Barton and published in 1925, sacreligiously portrays Jesus Christ as a salesman of A-1 Sauce who becomes the founder of modern business who "picked twelve men from the bottoms of the ranks of business and forged them into an organization that conquered the world." It became a best-seller on the non-fiction list.

An article in THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE argued that "Capone supplied a huge public demand, that's all, and regarded in this light may be placed with Mr. Ford, Mr. Hearst and Proctor and Gamble."

The NEW YORK TIMES argued that Capone's "executive ability was worthy of envy" while others called Capone "a genius of mass production," noting that he even had the impeccable looks of a businessman.

There does not seem to be any hard evidence to prove a connection between Al Capone's fame and the steady stream of Italian immigrants that arrived in Chicago looking for work with The Outfit, but that there was such a stream is beyond doubt. Being employed in a successful criminal gang was better than being unemployed. Having money to spend was better than being destitute, especially as an immigrant belonging to a group of immigrants that were considered the bottom of the barrel. "If Al Capone can make it in America, so can I," was a logic that was difficult to argue with.

Chicago's growing reputation as one that was controlled by gangsters was bad for business and for the image of the city. Therefore, for the politicians who were not on Capone's payroll and for the businessmen, putting Capone behind bars became priority number one. After Herbert Hoover was elected President, he charged his Treasury Secretary, Andrew Mellon, with bringing Al Capone to justice. The Federal government pursued his illegal activities in two areas: income tax evasion and violations of Prohibition. Elliot Ness was chosen to head the operations from a Federal level under the National Prohibition Act, since it was clear to Mellon that there would be no chance to use local law enforcement authorities. Ness created a reliable team, initially comprised of fifty agents, which was later reduced to fifteen and finally to just eleven men. They were given the label "The Untouchables" because they were supposedly unbribable. They began to conduct raids against illegal stills and breweries, and within six months they had seized breweries worth over one million dollars. They employed an extensive wire-tapping operation as their main source of information.

Elliot Ness and his team wounded Capone, but it was the Internal Revenue Service that delivered the deadly shot. It was U.S. Attorney George E.Q. Johnson and IRS agent Frank Wilson who put the evidence together to bring Capone to trial and convict him. He was charged with twenty-two counts of income tax evasion and five thousand violations of the Volstead Act. On the 31st of October, 1931, he was convicted only of five counts of tax invasion, and he was sentenced to eleven years in prison. He appealed, but his appeal failed.



I convinced Zia Pasqualina that making drawings was not work so I could draw on Sunday afternoons. By the time I went back for my interview with the Pratt registrar in early October, I had a portfolio full of the signed charcoal portraits. The registrar was impressed that a would-be student from Scranton had the gumption to take his artwork backstage to have stars like Jean Harlow, Martin Downey, Joe E. Brown and Amos 'n' Andy sign them.

"Did any of the actors or actresses refuse to sign your drawings, Lawrence?" asked the registrar.

Not the big stars. The big stars were real nice. Some of them, like Edward G. Robinson, asked if they could have the portrait, and I had to explain that I was trying to get into art school and if they signed the draw-

ing it was a way of saying they thought it was good. He said he liked my spunk.

"This one of Rudy Vallée has your signature with Scranton, PA underneath. The same with Buddy Rogers. Is there a reason for putting your hometown on them?" asked the registrar.

All the others I did here in Brooklyn and they're all charcoal. These two I made when I was at home. I used pen and ink and watercolor wash on them.

"They show good technique, Lawrence," offered the registrar. "You have also done well in your make-up courses. Assuming that you get a passing grade in your chemistry course, you can start on the 1st of February, and your major will be *Pictorial Illustration*. These are not the best economic times, and I hope you will be able to finish the four-year course."

I hope so, too. When I graduate, I want to move to California and work for Walt Disney.

"That's a good goal, Lawrence," declared the registrar. "If you keep that in your thoughts for motivation to work hard and study, you will do just fine."

Edward G. Robinson

He was born Emanuel Goldenberg in Bucharest, Romania to a Yiddish-speaking family. When one of his brothers was attacked by an anti-Semitic mob, the family decided to emigrate to America. This was in 1903 when he was ten years old. He grew up on the Lower East Side of New York. He won a scholarship from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, changed his name to Edward Goldenberg Robinson and began a career in acting that would span sixty years. One of his most famous roles was as gangster Caesar Enrico Bandello in Little Caesar in 1931. He was an outspoken critic of Fascism and Nazism.



Fifi D'Orsay

She was born Marie-Rose Angelina Yvonne Lussier in Montreal. She was a young typist with the desire to become an actress, so she went to New York City. After a period in vaudeville, she went to Hollywood, adopted the surname "D'Orsay" (after a favorite perfume) and began a career in movies, often cast in roles as a naughty French girl from "gay Paris". Although she never became a super star, she was a hard worker and appeared alongside stars like Bing Crosby and Buster Crabbe. She alternated her appearances in film with continued performances in New York's vaudeville. She and Helen Kane were good friends.



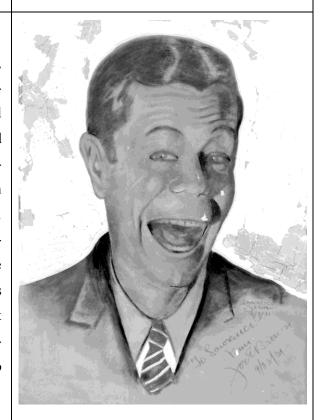
Kate Smith

Katheryn Elizabeth Smith was born in 1907 in Greenville, Virginia, close to Washington, DC. Her father owned a newspaper and magazine distribution company. She started singing at the age of four, never took singing lessons and by the time she was eight she was entertaining WWI troops at the Army camps around the DC area. Her parents sent her to George Washington University to study nursing, but she wanted to go into show business. Her first Broadway appearance was in 1926 in *Honeymoon Lane*, and her musical career began in1930 when she was signed by Columbia Records. She said of herself, "I'm big, and I sing, and boy, when I sing, I sing all over!"



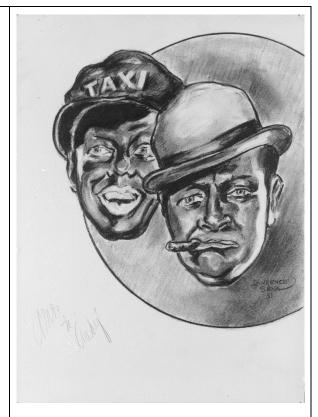
Joe E. Brown

Joseph Evans Brown started life in Holgate, Ohio in 1891. He was athletic, and joined a circus tumbling act at the age of ten. He played professional baseball for three years—and turned down a chance to play with the Yankees—before moving to Vaudeville, then Broadway and finally starting in films in 1928. He became a star after appearing in the first all-color, all-talking musical comedy, On with the Show, in 1929. By 1931, he had top billing. His most distinct physical feature was his mouth. It was said that he had 'an enormous elasticmouth smile'. He was liked because he gave so much of himself.



Amos and Andy

Amos 'n' Andy is the name an American radio and television program that is set in Harlem, Manhattan. The original radio show started in 1928. It was created, written and voiced by two white actors, Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll. They played a number of different characters, including the Amos Jones (Gosden) and Andrew Hogg Brown (Correll).



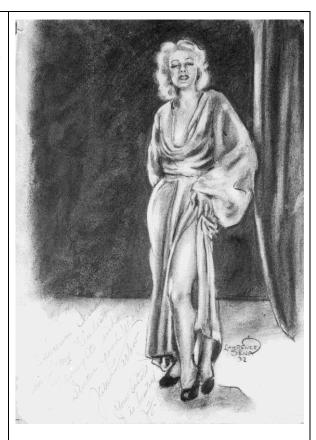
Raquel Torres

Raquel Torres was born in Hermosillo, Mexico as Paula Marie Osterman on the 11th of November, 1908. Her mother, whose maiden name was Torres, died while Raquel was very young and the family moved to the United States. Her name change, including adoption of her mother's maiden surname, was done to capitalize on early Hollywood's penchant for 'Latinness'. Her career spanned the silent era and 'talkies', beginning with *White Shadows in the South Seas* in 1928, a silent film shot in Tahiti. This film was Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's first movie with fully synchronized music and effects.



Jean Harlow

Born Harlean Harlow Carpenter on the 3rd of March, 2011 in Kansas City, Missouri. Her mother divorced her father and moved with her to Hollywood in 1923. It was mother Jean who had dreams of becoming an actress, but it was daughter Harlean who succeeded five years later after moving back to Kansas City, marrying and moving back to Hollywood with her wealthy husband, Charles McGrew. She was an immediate success in her first film, Hell's Angels, in 1930. She signed with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 1932 and had leading rolls in a number of films, starting with Red Dust in 1932. Her nicknames were the "The Baby", "Blonde Bombshell" and the "Platinum Blonde".



Billy Haines

Charles William "Billy" Haines was born on the 2nd of January, 1900 in Staunton, Virginia. He was type-cast as a wisecracking, arrogant leading man. His major films included *Little Annie Rooney* in 1925, costarring with Mary Pickford, and *Show People* in 1928, costarring with Marion Davies. He successfully transitioned to 'talkies' with *Alias Jimmy Valentine* and *Navy Blues*, both in 1928. In the 1930 Quigley Poll, a survey of film exhibitors, he was listed as the top box office attraction in the country.



Lupe Vélez

María Guadalupe Villalobos Vélez, known professionally as Lupe Vélez (July 18, 1908 – December 13, 1944), was a Mexican and American stage and film actress, comedian and dancer.

Vélez began her career as a performer in Mexican vaudeville in the early 1920s. After moving to the United States, she made her first film appearance in a short film in 1927.

Nicknamed The Mexican Spitfire by the media, Vélez's personal life was as colorful as her screen persona. She had several highly publicized romances and a stormy marriage. In December 1944, Vélez died of an intentional overdose of Seconal.



Charles Buddy Rogers

Charles Edward "Buddy" Rogers (August 13, 1904 – April 21, 1999) was an American film actor and musician. During the peak of his popularity in the late 1920s and early 1930s he was publicized as "America's Boy Friend".

Nicknamed "Buddy", his most remembered performance in film was opposite Clara Bow in the 1927 Academy Award winning *Wings*, the first film ever honored as Best Picture. In 1968, he appeared as himself in an episode of *Petticoat Junction* entitled "Wings", a direct reference to the silent movie.



Bessie Love

Bessie Love, born Juanita Horton (September 10, 1898 – April 26, 1986), was an American motion picture actress who achieved prominence mainly in the silent films and early talkies. With a small frame and delicate features, she played innocent young girls, flappers, and wholesome leading ladies. Her performance in *The Broadway Melody* (1929) earned her a nomination for the Academy Award for Best Actress.

Because of her performance in *The King on Main Street* (1925), Love is credited with being the first person to dance the Charleston on film, popularizing it in the United States.



Helen Kane

Born Helen Clare Schroeder on the 4th of August, 1904 in The Bronx, New York City, she became one of America's most loved singers. Her first performance at the Paramount Theater in Times Square was her breakthrough. She sang "That's My Weakness Now" and inserted her version of the popular scat lyrics 'boopboop-a-doop' as 'poo-poo-pah-doo'. Her 'signature song' was "I Wanna Be Loved by You", in which she also used the phrase. The song was part of the 1928 Broadway hit by Oscar Hammerstein, *Good Boy*. In 1930, cartoonist Grim Natwick, created an animated cartoon called *Dizzy Dishes*, with a singing character named Betty Boop. Kane sued, but lost.



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Figure 9: Cover of the Natale di Roma Program organized and conducted by Societa'di Mutuo Soccorso Cittadini di Sant' Angelo dei Lombardi di East Brooklyn

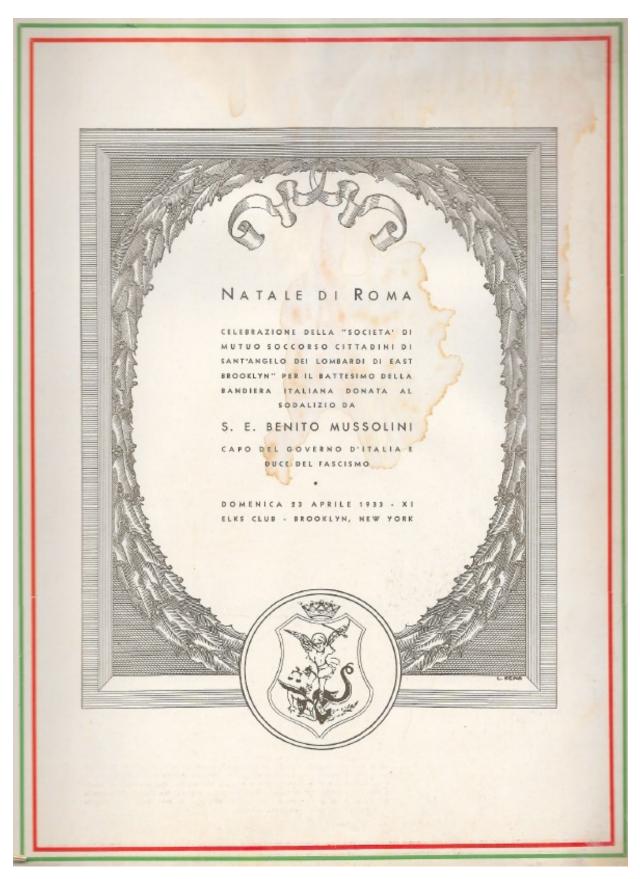


Figure 10: Translation: The Birth of Rome: Celebration of the Society for the Mutual Aid of Citizens of Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi of East Brooklyn for the christening of the Italian flag donated to the Society by S.E. Benito Mussolini, Head of Government of Italy and Leader of the Facismo. Sunday, the 23rd April, 1933.

\mathbb{X} The 15st of April, 1933 \mathbb{X}

IN A HALF-FULL subway car that would take me to the 125th Street Station in Harlem, I sat reading a newspaper. It was early morning, Saturday, the 15th of April, 1933. I worked on Saturdays at the W.T. GRANTS store in central Harlem painting signs and fixing the displays. I had had the same part-time job after high school at the GRANTS in downtown Scranton. Usually, I read the NEW YORK EVENING POST from the day before on the long train ride and the day's NEW YORK TIMES. I skimmed the headlines in THE TIMES: Roosevelt Links a Minimum Wage to Huge Job Drive; Huey Long's Taxes Are Investigated; House Republicans Fight Arms Embargo-Oppose Giving Power to the President; Anti-Jewish 'Drive' Is Staged In Tokyo; Luther, Here, Says Germany Is Normal. Nothing on Italy or Mussolini today. There were a few articles about Germany and Hitler. There always seemed to be something now about Germany and Hitler since January when the Nazis took over the government and Adolf Hitler became the Chancellor, so today was no exception.

The world's political situation in the spring of 1933 was changing quickly. On the 30th of January, 1933, Paul von Hindenburg, President of the German Reich, appointed Adolf Hitler as Chancellor to lead a coalition government between the party led by Hitler, the National Socialist German Workers' Party—known to the rest of the world as the Nazi Party—and the German National People's Party (DNVP). The Nazi Party had become the largest party in the German parliament, but it did not have a majority, hence the reason for the coalition. In March elections, the Nazis were unable to secure a majority, but Hitler pushed for increased emergency powers to combat what he called threats by the Communists. An act of arson against the German parliament building was cited as proof that Communists were plotting to overthrow the government. Hitler proposed an amendment to the Weimar Constitution, called the Enabling Act, that would give him as Chancellor power to enact laws without the involvement of the Parliament. It was passed on the 24th of March, 1933, and signed into law by President von Hindenburg on the same day.

I put down THE TIMES and turned to the entertainment section in THE POST, to the *Arrivals in the Picture Theatres and News of the Hollywood Studios* page. "Today We Live", with Gary Cooper and Joan Crawford, opened yesterday at the Capitol. I have to see that one. I read the column on the new Cohens and Kellys movie. It was playing at the Rialto. I made a mental note to see that one as well. I had seen all of the first six in the series.

When I finished with the papers I took out a package from the leather shoulder bag in which I carried my pencils and brushes and other artist tools. It was a book that I had carefully wrapped in brown paper so that it would not be blemished. Even though it had the heft of a book, it was actually the program for the *Natale di Roma*, the celebration of the birth of the City of Rome that the *Sant'Angelo Society* was organizing. It was one week and a day away. What an event it would be! It would be the biggest and most important occurrence ever sponsored by the *Society* in its entire history. I had worked on the program during the past four months. It was fresh from the printer and I was as proud of the result as I could be. It had been accepted by my commercial art studio professor as a class project, and it had gotten me my first A⁺ grade. I thought about how it had all started at the end of last year.

It was a cold and snowy November evening when Zio Nicola asked me to join him, Uncle Patsy and Cousin Joey at the *Society* meeting. I wasn't a regular member of the *Society* and I didn't attend the meetings as a guest very often because of my work and studies, but I enjoyed taking a break every now and then and listening to the talk about the town where our families came from. Ma and Pa never made it a topic of conversation at home when we were growing up. The main subject of this meeting was the big event that was going to take place in April of the following year: Natale di Roma. Zio Nicola presented the program committee's proposal for the event's activities. It would start with speeches from dignitaries, including the Italian ambassador to the United States and Generoso Pope, owner and publisher of IL PROGRESSO. Then there would be a short opera with famous Italian singers from the New York Metropolitan Opera. Then there would be dinner and dancing. It all sounded very ambitious, I had thought. Suddenly, Zio was saying my name. He was proposing that I be given the job of designing the program. I turned to Cousin Joey who was sitting beside me.

Is he serious, Joey? I've never done anything like that before. There was applause, and Zio was calling for me to come up to the front of the hall.

"He's serious," replied Joey with a big smile.

After the meeting was over, I met with the program committee chairman, Rocco Tarantino, who handed me a large envelope with all the materials the committee had assembled. There were photographs of the dignitaries, including a picture of Mussolini and a signed letter from him. "We have been planning this for over a year," said Rocco. "It's now in your hands."

Before I had started to work on the program I knew very little about this day and why it was celebrated. I did know that the name for the day in Latin was Natalis Urbis Romae. I had found a book in the Pratt Library called History of Rome that was one book in a series called Library of Useful *Knowledge*. It was difficult to read and understand, but I managed to decipher the legend about the twins Romulus and Remus. Their mother was Rhea Silvia. Her father had been a king of a city in central Italy, but he was dethroned by his younger brother who killed all of the king's male heirs and forced Rhea Silvia into a life of celibacy as a Vestal Virgin. She became pregnant—there are many different stories about how—and gave birth to twin boys. They were ordered to be killed, but a servant placed them in a reed basket and set them adrift in the Tiber River. They were rescued from the river by a she-wolf at the place that would become the City of Rome. The infant twins were discovered in the wolf's lair by a shepherd named Faustulus who brought them home to his wife. She had recently lost her infant to sickness and had breast milk to feed them. What I could not find was how the Romans knew that the twins were found by the wolf on exactly April 21st, and how anyone knew that this happened in exactly 753 B.C. I decided that it really didn't matter. If you choose to celebrate something that happened a very long time ago, whether it is the day that Rome was founded or the day that Jesus Christ was born, any day will do.

There was nothing in <u>History of Rome</u>, which was written in 1830, about why *Natale di Roma* was such an important date for modern Italy. This I learned from my weekday boss, Alfonso Benvenuto. I learned from Zio Nicola that it was Mr. Benvenuto who had proposed to the Society that I be given the task of producing the program. Mr. Benvenuto explained that when Christianity came to the Roman Empire in the fourth century A.D., the Roman traditions and celebrations were either discarded or merged with Christian festivals. Rome's significance was then tied more to the Church than to its position as the capital of an empire, especially after the fall of Western Rome

to the *Longobardi*. This changed with the *Risorgimento*, explained Mr. Benvenuto. Nationalists like Garibaldi and Mazzini began to revive the tradition. 'Do you know that for a brief six-month period in 1849, Rome was taken by a group of rebels led by Mazzini and two others, and they controlled the Papal States?' Mr. Benvenuto had asked me. I had to admit that he didn't. This was really the start of what finally led to the formation of Italy in 1861 and the persecution of the Pope and the Catholic Church, Mr. Benvenuto explained.

But the reason *Natale di Roma* is so important today is because of the Fascists. It was in 1921, even before they took over the government, that they proclaimed the date as the official holiday of Fascism, in their words, 'the day signified the successful revival of the Roman greatness.' "That is what our *Society* is sponsoring and why so many people are coming from the Italian government," Mr. Benvenuto had explained.

The more I learned, the more I wondered what Pa would think about this. Would he approve of me working on a program that is so heavily supported by the Fascists? I began to worry that he would not approve. Sooner or later I will have to cross that bridge.

Do you think it's alright for us to be sponsoring this affair if it's so much connected to the Fascists?

"At least for now, relations are good between America and Italy. The idea is that with these kinds of events we help to keep those relations good. Eventually, it's going to be up to Mussolini to decide what happens."

That was what I needed to hear. That's what I would tell Pa. I met with my commercial art studio professor to show him what needed to be included in the program. "This isn't going to be a program; this is going to be a book!" he had exclaimed. Together, we made a rough estimate of the number of pages it would need and came to one hundred twenty-eight if the pages were nine inches wide and twelve inches long. "This will be just right for what is called a C-sized sheet in the printing trade," explained my professor. "I suggest that you work on the cover and start putting the pages of the book into a mock-up. Try out a few different ideas for the cover. You have a lot of good material to work with."

Among the materials I had received was a pamphlet describing the royal family and the history of the House of Savoy. There were different versions



of the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Italy. They all had the red shield with a white cross and the same four letters, F.E.R.T, repeated three times. There were photos of the flag of Italy, the 'il Tricolore', and the National Fascist Party flag, a bundle of sticks with an ax head coming out one side sitting on a black background. When I saw it for the first time, I thought there was something familiar about it, but it took me a while to put my finger on what it was. I made three different designs using the shield, the Italian flag and the words *Natale di Roma*. In all three I also added a version of the American flag. My reasoning for including the American flag was that if a flag of another country was going to be shown on something in America, the American flag should also be present. I didn't know if that was a law, but it just sounded right to me. It shouldn't look like the *Society* is just promoting Italy. After all, it is an Italian-American society, not an Italian one only. In one of the designs I added the two *fasci* on either side of the shield.

When I showed the designs to the program committee there was a great deal of discussion about what should and shouldn't be included. A few of the members believed strongly that the American flag didn't belong on a program celebrating the birth of Rome. These were the men who were the strongest supporters of Mussolini and the Fascists. Some of the members who were Monarchists but not Fascists were against having the *fasci* connected with the symbol of the monarchy because for them it was the symbol of the Fascists. Most of the members didn't like the Fascists or the King, and they felt that there should not be any mention at all of the House of Savoy. Zio Nicola was in this group. In the end, they all agreed that if they were going to have the event they were going to have to accept the fact that the Italian government would be supporting it and that Mussolini and the King were the leaders of that government, for better or worse. It was better to include all of the symbols, they reasoned, rather than leaving something out and risking making someone angry, and that the American flag had to be there as well.

Does anyone know what 'F.E.R.T' means? I asked after the decision was made.

"It's the royal family's motto and has several translations," offered Rocco Tarantino. "The one we learned in school was *Fides Erit Robur Tuum*: 'Through faith, become stronger', or in everyday language: 'Face the ups and downs of life with a spirit of endurance'."



On the back cover I had placed a new design for the *Society*'s logo. There was my name at the tip of the flag in very small letters. In the middle of the circular shape I drew a street scene image from *Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi* with a triangular version of the official Italian flag, *il Tricolore*, with the cross symbol for the House of Savoy in the middle. Peering above and below the circle were the top and bottom of a *fasci*. "What's with the *fasci* again, Lo-

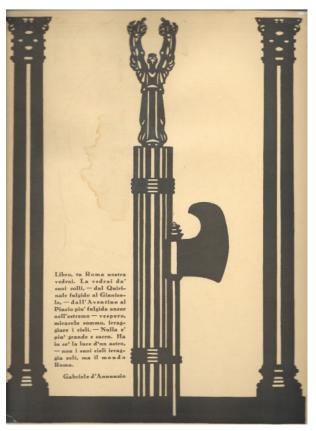
renzo?" asked one of the committee members. I pulled out a dime from my pocket. I took the design from here. The Americans have been using the fasci longer than Fascists. I can take it out if you want. They all agreed to leave it in.

I turned over the program. I had printed my name in capital letters in the lower right corner of the front cover: LAWRENCE SENA. It was the name I was given when I attended my first school day in Miss Mayo's kindergarten class at Washington Irving Number 12 elementary school, but



except for my teachers, everyone, including my brother and sisters and cousins, called me Larry. My parents and aunts and uncles called me Lorenzo. One person; three names. It was the same for Pa (Michele, Michael and Mike), my uncle (Nicola, Nicholas and Nick) and many others among our family and friends.

It was a long ride to Harlem. I took my time admiring my work. I turned to the inside cover. There was a short poem by Gabriele d'Annunzio. It seemed to be in praise of the City of Rome, but I was never sure if d'Annunzio and other Fascist supporters were writing about the City of Rome or the Roman Empire. It felt like the name was interchangeable. Were the politicians trying to compare the Italy of today with the empire that existed two thousand years ago? Did Italy plan on expanding into other countries that were once part of that empire? A few members of the Society had been to the City of Rome, but they didn't come back with so many complimentary things to say about it, and there were as many members who didn't like the Fascists as who did.



Libro, tu Roma nostra vedrai. La vedrai da' suoi colli,--dal Quirinale fulgido al Gianicolo,--dall'Aventino al Pincio piu' fulgida ancor nell'estremo--vespero, miracolo sommo, irraggiare i cieli. Nulla é piu' grande e sacro. Ha in se' la luce d'un astro, non i suoi cieli irraggia soli, ma il mondo Roma.

'Book, you Rome will see us. You will see it from its hills, from the Quirinal to the Gianicolo, from the Aventino to Pincio, the most flamboyant even in the extreme, the Vespers, the Great Miracle, the irradiation of the heavens. Nothing is bigger and sacred. It has in itself the light of a star, its skies do not radiate alone, but the world of Rome.'

Gabriele d'Annunzio

On the first page I had placed the title along with a symbol of St. Michael the Archangel, patron saint and namesake of the town of *Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi*, which translates to 'Saint Michael the Archangel of the Lombardy'. I had learned that the Lombards, or as they are called in Italian, *Longo-*

bardi, meaning 'long beards', descended from a small tribe called the Winnili, who lived in southern Scandinavia. They invaded Italy in the 6th century A.D. along with many other Germanic tribes, established a kingdom in the north and central parts of the Italian peninsula and duchies in the south. Benevento was one of these duchies, and the town of Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi was in this duchy. St. Michael the Archangel became the patron saint of the Lombards following their victory over the Greek Neapolitans in 664 A.D. when they attributed their victory to their prayers which he answered.

I continued turning the pages. All of the text, with one exception, was in Italian. Even though I spoke Italian, albeit with a *Santangiolesi* dialect, I was not schooled in Italian. It took me many hours with an Italian-English dictionary by my side to read through all the text. There was a long section from the chairman of the committee that he titled *Evviva L'Italia*, 'Hooray for Italy'. On the next page was a photo of *Il Duce* pictured reading a small book or pamphlet, looking very concentrated, deep in thought. Below the photo is a quote: "Those who imitate the story we live." What does that mean? I had thought when I read it the first time. I had asked Zio Nicola and other members of the committee, but they had no idea what it meant either. *Il Duce's* message read like a history of the rise and fall and rise again of the Italian empire.

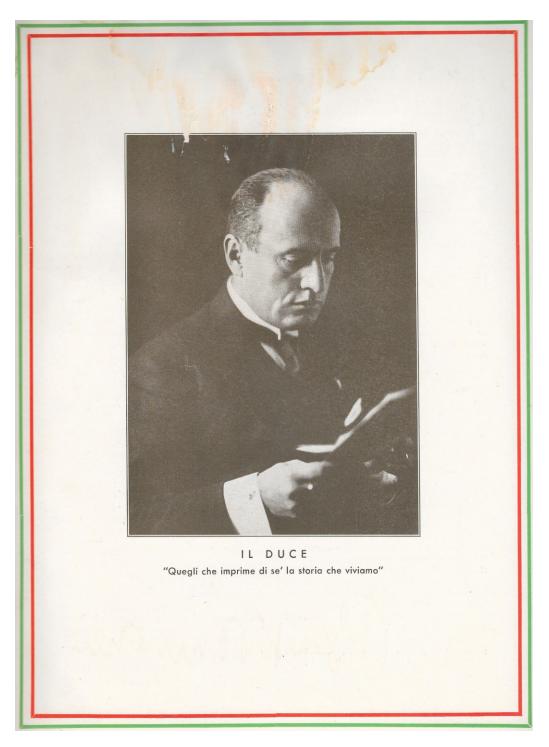


Figure 11: "Those who imitate the story we live."

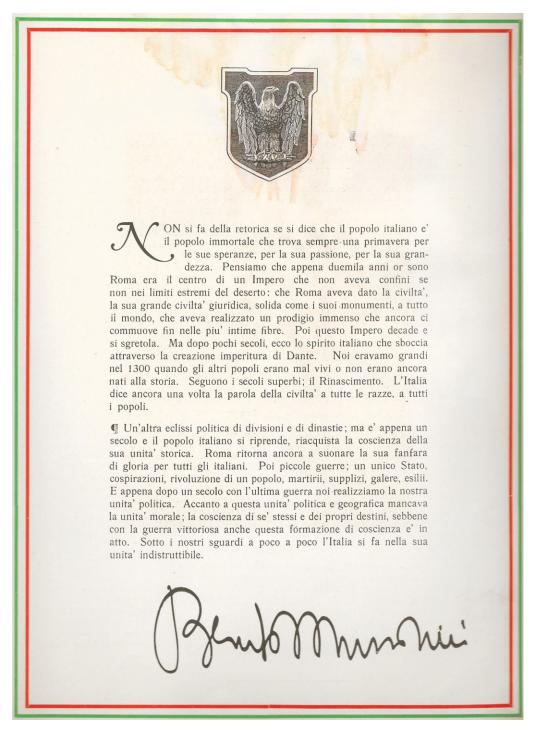


Figure 12: The original text of the message sent by Mussolini to commemorate the baptism of the Italian flag donated to the Society by S.E. Benito Mussolini

The text of the message from Benito Mussolini

There is no rhetoric if it is said that the Italian people are the immortal people who always find a spring for their hopes, for their passion, for their greatness. We think that just two thousand years ago, Rome was the center of an Empire that had no boundaries except in the extreme limits of the desert, that Rome had given its civilization, its great legal civilization, as solid as its

monuments, to all the World, who had realized an immense prodigy that still moves us into the most intimate fibers. Then this Empire decays and crumbles. But after a few centuries, here is the Italian spirit that breaks through Dante's impure creation. We were great in the 1300s when other peoples were badly alive or were not yet born into history. Following are the great centuries; the Renaissance. Italy once again says the word of civilization to all races, to all peoples.

Another political eclipse of divisions and dynasties; but it is just a century and the Italian people resume, regaining the consciousness of its historical unity. Rome is still playing its fanfare of glory for all Italians. Then small wars; a single state, conspiracies, revolution of a people, martyrdom, supplication, galleys, exiles. And just after a century with the last war we realize our political unity. Alongside this political and geographical unity there was no moral union; the consciousness of oneself and of their destinies, though with the victorious war also this formation of conscience is in progress. Under our eyes, little by little Italy is in its unquenchable unity.

Benito Mussolini

The next three pages were devoted to the flag of Italy, the first being a history of *La Bandiera Italiana*, and the next two a reproduction of the communications between the office of *Il Duce* and the Society concerning the donation of an official flag of Italy to the Society by the government of Italy. Then came the legend of the *Natale di Roma* retold as the second birth of Rome that arrived with the Fascists. The text was provided by the Italian government. It said that it wanted the memory of *Natale di Roma* "to be renewed in the heart of every Italian, and that the day should be understood in its solemnity by the whole nation to celebrate the glory of our race."

I thought back to what Mr. Benvenuto had said about Al Capone and how the people he called 'the Mayflowers' hated him because he didn't fit the stereotype. Here are the Italians saying that we are the superior race because we did all of those great things when we ruled the Roman Empire. Back then, the Germans were barbarians. I wonder what *Il Duce* thinks of Hitler.

Several pages followed containing letters and photos of ministers, including Piero Parini, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Augusto Rosso, the Italian Ambassador to the United States, and Antonio Grossardi, the General Console of Italy in New York. Grossardi had asked to have photos of his wife

and his daughter in the program. It was clear that it was more of a demand than a request. Rocco Tarantino called him a *stronzo pomposo*, but we included their photos. There were two pages with the names of all Society members and a full page with the names of all of the wives and daughters of the members who were helping with the preparations. My cousins Filomena and Rosa were there; Zia Pasqualina and Zi'Assunta were not. They went to church every day and to the market, but would never think of taking part in any type of festivities. Nevertheless, they would keep everyone up late into the night retelling every detail when we came home.



Then came the one page in English, titled 'Our American Flag'. I had brought along to one of the review meetings with the committee a photo I had taken of a page from one of the books in the Pratt Library. In the photo was a statue of a young man holding the American Flag. Under the photo was text with a statement of American values. I took out the photo and let it circulate among the committee members. There was one passage in the text that seemed to contradict everything I had read about the Italian government under the Fascists. "It (the American Flag) is the emblem of equal rights. It means self-government and the sovereignty of the individual." After everyone had had a chance to look at the photo, there were comments for and against including the page. After a few minutes, Rocco Tarantino declared: "This will be one of the pages in the program, just as it is. In English." That ended the discussion.

Figure 13: The one page in the program in English with the flag of the United States of America

The largest section of the program followed. It consisted of twelve pages of text and photographs of the major sites in *Sant' Angelo dei Lombardi*. The opening paragraph of the section described how and why the town was founded:

Saint Michael the Archangel of the Lombards was founded in the year 890 A.D. by a handful of Longobardi hiding there from the Greeks of Naples with whom they were in a war. Thus, it became a place of defense and security. Later, in 921, the town was besieged by the Saracens, who seized and plundered it. A second plundering took place in 1002 by the same ferocious bands.

There were photographs of the railway station with a steam locomotive idling while passengers boarded. There were two photos of the *Piazza De Sanctis*, one showing the *Fontana Ornamentale*. There were photos of the Church of Saint Rocco, our family's church when they lived there, the Monastery of Saint Mary, the Church of Saint Anthony and the 11th century Cathedral that was rebuilt in the 16th century after it was devastated by one of the many earthquakes. I was most fascinated by the Castle of the Imperials, *Castello degli Imperiale*. Among the materials I was given by Mr. Tarantino when I began the project was a brief history of the Castello. I translated it myself just out of interest..

The Castle of the Imperials was originally built as a fortress by the Longobardi around the 10th century and rises on the highest point of the ancient urban nucleus. It is one of four castles built along the border between the Duchy of Benevento and the Duchy of Salerno. The town grew up around the base of the Castle. According to the legend which gave the town its name, it was here that Saint Michael the Archangel appeared to the Longobardi and it was he who answered the Longobardi prayers in their battles with the Greeks.

During the Norman's domination of 1076, the Longobardi fortress was transformed into a Norman Castle. Beginning in the second half of the 16th century, however, the building was subject to numerous reconstructions that transformed it into a nobleman's residence. In the nineteenth century, the structure was first used as a court and prison seat, then as a notarial archive and offices.

I looked at these pages now, concentrating only on the photographs. I imagined standing in the *Piazza De Sanctis*, walking through the *Castello degli Imperiale* and attending mass in Saint Rocco's. What was it like to live there? It seemed like Pa and Zio Nicola had two different sets of memories.

What is it like there today? Those who had recently left there had a very different view than the representatives of the government.

I was given the text that accompanied all the photographs. I thought it would include descriptions of life in the town where our own history was born. Instead, it was a long and detailed account of the deeds performed by the *Society* from the time of its founding until the day of the event for which I was producing the program. It was as if the *Society* had decided this was the perfect time to give everyone a big pat on the back. I had the copy typeset by a specialist in the Italian language who made it exactly the right width for the columns, and I cut and pasted the columns onto the page templates along with the photographs. Then, the printer photographed the pages to make the printing forms.

Before making the final printing forms, I photographed every page and made a final mock-up and brought it to the committee. A few of the members, those who had already shown themselves to be the least in favor of the Fascists, said they felt it was too much of a Fascist propaganda piece. It was promoting a picture of Fascist Italy, rather than commemorating the day as the birth of Rome, and it was not showing enough of *Sant' Angelo dei Lombardi*. The Fascist sympathizers in the *Society* still thought it should not include any American flags. There were arguments among the members, some of them heated. Mr. Tarantino had made a list of the changes that I should make before printing. The list did not include taking out the American flags. The committee members had insisted that I include a full-page photo of myself. Cousin Joey had written the text. So I added it.

The train was now two stops from my destination. I quickly turned the remaining pages. I looked at the photo of the executive committee members. Zio Nicola and his Cousin Joey were there. Pa's and Zio's first cousin, Amadeo Sena, had his photo next to Joey's. The large photo of Rocco Tarantino was framed on each side by the new logo for the Society I had designed. There was the program for the concert and a list of all the dance music. Many pages were devoted to the advertisements that were sold to help pay for the printing of the program, hiring the hall where the event would be held and paying for the food and drinks and entertainment. Five hundred programs had been printed. Each member would receive one, as would each of the invited guests. Twelve had already been carefully wrapped and sent

by boat to *Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi* where they would be distributed according to how the government administrator saw fit.

As the train approached the station, I wrapped my own copy in its brown paper cover and placed it back in my leather shoulder bag. Eight more days until the big event.

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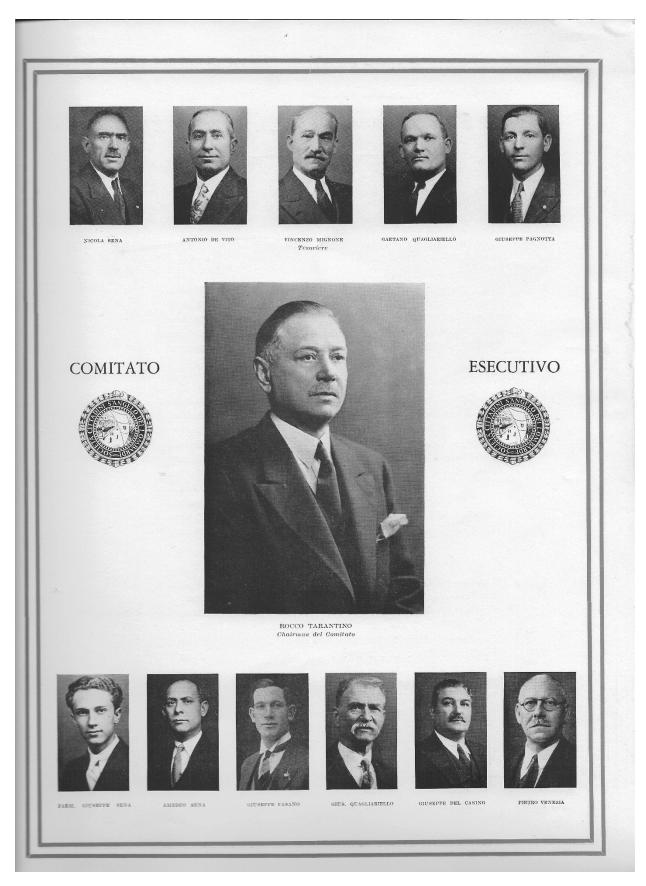


Figure 14: Executive Committee of the Natale di Roma Celebration of the Society for the Mutual Aid of Citizens of Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi of East Brooklyn with Nicola Sena in the upper left and his son, Giuseppe Sena in the lower left next to his father's cousin, Amedeo.

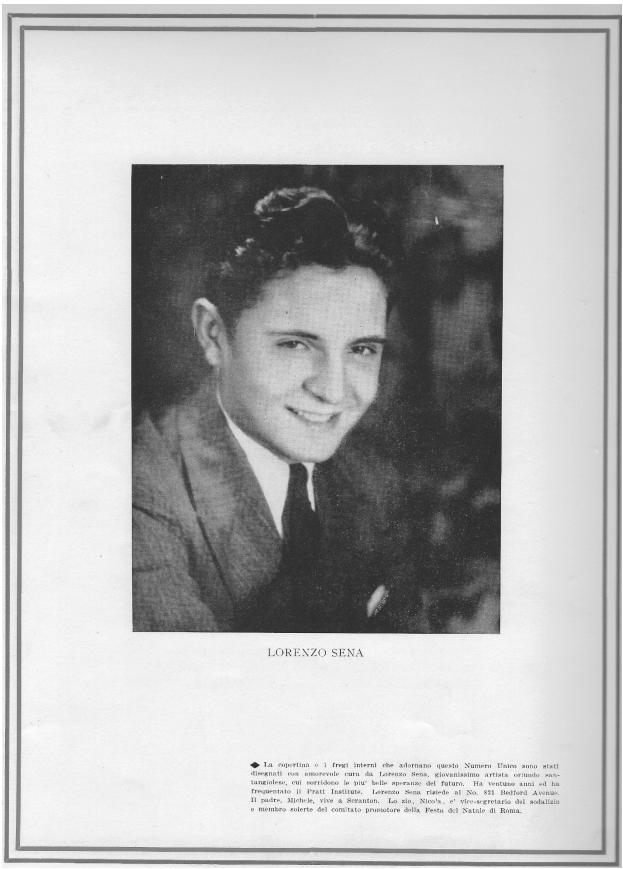


Figure 15: Translation: "The cover and the interior drawings that adorn this document have been lovingly created by Lorenzo Sena, a young artist with his roots in Sant'Angelo, with his smiles has good hopes of the future. He is 21 years old and attends the Pratt Institute. Lorenzo Sena resides at No. 831 Bedford Avenue. His father, Michele, lives in Scranton. His uncle, Nicola, is the vice-secretary of the association and a distinguished member of the promotional committee of the Natale di Roma."

	PROGRAMMA DEL CONCERTO
	Star Spangled Banner Marcia Reale Giovinezza
	I. Aida — Marcia trionfale . Verdi II. Barbiere di Siviglia — Ouverture . Rossini III. Cavalleria Rusticana — Selezioni . Mascagni IV. La Leggenda del Piave . Mario Orchestra Minichini
	XX
	I. Minnetto
	H. Elegie per Viola e Quintetto a corda Giuseppe Di Janni Albino Di Janni, solista Assistito da Giovanni Di Janni, contralesso Questa composizione fa sescuito per la prima velta, con notevole successo, alla l'etranolitan Opera Hoise, il 22 febbraio 1912.
	III, Forza del destino — Pace mio Dio Verdi Della Samonaur, soprano
	IV. Berceuse — Per vorno
	V. Andrea Chénier — Improvisio
	VI. Screnata — Tercette
	VII. Faust — O santa medaglia!
	XX
	I. Rigoletto — Selezioni ,
	II. Cavalleria Rusticana — Voi lo sapete o mamma Mascagni Diela Samottore, soprano
	III. Thais — Meditation
	IV. L'alba separa dalla luce l'ombra
	V. Scherzo — Dal Quartetto a corda in sol maggiore, Op. 6 Laucella Quartito
	VI. Mia sposa sarà la mia bandiera!
	Al piano: Maestro Pasquale Rescusso
	Direttore artistico: Prof. Roberto Roberti

Figure 16: Natale di Roma Concert Program

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Three taxis arrived at 831 Bedford Avenue at 9 a.m. on Sunday, the 23rd of April to drive us to the Elks Club on Livingston Street in Brooklyn Heights. It was only two miles, but Zio Nicola, Pa and Zio Patsy decided they could afford this luxury since we would all be dressed in our finest clothes. We had all attended the early mass together already dressed for the day, as were many of the others in church. My entire family had arrived in Brooklyn the day before. With the exception of Zia Pasqualina and Zia Assunta, and little Lucy who had died in 1931, everyone in both families would attend. Ma saw no reason to miss the event in order to keep her sister and sister-in-law company.

Zia Pasqualina had never gone out much before Lucy's death, except to shop and attend mass, but now she went out even less.

"Twenty years ago the Society wouldn't be able to rent out a hall in such a swanky place as The Elks," commented Zio Patsy as the families assembled in front of the entrance after the short taxi ride.

"The only way an Italian would have gotten into this building twenty years ago was to clean the toilets," quipped Pa.

"It wasn't here twenty years ago, *fratello mio*," replied Zio Nicola, "but I know a lot of Society members who were able to buy new houses because they worked on building it, and then Jimmy and me got to paint their houses. Our kids will join The Elks or any damn club they want."

"It's Sunday, Pa," admonished my cousin Rosa. "You shouldn't swear."

"Just like her mother," replied Zio Nicola with a laugh.



The Brooklyn Elks Lodge had the prestigious firm of McKim, Mead & White design their new headquarters on the corner of Schermerhorn and Boerum Place at 110 Livingston Street. Columbia University's main campus, Pennsylvania Railway Station, Madison Square Garden and many other prominent buildings had been designed by the firm. The building was completed in 1926 and was a wonderful example of late Beaux-Arts architecture. It had bowling alleys, a pool, and a large banquet hall, which was on this day the venue for *Natale di Roma*.

The event was scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. All of the members of the organizing committee had agreed to arrive with their families a few hours early to make sure that all of the arrangements were in order and to prepare for the arrival of the honored guests. At eleven sharp, everyone was seated. The entire banquet hall was full. At the front of the hall, before a stage that still had its curtains shut, a raised floor held a long table at which all the honored guests sat. Rocco Tarantino stood at the dais. He welcomed everyone, naming each of the guests at the head table, and then asked Father Vincenzo Jannuzzi, pastor of *Chiesa di San Giuseppe* in New York, to say a benediction. Then the band played *Marcia Reale*, the official national anthem of the Kingdom of Italy. All the Italian officials sang along, but most of the rest of us just listened since we didn't know the lyrics. I think it was mainly 'Long

live the King!' Then they played *Giovinezza*, which was the official hymn of the Italian National Fascist Party. The Fascists who were there sang this in a loud voice. It's a nice tune. Finally, they played the Star Spangled Banner, and all the Americans sang it especially loud.



Generoso Pope, publisher of IL PROGRESSO, gave the opening speech. He told us why we were all here and thanked the Italian government for the gift of the official flag of Italy. I finally got to see the man behind the words, the man who owned the newspaper my family and many other Italian-Americans had been reading since he took it over five years earlier. When I saw him, I thought he was bigger than I imagined him to be from the photograph I had of him in the program. I thought he would just praise Mussolini and Italy, like he does in his newspaper, but he was the only one who praised America and how it made it possible for the people who came here to start a new life, like he did. I guess that's why the caption for his photo is 'Godfather of the American Flag'. There was an article

about him recently in THE TIMES that I had read. It said that his was a rags-to-riches story.

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Generoso Antonio Pompilio Carlo Papa was born in 1891 in Benevento, which, like Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi, was in the Region of Campagna. His name was Papa before he changed it to the English version after coming to America in 1905. He got a job on a construction site in New York City carrying water for the workers and earning \$3.00 a week. He rose up the ranks, becoming a construction supervisor and eventually taking over as owner of Colonial Sand & Stone.

At the age of twenty-two, he established Pope Foods to import Italian products into America. Between his food importing and sand and gravel businesses, he made money, lots of it, the article said. It cost him \$2 million to buy IL PROGRESSO, but he quickly doubled its circulation, making it the largest Italian-language daily in the country. He used his profits to acquire other newspapers, like IL BOLLETTINO DELLA SERA, IL CORRIERE D'AMERICA and L'OPINIONE. He added the radio station WHOM to his empire. With all of these media properties, Pope became a major source of information on what Italian-Americans were doing in America and what Italians were doing in

Italy. Pope was active in the New York Democratic Party and used his business power to organize the Italian-American vote for his chosen party. This was especially important in the 1932 election of FDR and other Democrats. At the same time, he was an enthusiastic supporter of Mussolini and was therefore reviled by the anti-Fascists.

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After Pope finished, one after the other, the Italian government representatives praised Italy and *Il Duce*. They praised what the Fascists had done to improve the life of Italy's citizens and return the country to a place of honor in the world. One of the Italian dignitaries even talked about the Olympics held last summer in Los Angeles. Italy came in second in medals to the United States. He didn't say anything about Italy winning only 36 medals compared to America's 103. We won more gold medals than their entire total, but that wasn't important to them. They won more than Germany or France or Great Britain.

There was no mention by any of the speakers of the Great Depression that continued to hold all of the world's economies in its grip. This event, with all of the well-dressed people in attendance, gave no hint that there was economic hardship everywhere, including in Italy. We listened to the concert, we ate a good meal and then we all danced until the early evening. There were taxis waiting outside that took us all home, and when we arrived at Bedford Avenue, Zia Pasqualina and Zia Assunta were waiting with coffee and cakes to listen to us tell them about all that they had missed.

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A letter arrived in May from Pa. Pa wrote regularly and always included a little extra spending money for me. There was no money with this correspondence, just a train ticket from Hoboken to Scranton, and the letter was much shorter than usual. As I read it, my eyes filled with tears. The depression was having a very bad effect on the family's shoe repair business, Pa wrote. It didn't matter that Franky was helping him because people could not afford to have their shoes fixed. "When the spring term at Pratt is over in June, you will have to come back to Scranton to work and help the family." Venzina had seen an ad in the newspaper for a lace curtain designer at the Scranton Lace Company and went there to tell them her brother was just the

person for the job. "Maybe, when things get better, you can go back to school."

Maybe I should use all the money I have saved up to buy a train ticket to California. I know I can get some kind of job with Disney. Then I can send more money home than what I will make at the Scranton Lace Company. Ma and Pa know that I want to work for Disney when I finish, but they want me to stay in Scranton. This is their way of making sure I don't have a good chance to be hired. I held that thought for a few minutes, and then let it drop. Disobeying and disappointing Pa and Ma wasn't something I could ever do. I knew that.



In June, when the term had ended, I packed my leather suitcase with my clothes and art tools, along with a carefully wrapped copy of the *Natale di Roma* program. After long good-byes with my Brooklyn family with whom I had lived for almost two years, I made my way from Brooklyn to Manhattan and across the Hudson River by ferry to the Hoboken railroad terminal where I boarded a Delaware Lackawanna &

Hudson train for Scranton. A few days later I started work at the Scranton Lace Company as a designer of lace curtain patterns. *One day I will get to California*.

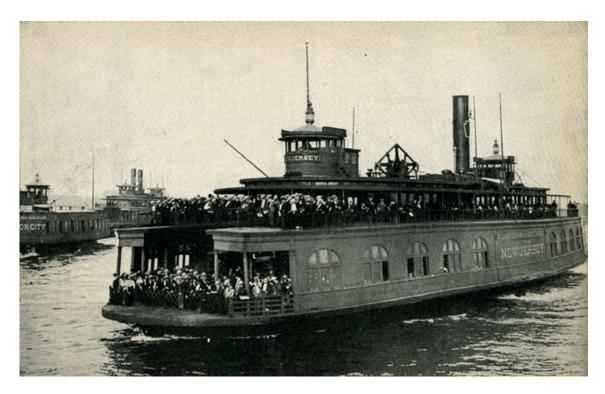


Figure 17: Ferry from Manhattan to Lackawanna Railroad Terminal in Hoboken, New Jersey

\mathbb{X} The 22ND of December, 1935 \mathbb{X}

ORA ALLA PATRIA read the headlines on the front page of the Sunday, 22nd of December, 1935 edition of IL PROGRESSO ITALO-AMERICANO. It was late in the afternoon and Fannie, Vee and I sat with Ma and Pa in the living room on the second floor over the shop. Rosie had married Jimmy Pinto in August and they spent Sundays with Jimmy's family in Dunmore. Frankie was at the car repair shop on Luzerne Street. Fannie and Vee were reading novels, Pa was reading the SCRANTON TIMES and Ma was sitting at the small desk writing a letter to Zia Pasqualina. It was my turn to read IL PROGRESSO. On Wednesday of this past week, December 18th, it had been the Day of the Wedding Ring. Women in Italy on that day exchanged their gold wedding rings for rings made of steel. Inside the steel bands was engraved ORA ALLA PATRIA, 'Gold for the Fatherland'. Along with the headlines in IL PROGRESSO there was a picture of Queen Elena handing over her wedding rings to show the royal family's support for the campaign. Generoso Pope and his newspaper were once again telling Americans of Italian descent that it was their duty to support Mussolini and his government and to do the same. Turn over your gold wedding bands, the newspaper demanded, to help the Fatherland pay for its future greatness. The more I read, the angrier I got.

In America, the Italian churches accepted the duty of serving as the places where these exchanges were made. Instead of doing it on Wednesday, they chose to have the ceremony on this Sunday, today. The Italian consulate was in charge of providing the steel rings and collecting the gold. As Ma wrote her letter, her wedding ring was still where it had been since the day she and Pa were married on the 2nd of July, 1905 in the Italian church on Bleecker Street in Greenwich Village, New York, *Chiesa Italiana della Madonna di Pompeii*.

Mia cara sorella,

Today was a black day. I will have to confess my sin of not attending mass. I could not go there because I was not going to take off my wedding ring and give it to the priest so that he could make a present to Mussolini. Michele said the church was less than half full because most of the women here feel the same way as I do. I think you gave Mussolini your ring. I'm sorry if you did because I know how much it meant to you. You cannot wear that iron band. It will only bring trouble. Nicola will buy you a new wedding ring.

I think we have to be careful about how we act toward Mussolini. One day the government people here might start wondering if we are all spies for him. If he can ask us to give him our wedding rings to support his war, what can he ask for next? Will he tell us who we should vote for President? I know that the Society wants to help the people in our old town, but if Mussolini is doing such a good job with the country, why do they still need our help? We should be using our money to build up our own places here and to make sure our grandchildren can go to college and become doctors and lawyers.

By the time you get this letter it will be after Christmas and we will be on our way to visit you for New Year's Eve.

Con tutto il mio cuore,

Giovanna

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The church was known to non-Italians as Our Lady of Pompeii. It was in the heart of the Italian district called 'Little Italy'. Almost one-half of the couples who registered to marry in the church in 1905 were from the northern provinces of Italy, but a decade earlier almost all of the church's parishioners were southerners. Siciliani, Napolitani and Italians from other southern provinces were coming to America in increasing numbers, and this was reflected in the members of church. In 1905, this church was where Italians who lived in Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan married.

Pa had told us that he and Ma had considered getting married in Scranton, in St. Lucy's Church where they both attended mass and were members. The church was in the same building as the Cabrini School and the convent for the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. It was Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini who had helped to establish the school, which opened in 1900. The school, along with the convent and church, occupied the former No. 16 school building on Chestnut Street that had been purchased by what was then known as the 'Italian Colony in Scranton', comprised of Italian Catholics within the Catholic Diocese of Scranton. Mass was held in the school's auditorium. It was only a block away from where Pa had his first shoe repair shop close to the top of Scranton Street. Just around the corner, on Chestnut Street, the Floreys had their grocery store, and Pa was one of several boarders in rooms they rented out.

Ma lived with her father, Lorenzo, her mother, Filomena Giovaniello, and her brother Vincenzo on Railroad Avenue, in Bellevue. She and her family, except for her sister Pasqualina, had come to America when Ma was in her early teens, and had settled in Scranton. Pasqualina had stayed in *Sant' Angelo dei Lombardi*, married Nicola and had her first child, Giacamo, before they left to come to America. Nonna Filomena came from a large family and they had all lived in Scranton. Pa and Ma were betrothed when they were still in *Sant' Angelo dei Lombardi*, and this is why Pa, alone among his entire family, came to Scranton instead of establishing himself in Brooklyn.

It was an unsettled time for St. Lucy's, Pa had said. Father Federico Sbrocca had been the pastor since 1901, when the founding pastor, Domenico Landro, was transferred by Bishop Hoban to a parish in Hazleton. While the Bishop decided which priests would serve in which churches, the Catholic parishes were owned and operated in the name of the congregation by elected trustees. It was the trustees who controlled the finances of the parish and managed the property. The priests received their salaries and house allowances from the trustees. It was also the trustees who hired the staff and the firms that did work on and around the church. Pa knew who the trustees for St. Lucy's were, but he did not know them personally. He minded his own business because he depended on the good will of all those around him who would bring their shoes to his shop for repair. But he understood that all was not right. He heard rumors that the trustees were arguing over control of the church's money and that Father Sbrocca was refusing to go along with what some of the trustees were doing. The faithful continued to attend mass every Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation, but many of the men decided that they did not want the money they were giving to the parish instead lining the pockets of trustees, their families and their cronies.

Pa and Ma, with the blessing of Ma's family, decided to be married in New York at *Chiesa Italiana della Madonna di Pompeii*. The Best Man was Pa's brother, Zio Nicola, and the Maid of Honor was Ma's sister and Zio Nicola's wife, Zia Pasqualina, who had arrived in Brooklyn the year before, already married and with their one-year-old son, Giacomo.



"So much has happened in those thirty years," said Pa as he looked at the wedding ring on Ma's finger. From where he was sitting he could look out of the living room window and see the new St. Lucy's Church, which sat at the top of Scranton Street right across from where he had his first shop. The church had been dedicated in 1928, fifteen years after ground was first broken on Wednesday, the 24th of September, 1913. He and his friends had been part of helping to build the church, not with their backs, but by running the money-raising events and encouraging new members to join. He had become friends with the general contractor for construction, Frank Carlucci, and the architect, Vincent Russoniello. The Great War brought construction to a halt. Russoniello had decided to frame the con-

struction with steel, and all steel was diverted to the war effort. After the war ended, building resumed, but it progressed slowly. All the Carrara marble that would cover both the interior and exterior surfaces had to be cut and shipped from Italy. Raising funds after the War proved to be difficult. "But it is finally finished, and it is magnificent," said Pa.



Figure 18: St. Lucy's Church in West Scranton

St. Lucy's was the Mother Church of the Italian Colony. There were one thousand families who were members of the parish when construction began on the new church. Like most Italian parishes, its members came from different regions of Italy, although the majority were from Campania and Sicilia. They carried their dialects and prejudices with them. They each had their own reasons for leaving their homeland, and they each had their opinions about whether they would prefer to be there or in their adopted country. Some viewed the building of a splendid church like St. Lucy's as an affirmation of the extraordinary character of Italians. Others, like Ma and Pa, viewed the effort as something that was unique to America, where a community of individuals of any ethnic background could join together and accomplish something extraordinary without the involvement of the Church, a king or the government. There were Catholic churches being built all over the city by other Italian groups, but also by Poles and Ukrainians and Lithuanians to add to those that already had been built by the Irish and Germans. There were Protestant churches being built by the Welsh and the English and the Scots and there were synagogues being built by Jews coming from all over Europe.

Then, when the church was still almost brand new, something very evil happened. Was it jealousy or spite or the long arm of the Fascists or dissatisfied gangsters that guided the hands of the people who placed dynamite beside the church in the early morning on Wednesday, the 10th of June, 1931? I sat upright in bed when I heard the blast. The next morning, when it was light, we looked out of our living room window and could see that the beautiful stained glass windows had been shattered. All of us walked up Scranton Street together to the church. Monsignor Francis Valverde was there with his assistant pastor, Monsignor Humberto Rocchi. Monsignor Valverde had been at a retreat at Marywood College when the blast occurred, and he had returned as soon as he had been informed by phone by Monsignor Rocchi. I heard the police superintendent saying that if the person who set the dynamite had been a real miner, there would have been a lot more damage done. Two of the large stained glass windows were shattered. They had been made in Germany, by a master craftsman in Munich. Now, four years later, the windows are still boarded up. There is no money to replace them, not with the bad economic times continuing. The culprits were never found, but those parishioners who disliked the Fascists continued to believe that the battles being fought in Rome between Mussolini and their Pope had been brought to their church, and they would neither forgive nor forget the desecration.

They called it Ethiopia in America and Abyssinia in Europe. Italy already had a colony that bordered Abyssinia, Italian Somaliland, which began as a protectorate in 1888 when its rulers agreed to become subjects of Italy. It was a marriage of convenience. The sultans were given arms to wage their local wars against each other and the Italians obtained ports on the Arabian Sea. One of the few trophies Italy received at the end of the World War I was the Jubaland region of Somalia which Britain ceded to Italy in 1925 as a belated reward for Italy having joined the Allies, and it did not have to ask the Americans for permission to do so. During the 1920s, Italians were encouraged to settle in Somalia to build up the colony's agriculture. In the 1930s, Italians began to move to the capital, Mogadishu, where they started small manufacturing companies. The capital grew, an airport was built, the city and the colony prospered. In 1930, there were 22,000 Italians living in Italian Somaliland.

Hostilities between Italy and Ethiopia stretched back to the 1890s when, in 1893, Italy invaded Ethiopia from its small foothold on the African continent, Italian Eritrea. The ruler of Ethiopia, Menelik II, was determined to keep his country free from dominance by a foreign power. He was given military support by Russia, who wanted to limit the number of competitor countries vying for colonies, and he was even supported by his enemies. They strenuously resisted the Italian army's advances. In the decisive Battle of Adwa, the Ethiopian army, which far outnumbered its opponent, dealt a fatal blow to the Italian aspirations for the time being. This humiliation was not forgotten by the Italians. In 1930, Italy built a fort inside the territory of Ethiopia in an area called Welwel and manned it with Somali soldiers. It took Ethiopia four years to protest this action to the Anglo-Ethiopian boundary commission, and during this time, Mussolini laid the plans for his army's invasion.

Mussolini wanted a major colony on the African continent. For him, controlling Ethiopia was essential for creating such a colony, combining it with the territories Italy already controlled. A large colony would provide additional mineral resources and land where increasing numbers of unemployed

Italians could be sent to work. In spite of what was coming from official sources in the Italian government, the Great Depression was having its effects on Italy as well. At the time, both Italy and Ethiopia were members of the League of Nations, but Italy's aggression was disregarded by the League's two most important and influential members, the United Kingdom and France, because they were determined to keep Italy as an ally against Germany. Germany had withdrawn from The League in October, 1933, just nine months after Hitler had been appointed Chancellor. The pretext was The League's denial of Germany's request to obtain military parity with France and the United Kingdom. Germany began a major military build-up following its exit from The League, destabilizing the situation on the continent and in the world. The economic sanctions were weak and ineffective, and Mussolini ignored the League's threats of political sanctions.

General Emilio De Bono was Commander-in-Chief of all Italian forces in East Africa. He had helped to found the National Fascist Party and was among the organizers of the March on Rome. Under his command was General Rodolfo Graziani, who led the attack on Ethiopia from Italian Somaliland in early October, 1935. De Bono led the main attack from Eritrea. He expected that the war would be over in a matter of days or, at most, a few weeks. In the middle of November, an impatient *Il Duce* replaced his general with Field Marshal Pietro Badoglio. In order to break through the Ethiopian defenses, Badoglio recommended that the army use chemical weapons. This was approved by Mussolini, and Badoglio immediately deployed mustard gas to neutralize the opposing forces. However, it was not until the 31st of March, 1936, at the Battle of Maychew, that the Italians defeated Emperor Haile Selassie who was commanding the last Ethiopian army. By early May, Emperor Selassie had fled the country and on the 5th of May, Badoglio led the victorious Italian forces into the capital city, Addis Ababa. Mussolini declared King Victor Emmanuel to be Emperor of Ethiopia, and, with that, Ethiopia became part of the Italian Empire.

The American government's romance with Mussolini was cooling, but it was not yet over. While the U.S. did not actively support the League's sanctions against Italy, it imposed its own restraints on trade with the warring parties. President Roosevelt, citing provisions of the country's Neutrality Act, issued proclamations that put into effect an embargo on the export of arms, ammunition, and implements of war to Italy and Ethiopia, and placed

restrictions on travel by U.S. citizens on vessels of either country. Upon issuing these proclamations on October 5, 1935, the President stated that "any of our people who voluntarily engage in transactions of any character with either of the belligerents do so at their own risk". In November, the Italian Ambassador to the U.S., Augusto Rosso, protested these measures in a meeting with Cordell Hull, the U.S. Secretary of State in Washington, calling them an 'unfriendly act'. The U.S. Secretary responded "...that I endeavor to impress upon the Ambassador that the United States and other peace-loving nations are greatly pained to see our traditional friends, the Italian people, involved in this war in spite of numerous peace treaties and despite the awful menace to the peace of the world." Following the ending of hostilities, the U.S. did not recognize Italy's occupation of Ethiopia. It was joined in this refusal by China, the Soviet Union, Spain and Mexico.

Following the bloodless seizure of control over the German government by Hitler and the Nazis, Pope Pius XI understood that he now had two dictators to appease in order to keep the Catholic churches open in the countries they controlled. However, it was important for the Church as an institution that appeasement did not appear to also mean acquiescence. There had to continue to be a semblance of disagreement and resistance, strong enough on both counts to make a difference, but benign enough to not invite a reaction that would cripple the Church's ability to continue its ministries. When in 1931 the Fascists tried to incorporate the Church's youth groups and continued its persecution of Catholic Action, the Pope issued an encyclical called *Non abbiamo bisogno* (We Have No Need). It began with the following:

"We do not need to announce to you, Venerable Brothers, the events that have recently taken place in our Roman Episcopal Church and throughout Italy, which is to say in our own Primacy, events that have had so great and profound repercussions all over the world, and more clearly in all single dioceses of Italy and the Catholic world."

The encyclical denounced the Fascists' persecutions and their worship of the State. It condemned Fascism's "revolution which snatches the young from the Church and from Jesus Christ, and which inculcates in its own young people hatred, violence and irreverence."

After only a few months in power in Germany, the Nazis began to take anti-Semitic actions. In March 1933, the Berlin City Commissioner for Health suspended Jewish doctors from practicing in the city's charity services. In April, all Jews were removed from government services and forbidden from practicing law. Limits were placed on the number of Jews who could be admitted to public schools. In July, the De-Naturalization Law revoked the citizenship of naturalized Jews, and in October, all Jews were banned from editorial posts on journals and newspapers. Representatives of the Pope asked Mussolini to take diplomatic action to help the Jews in Germany. Mussolini's response was to encourage the Pope to excommunicate Hitler in the belief that such a tactic would reduce Hitler's appeal to the Austrian Catholics and other predominantly Catholic countries. The Pope replied through his emissaries that he was not prepared to take such a drastic step, and reminded Mussolini that in 1931 the Bishops of Germany had excommunicated all leaders of the Nazi Party and banned Catholics from becoming members of the Party. Hitler was a Nazi leader and therefore he, too, had already been excommunicated. This fact did not seem to trouble the wouldbe dictator in 1931, nor did it hinder him once he gained power.

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The entire family was now gathered together in Brooklyn to celebrate the holidays. Zio Nicola said he felt a mixture of anger and sadness as he and Pa discussed the account of the *ORA ALLA PATRIA* in IL PROGRESSO. He said he had saved for a year to buy the wedding band for Zia Pasqualina. He said he remembered holding her small hand in his while he placed the band on her finger the day they were married all those years ago in *Sant' Angelo dei Lombardi*. The ring had never come off her finger until Sunday when she, Zia Assunta and most of the women in their church walked up to the altar to exchange their gold rings for worthless pieces of metal. His feelings for Mussolini, never really warm, were now ice cold, he said.

"If he couldn't afford to fight a war, why the hell did he have to start one?" demanded Zio Nicola. "Those *negri* in Africa weren't bothering anybody. No, they were minding their own business when *Il Duce* and his worthless generals decided to get themselves another colony like all the other big shots in the world. He's showing off for Hitler, that's all he's doing."

The *Society* was divided amongst those who supported Italy in its invasion of Ethiopia and those who did not. Zio Nicola found himself on the side who no longer supported the Fascists. There were arguments about whether

the League of Nations had the right to put economic sanctions on Italy. The Italian Red Cross was asking for donations to help them care for the wounded on both sides of the war, but it was clear that the money being donated was going directly to the Italian army.

Zio Patsy came into the room. "The girls are sitting at the kitchen table bawling their eyes out. We're going to have to buy them new rings."

Zio Nicola slowly lowered the newspaper to his lap. "It's not the rings, Patsy, it's the Church. It let them down and it's letting all the Catholics everywhere down."

"And it's that SOB *Il Papa Generoso* who is acting like *Il Duce's* voice in America," added Pa.

"We had such a good plan," intoned Zio Patsy. "All they had to do was stick to it and they would have had the support of the whole world."

"Mussolini had his own plan; it had to do with getting more power," said Pa. "The Church is afraid if they say or do something against him, the Fascists will beat up the priests and close down the churches."

"We're going to have to take this up at the next meeting of the Society," said Zio Patsy. "I don't see how we can keep sending money over to *Sant'Angelo* without attracting the attention of the American authorities, do you?"

"The Pope has to do something," said Zio Nicola.

"He won't," said Pa.

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Nothing symbolized the differences between the feelings and sympathies of Italian-Americans more than what had happened on the *Day of the Wedding Ring*, which for the Italian Catholics in America, was on the 22nd of December, 1935. Pa had told us that he hoped this dark day was a culmination rather than a continuation of the conflicts they had witnessed and attempted to remain apart from since the days they arrived in America. There were women who gave up their rings in St. Lucy's church on that Sunday, but they were not in the majority. Like Ma, many of the women did not want to divide their loyalties between Italy and America. In spite of all the urgings of the priests and some of their friends in the parish, they refused steadfastly to send their children to Cabrini School. Their children would attend the local

school along with their neighbors' children on South Seventh Avenue, Railroad Avenue and the rest of Bellevue. They would grow up to be Americans, not Italians.

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LA GIORNATA DELLA FEDE - Il 18 dicembre 1935 milioni di italiani consegnarono le loro fedi nuziali per contribuire allo sforzo bellico: ricevettero in cambio un anello in ferro che recava la data di quella domenica.

THE 12TH OF DECEMBER, 1937

"IT SAYS HERE that Italy is going to leave the League of Nations," said Frankie, who was reading the front page of the Sunday SCRANTON TRIBUNE when I came down for breakfast. Pa was still upstairs shaving. Ma had already been to mass and was making the *macaroni* for our midday dinner. She had started the fire in the stove before she left and along with the sun shining in through the windows the room was comfortably warm. Fannie and Vee were reading other parts of the newspaper and the Sunday funnies were lying as usual in front of my place at the table.



Figure 19: Jimmy Pinto, Rosie Sena Pinto, Vee, Fannie and Larry in the back yard of 135 South Seventh Avenue sometime around 1937

"They're going to leave officially tomorrow, it says," continued Frankie. "Mussolini claims there is no reason for them to stay since Italy's two best allies, Germany and Japan, are not members."

"Italy hasn't really been a member since the Abyssinian War," offered Vee. She and Pa were the ones who followed these stories closely and knew all the details. "After Mussolini had his big visit to Germany, all the experts figured it was just a matter of time before they left."

"The talk Mussolini gave in Berlin back in September was a waste of good radio time," said Frankie. "You couldn't hear what he was saying and then, on top of it all, he was speaking German. Who ever heard of a country's leader speaking a foreign language? What a *shidrool*."

"He was trying to show the Germans that Italians were smarter than they are," offered Vee.

It didn't work. I sat down, took a slice of toast and a soft boiled egg and poured myself a cup of coffee. I usually didn't bother with politics, but I felt I needed to add my two cents on the League of Nations. I could never figure out what that group was supposed to do. America never joined and they couldn't stop any wars. They talk big but then can't deliver because they don't have an army. When they try to tell countries how to run their affairs, the countries just up and quit. What's the point?

"I read that all of the members of the main group..." started Fannie.

"The Council. There are fifteen members," interjected Vee.

"Thank you, Miss Encyclopedia. The Council," continued Fannie. "They all have to agree or else no action can be taken. How stupid is that?"

"Are we going to have a vote on whether we're taking a drive this afternoon after dinner?" asked Frankie.

"Let's go up to Wyalusing!" suggested Fannie.

"It may be one of the last nice days before we get winter," seconded Vee.

"If we go, you're going to drive, Lorenzo," said Ma without missing a roll of the dough. "Frankie drives too fast."

"That's the fun part, Ma, driving fast," answered Frankie.

"You're going to get another ticket, Francesco," said Pa as he came into the kitchen, "and then you are going to lose your license."

Frankie can drive up and I will drive back, but you have to promise that you'll stick to the speed limit.

"Cross my heart and hope to ..."

"Italy's leaving the League, Pa," said Vee, cutting off Frankie's joke ending (fart) and changing the subject back to where it was when I came in.

"Nobody's paying any attention to them anymore. They might as well stop wasting whosever money that's paying for the whole circus," lamented Pa.

"Let's drive to Wyalusing Rocks," suggested Fannie. "It was really pretty up there when Larry, Vee and I drove there in September.

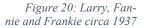
"We'll decide after dinner," said Pa and we all went back to reading and eating before getting ready to walk up the hill to mass.

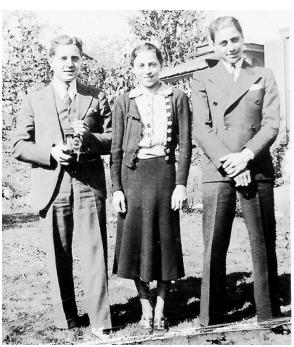
"That man is making things bad for us," said Ma. She had sat down at the table and taken a cup of coffee. She didn't have to say the name of the man she was referring to. We knew it was *Il Duce*. And she didn't have say who she meant by 'us'. It was the Italian-Americans, the group we knew we should feel like we belonged to but didn't.

"In '29, your sister and mine were calling him a saint. *Santo Benito*. It feels like yesterday that we were in Brooklyn at the *Natale di Roma* where

one person after the other talked about how great everything is in *Italia*, all due to *Santo Benito*."

"I never thought he was a saint. He's the devil. He even looks like the devil when he puts that face on. Enough talk about him. Time to finish your breakfast and get ready church. Hurry back home soon if you want to go for a drive this afternoon. I do."





Mussolini's week in Munich in late September 1937 was the last evidence he needed to cast his lot with Hitler and Nazi Germany. Hitler spared no expense or effort to exhibit the power and might of the Third Reich and to make *Il Duce* feel like a vital part of the future world that *Der Führer* believed was their destiny. But the road to Munich first passed through Spain, where the two dictators helped an aspirant to the same role, Francisco Franco Bahamonde, *El Caudillo*, the Leader, as he was called, join their ranks. They provided material resources, soldiers on the ground and planes in the air during the Spanish Civil War to aid Franco and his Nationalists against the Republicans.

It is difficult to point to an exact date when the spark flew that ignited the Spanish Civil War which brought Franco to power. It is easier to see those points for Italy and Germany. There could have been no Mussolini without *Risorgimento*, achieved in 1870, and no Hitler without the unification of Germany, achieved in 1871. Franco was a traditionalist, brought up to respect the Catholic Church and educated to be a military officer. The Republicans were anti-clerical, as were the Italians fighting for the unification of Italy. The Republicans were willing to allow the autonomy of regions, like Basque and Catalonia, while Franco saw one, unified Spain with one culture and one

language. The Second Spanish Republic, officially called just the Spanish Republic established in 1931 by the Republicans and against whom Franco and his Nationalists fought, trace their roots back to the First Spanish Republic that was created by a parliamentary proclamation on the 11th of February, 1873, which lasted until the 29th of December, 1874.

What set the proclamation in motion was the revolt in 1868 against the Queen of Spain, Isabella II. She was a member of the House of Bourbon, as were the last kings of the Kingdom of Naples (1735-1806) and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (1816-1861). After the defeat of Isabella's forces at the Battle of Alcolea, she exiled herself to France. She was forced to abdicate in 1870 following the *Glorious Revolution*. She was replaced by Amadeo I, the second son of Vittorio Emanuele II, King of Italy and a member of the House of Savoy. So, with this, both Spain and Southern Italy were ruled by members of the House of Savoy, although briefly. Amadeo's rule was short-lived. He was forced to abdicate and he returned to Italy as the First Spanish Republic was declared. However, it collapsed in less than two years. Isabella's son, Alfonso XII, was restored to the throne and the Bourbons ruled until the Spanish Republic was established in 1931 when the Republicans won control of the parliament and overthrew the monarchy.

A new constitution was adopted by the Republicans that guaranteed freedom of speech and association, gave the vote to women, allowed divorce, removed all privileges of the nobility, allowed regional autonomy and, most importantly, strictly controlled the Catholic Church's rights to property and the provision of education. As a result of this last provision, Pope Pius XI condemned the new Spanish government for oppressing the Church. Expectations among the common people were high, but it turned out that it was not possible for the Republicans to live up to the promises they made. Conservative supporters of the Church and the monarchy became more determined to stop the progressive reforms while leftist forces pushed for even more reforms. The result was a civil war that offered Hitler and Mussolini the opportunity to cooperate for the first time on achieving the same goal.

When the Spanish Republic was first established, Franco, an authoritarian rightest, fell out of grace. He was banished to a remote outpost. But when a more centrist government won elections two years later, he was recalled and became army chief of staff in 1935. Leftists took over the following year, and once again Franco was out of favor. This time he was sent to the Canary

Islands. On the 18th of July, 1936, a group of military officers, including Franco, initiated a military action that resulted in their taking control of the western half of Spain. It was then that Franco made contacts with Italy and Germany to obtain commitments of arms and assistance. Franco became the commander-in-chief (*generalissimo*) of the Nationalist forces. He had the full backing of the Catholic Church as he consolidated his power, dissolving all political parties while winning ground on the battlefield with the help of his German and Italian allies.

It was during *Il Duce's* visit to Germany in 1937 that he admitted publicly for the first time that Italy was actively aiding and abetting Franco and the Nationalists. Up to this time, he had worried that the League of Nations would place sanctions on Italy if he acknowledged assistance. It was in a speech he gave at a rally in Berlin which was broadcast around the world. He delivered his speech in German and spoke of the common ideals and interests that were inspiring cooperation between the Italian and German people. Concerning Spain, he said: "Where words are insufficient to carry on the fight we turn to weapons. We have done this in Spain, where thousands of Italian Fascist volunteers have lost their lives."

Aiding the Republicans were Italians of other stripes. One group of self-imposed exiled Italians who had left Italy because of Mussolini formed the *Garibaldi Brigade*. At the Battle of Guadalajara, Italians fought Italians, the nightmare that the Italian people had hoped would never occur. The Republicans won, and Mussolini blamed the defeat on the rogue Italians. Three months after this defeat, the leader of the *Garibaldi Brigade*, Carlos Roselli, was found murdered. Also fighting on the side of the Republicans were troops from the Soviet Union, which caused the governments of other European countries and the United States, who were extremely apprehensive about Communism, to withhold their support for the elected government. Barcelona, the center of Republican resistance, fell to the Nationalist forces in January 1939 and Madrid surrendered in March of that year.

If Hitler and Mussolini thought that their active support of the Nationalists would result in Franco becoming a grateful and dedicated ally in their cause of European domination, they were mistaken. Spain remained a neutral party in almost all respects during the coming years, except for sending 50,000 troops to the Soviet front to help the Germans.

There was one important reason that it took four years after Adolf Hitler became Germany's *Führer* for Mussolini to set foot on German soil: Mussolini hated Hitler. The two men had met once before, in Venice in 1934, when Mussolini had reluctantly accepted Hitler's invitation for a brief and less than formal visit. On the 14th of June, 1934, a JU-52 plane bearing a swastika on its wing and carrying *Der Führer* landed at the airfield of San Nicoló outside Venice. The main reason that Hitler called for this meeting was to discuss the future of Austria, but this fact was not revealed beforehand to his host. It was prompted by Italy's stance on German meddling in Austrian affairs that came to a head in May, 1934 in articles in the Italian press ordered by the government. One headline read: STOP TERRORISM IN AUSTRIA! The article declared: "These terrorist actions, directed and prepared by German agitators, are continuing to threaten the relations between Italy and Germany."

The meeting in Venice had done little to change his opinion. In fact, it hardened his views about Hitler and did not resolve the differences on the matter of Austria. Mussolini's wife, Rachele, later revealed what her husband told her following the meeting. "Benito told me that Hitler was a violent man, unable to control himself. He was more stubborn than intelligent. For hours during their meeting he insisted on quoting from his book, *Mein Kampf*, rather than discussing serious problems."

In a speech *Il Duce* gave in Bari in September, 1934, he referred to assertions that Hitler had made during the meeting in Venice about the superiority of the Germanic race compared to the Mediterranean peoples:

"Thirty centuries of history allow us Italians to consider the pitiful theories that come from the other side of the Alps, theories concocted by the offspring of men who could not write and could not inform us of their own existence at the time when Rome already had Caesar, Virgil, Augustus. Italy had a centuries' old civilization when Berlin was still a marshland populated by wild boars."

One month after the Venice meeting, Engelbert Dollfuss, Chancellor of Austria since 1932 and friend of Mussolini, was assassinated by Nazi agents as part of a failed coup attempt on the 24th of July, 1934. In a private meeting one month later between Mussolini and Austrian Vice Chancellor

Starhemberg, Starhemberg thanked Mussolini for his attempts to assist Austria. Mussolini said to Starhemberg: "What I did I did for Europe! If this group of criminals and pederasts should take over in Europe, it would mean the end of our civilization. It's a fact that this putsch was organized by the Nazi government. The Reich Chancellor had ordered the murder of Dollfuss. Hitler is the murderer. Hitler is the murder. Hitler is the murder." He went on repeating how much he despised the Führer: "A dangerous madman, a revolting individual, a sexual degenerate." Mussolini predicted that Hitler "will create an army, will rearm the German people, and go to war, perhaps in two to three years. I can't hold him off by myself."

Much can happen in three years. What was Mussolini thinking when he boarded his train in Rome on the 24th of September, 1937? He was wearing a uniform specially designed for his first state visit to Germany. It was a grey-blue Corporal of Honor uniform with a 'cornflower blue' sash across his chest and a black militia cap adorned with a red cord. The train made a stop in Forli, Cesena (named for the *Senones*, who ruled the region in the third century B.C., from where the name 'Sena' derives) for a short visit with his family. It continued into the Alps where it stopped for five hours to give *Il Duce* a chance for some sleep. Early the next morning, the train carried on into Austria. Austrian troops were stationed along the 160 kilometer route from the Italian border to Innsbruck on both sides of the tracks, facing away from the train, to protect Mussolini from attacks by anti-Fascists.



At approximately 9:00 a.m. on the 25th of September, Mussolini's train stopped at the German border town of Kiefersfelden, where Reichminister Rudolf Hess and Italian Ambassador to Germany, Bernardo Attolico, boarded the train and accompanied Mussolini to Munich, where a five-day spectacle would begin.

Figure 21: Mussolini arrives in Munich on the 25th of September. 1937

At 10:00 a.m., the train arrived at Munich's *hauptbahnhof*. A red carpet had been laid from the point where Mussolini would alight from the train to the exit from the station. Hitler was waiting on the platform for his guest,

and, after handshakes and introductions, the two men strode through the station out onto the street where they were greeted by a roaring 21-heavy gun salute, cheering crowds and bands alternating between Giovinezza and Deutschlandlied, the Nazi hymn. After a drive through the streets in an open Mercedes-Benz automobile, the two men met, accompanied by Count Galeazzo Ciano, who had travelled with Mussolini, and Baron Constantin von Neurath, the German Foreign Minister. During their talk they agreed to treat Japan as an ally and to continue their support for Franco and his Nationalist forces. Hitler revealed his plans for Austria. Mussolini had already given up on trying to hold off Germany's takeover of Austria and asked only that Hitler inform him in advance when the eventual action would take place. When the discussions were concluded the leaders bestowed honors on each other. Mussolini presented Hitler with a commission as a Corporal of Honor in the Fascist Militia, which *Il Duce* had reserved for himself alone. Hitler presented Mussolini with the Grand Cross of the German Eagle Order, which had been created in May. The Grand Cross was in gold and festooned with diamonds.

On the 26th and 27th, Mussolini was given tours of military facilities and factories building the armaments that would be used to realize *Der Führer's* dreams. Mussolini was duly impressed. In separate trains that moved at the same speed along parallel tracks, symbolizing their equality, the two men were transported to Berlin, arriving in the evening of the 27th of September. Count Ciano described the entry into the capital as "Triumphal". The three previous days had been the prelude; the next two days in Berlin would be the main event. The professional stage designer, Benno von Arendt, was enlisted to transform Berlin into a fantasy land.

The 28th, a Tuesday, was declared a national holiday in Germany. In the evening, the two leaders would deliver speeches from an area adjacent to the Olympic Stadium. The speeches were to be broadcast live to twenty countries, including America. Britain did not accept the invitation and the Soviet Union was not invited. Reich Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, mounted the podium as heavy rain clouds hung overhead and introduced the two dictators with the following: "The whole world is listening to you."

Hitler rose to speak and introduced *Il Duce*: "What moves us most at the moment is the deep-rooted joy to see in our midst a guest who is one of the lonely men in history. These two men are not put to trial by historic events but determine the history of their country themselves."

Mussolini rose and spoke in German to the adoring crowd who greeted him with the Roman salute. As he began, the skies opened up and a torrent of rain fell over the crowd and the speakers. In his excitement, he spoke faster and faster and, with the sound of the pounding rain, he became more and more unintelligible. He soldiered on to the end of his speech. His message could be summed up thusly: Italy and Germany must "unite in one single, unshakable determination."

The next day, after more parades and lunch, Mussolini was escorted by Hitler to the Berlin train station where they shook hands and conversed through the open window even while Mussolini's train pulled away from the platform. Hess stayed on the train until it reached the border with Austria. The Rome-Berlin Axis was now a fact.

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My four-door 1936 Chevrolet Master carried all six of us comfortably. It would have taken Rosie as well. Ma and Pa sat in the back with Vee, and Frankie, Fannie and I had plenty of room in the front. No one expected Frankie to drive slowly, and he didn't disappoint us. He was a very good driver. He got his license as soon as he turned eighteen, but he had been driving since he was thirteen with the mechanics he hung around. By the time we reached Clarks Summit, Pa was asleep and snoring. Ma had brought her knitting and Vee had a book. Fannie was pointing out to anyone who was awake and listening all the sights. It was a beautiful late fall day and we were



going for a ride in the country. *Pa*, I said loud enough to wake him up, *do you think we would be able to own a car if we were living in Italy?* It took him a few seconds to wake up and then think of his answer.

"If we were back in Sant'Angelo, you would all be sleeping in the same room, we would be eating dinner where your mother and I would spend the night and you might be lucky enough to ride a donkey up and down the hill a couple of times a year."

"We get the letters," continued Ma. "They're no better off now than when we lived there. Thank your lucky stars that you were born over here and not over there. Thank them every day."

Figure 22: Larry and Fannie at Wyalusing Rocks in 1937

THE 18^{TH} OF NOVEMBER, 1938

THE SHOPS ON SOUTH SEVENTH AVENUE and Scranton Street were as much meeting places as they were places to buy the wares and services offered by their proprietors. *Sena's Shoe Repair*, at 135 South Seventh Avenue, was in the middle of the block on the east side of the street. There were three wooden chairs along the wall facing the counter and work bench that stretched the length of the shop. Along the other wall were the machines that Pa had bought over the years that helped him make and repair shoes. Pa would always take care of customers who had an emergency with a heel that had fallen off or a sole that had worn through on a rainy day. They would sit with one or two bare feet while he fixed their shoes and they would chat about whatever was on their mind on that day, usually at a conversation sound level above the normal so that they could be heard above the hum of the machines.



Figure 23: Inside Michele's shoe repair shop at 135 South Seventh Avenue

Newman's Grocery Store was a half dozen houses away to right of our house and Meyer's Meats was a few houses away to the left, all three on the east side of the street. Abie Newman and Otto Meyer were Jewish. As Pa told us later that day, Abie and Otto walked into Pa's shoemaker shop on Friday morning, the 18th of November, 1938. Otto was carrying a copy of the morning paper. He was still wearing his white apron that had streaks of blood from the carvings he had made during the hour or so that he had been open.

His large, round face was the color of those streaks. Abie, who smoked heavily, had skin the color of cigarette ash. He always wore a dark, grey suit that hung on his shriveled frame and looked like it was two sizes too large. Standing together, they looked like the comedy team of Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy.

"Good morning, Otto. Hello Abie," said Pa when he saw his two friends. "What brings you both in here so early?" He had not taken time to see the agitated look on Otto's face. When he did, the smile disappeared from his face.

"Have you seen this morning's paper, Michael?" said Otto, without returning the greeting.

"No. I usually read it during lunch," replied Pa. "Something important today that I should see?"

"It's the Italians, Michael," shouted Otto. "They're following Hitler in everything, and now they've even followed him with his killing of our people!"

We had been reading about what was happening in Italy leading up to the Italian Racial Laws, *Leggi razziali*. We all read the *Manifesto della razza*, the 'Manifesto of Race', that had been reprinted in IL PROGRESSO in August. It did not match our view of the world, and it did not matter that scientists had signed it in support of its assertions. To claim that there is a 'pure Italian breed' is pure nonsense, exclaimed Pa. He knew his own history, or at least the vague outline of it, and he knew that his family's story was not unique. It was a mixture of many peoples from many different regions. His father's closest friend, Napoleone Usiglio, who taught Pa his shoemaking trade in *Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi*, was a man of great character and he was Jewish. He was no less 'Italian' than any of the others in their town, and he was more deserving of respect than the whole pack of Fascists put together, said Pa.

"What shall I do, write a letter of protest to Mussolini? He agrees with you. His mistress, Margherita Sarfatti, is Jewish, so he's also a hypocrite. He is simply showing his weakness in the face of threats by the Nazis."

"You're an American, Michael, and we know your feelings about Mussolini, even though you don't like to broadcast them. We're here because you are a Catholic. Write a letter to the Pope!" replied Otto. "He's doing nothing

to prevent the Nazis and Fascists from killing our people. Look at what the Nazis did last week in Germany and Austria on *Kristallnacht*. They'll be doing the same in Italy now. Why isn't he saying something?"

Pa could not answer this question. After the Manifesto was made public in August, there had been meetings of the Holy Name Society at the church to discuss what it meant for Italian Catholics. A new pastor was appointed in October, Father Salvatore J. Florey, who was now leading these meetings. He was Pa's Godson, born on Christmas Day of the same year he and Ma were married, 1905. His father was Francesco and his mother Maria Valverde. The young priest had studied in the Roman Pontifical Seminary in Rome and was ordained there in 1933. He had experienced first-hand the Pope's struggles to keep a balance between the Church and the Fascist government. But as a seminarian, he also learned of the Church's nineteen hundred years of history with people of the Jewish faith.

Father Florey, in their meetings, said the Church has taught that Jews brought persecution upon themselves because they accepted responsibility for crucifying Jesus. He quoted from the New Testament, Matthew 27:24-25, which reads:

Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

When Pilate saw that he prevailed nothing, but rather that a tumult was arising, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man; see ye to it.

Then answered all the people and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

"Why are all Jews blamed for killing Christ, when it was the chief priests and elders who brought Jesus to Pilate?" asked one of the men in the meeting. "Weren't Jesus and all of his disciples also Jews?"

"Yes, they were," replied Father Florey. "For the first few hundred years of Christianity, there were different opinions on what it meant to be a Catholic. The original apostles felt that to be Catholic you had to start by being Jewish. But St. Paul, who was not one of the original apostles, taught that any

person who believed in the teaching of Jesus could be a Catholic. His position is the one that the Church finally adopted. The Church has two positions on Jewish persecution. On the one hand, the Church maintains that the Jews cursed themselves for killing their Messiah, and then compounding their sin by being *perfidis*, or unbelieving. We pray on Good Friday that the *perfidis Judaeis* be converted to 'the truth'. The other position of the Church is that Jews, as people of The Word with whom we share a common heritage extending from Abraham, should come to no harm."

Father Florey explained that from the 12th century, the *Sicut Judaeis*, a Papal Bull issued by Pope Callixtus, stated that under the pain of excommunication Christians are forbidden from forcing Jews to convert, from harming them, from taking their property, from disturbing the celebration of their festivals, and from interfering with their cemeteries. He said that this law declared by Pope Callixtus has never been revoked by any Pope, and is therefore still in effect.

"I guess it hasn't always been followed," added one of the men.

"No, unfortunately not," replied Father Florey, "and now it is being disobeyed by Mussolini, who calls himself a Catholic. Hitler was a Catholic, but he was excommunicated along with all of the other Nazi leaders in 1931. He has no morals."

"What shall we do?" asked several of the men at the same time.

"Our Pope has told us that we need to look at what is happening with the Jews in Germany and Italy in a broader perspective," explained Father Florey. "It is both racial persecution of a single group and persecution of those who are religious, including Christians, by governments who place themselves above God. It is just the beginning of attacks on all people who believe in God as our savior and redeemer and not in the state and especially not in a mere mortal dictator. We must continue to do all we can to support the Church and the people in Italy, but we must refrain from offering sustenance to the Fascists. This means not giving money to Fascist organizations or taking part in activities sponsored by the Italian government."

"No more *Natale di Roma*, I guess," quipped one of the members. The other members laughed. They had already started preparations for the spring festivities. They didn't expect Father Florey's reply.

"No more *Natale di Roma*," confirmed Father Florey, "and no more visits to St. Lucy's by representatives of the Italian government. From now on, we must treat Italy like a potential enemy of America."

What about the priest on the radio, the one in Detroit? Pa turns the radio off as soon as he comes on.

"You mean Father Coughlin, Lorenzo. He's a disgrace to the Church and to the priesthood. He says he is against Communism, but he is a Fascist and anti-Semite. He should be defrocked."

Germany had annexed Austria in March of 1938. Austria's Chancellor, Kurt von Schuschnigg, resigned in the face of internal pressure from the Austrian Nazis and from claims by Hitler that Austria was rightly part of the German Reich. On the 12th of March, 1938, Hitler rode into Vienna accompanying his troops, officially annexing Austria. There was no resistance from Austrian troops. The Nazi *Sturmabteilung*, or 'Stormtroopers', raged on the 9th and 10th of November, 1938 throughout the Reich, which now included Germany and Austria and the colonies, during what was known as *Kristallnacht*, or the 'The Night of Broken Glass'. Ninety-five of the over one thousand synagogues that were burned on that night were in Vienna. In all the territories controlled by the Nazis, businesses, schools, hospitals, homes and other properties owned by people of the Jewish faith or people of Jewish heritage who did not practice Judaism (it did not matter to the Nazis), were destroyed or severely damaged.

The following week, Mussolini issued the *Leggi Razziali*, the 'Italian Racial Laws'. The decree had been passed at a meeting of the *Gran Consiglio del Fascismo* late in the night of the 6th of October. It restricted the civil rights of Jews, banned their books and excluded Jews from holding public office and teaching at universities. It also stripped Jews of most of their assets, restricted their travel and made provisions for interning them in the same way as political prisoners. If Italy had been a member of the League of Nations when these laws were passed, it would probably have been expelled. But Italy had left the League on Saturday, the 11th of December, 1937. The decision was announced by *Il Duce* to a crowd estimated to be 100,000 gathered in the Piazza di Venezia in Rome on the evening of the 11th. He blamed the rift with the League on the sanctions it had imposed during the Abyssinian

War, saying that Italy would never forget this "shameful attempt at the strangulation of the Italian people." He also said that it was "grotesque to believe that pressure was exerted on us to decide. Our comrades of the Berlin-Tokyo axis have shown absolute discretion."

Opinions among Italian-Americans about the treatment of Jews in Italy were mixed and generally followed the individual's political leanings or their pre-existing prejudices. People were affected by their business situation or social surroundings and influenced by the newspapers they read—or, in the case of the many illiterate immigrants, what others told them was written in those newspapers. As business owners, Michele and his brother Nicola were dependent on having good relations with all potential customers. The Newmans, Meyers, Cohens, Levys and all of the Jewish families in their neighborhoods could choose to have their shoes repaired or walls painted by other tradesmen if they felt discriminated against by those of Italian heritage.

It was this line of reasoning promulgated by Generoso Pope and IL PROGRESSO. During Barsotti's ownership, the paper was used to rally support among Italian-Americans for erecting monuments in America of notable Italians, like Cristoforo Colombo and Garibaldi. Pope concentrated on national and international politics and had been one of Mussolini's unwavering supporters in print since taking over IL PROGRESSO. In 1937, he journeyed to his homeland where he had private audiences with Pope Pius XI and Mussolini. *Il Duce* gave him a message to bring back to the American people, which Pope dutifully did upon landing at New York harbor on the 24th of June, 1937. He told the gathering what Mussolini had told him:

"I authorize you to declare and make known, immediately upon return to New York, to the Jews of America that their preoccupation for their brothers living in Italy is nothing but the fruit of evil informers. I authorize you to specify that the Jews in Italy have received, receive, and will continue to receive the same treatment accorded to every other Italian citizen and that no form of racial or religious discrimination is in my thought, which is devoted and faithful to the policy of equality in law and freedom of worship."

It must have been a bitter pill for Generoso Pope to swallow when a little over a year later he understood that he had been lied to, duped. Pope now seemed to draw the line for this support when the Fascists formalized their anti-Semitism. He urged ethnic tolerance among Italian-Americans for Jews. Even before the Italian Racial Laws were formalized, in an editorial signed by him on the 11th of September, 1938, he counseled his readers "not to yield to anti-Semitic attitudes and continue to befriend Jews because reciprocal discrimination would be counterproductive for both immigrant minorities."

It was also true that many businesses were owned by Jews, and Italian immigrants were dependent on jobs in these businesses. As a businessman himself, Generoso Pope had to be sensitive to this issue. In New York City, fifty thousand Italian-Americans worked in the garment industry, which, in the 1930s, was controlled by Jewish businessmen. They employed immigrant men and women and their children to cut, sew, press, distribute and sell their clothes. But Italian immigrants were competing for these jobs with Eastern European Jews who began arriving at the same time as the Italians, and it was the Jews who first organized workers into unions, even conducting meetings in Yiddish. It was not uncommon for Italian workers to feel that Jewish workers and supervisors were given preferential treatment in pay and position. Beginning in 1910, Italian workers organized their own local unions to look after their own interests. Nevertheless, labor leaders of all ethnic backgrounds viewed the Italian Racial Laws as a potential wedge in the entire labor movement. Luigi Antonini, who had become Vice President of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the ILGWU, as well as holding the post of Secretary General of ILGWU Italian Language Local 89, condemned "the venom of racial intolerance" signified by Italy's anti-Semitism, and warned that it threatened to "poison the minds of a great number of Italian immigrants."

IL GRIDO DELLA STIRPE (The Cry of the Ancestry) was an Italian-language weekly newspaper published in New York City. It was blatantly anti-Semitic. Shortly after it was founded in 1923 by Domenico Trombetta, the newspaper accused Jews of being the "staunchest opponents of the Fascist Revolution that had marked a second 'Renaissance' in Italy." This claim was met with skepticism, especially in Italy, since Jews were relatively few in number in the country, appeared to be supporters of the Fascists and held high positions in the government and the military. It was only in 1934 when the Fascist security forces determined that there were a large number of Jewish members in the underground organization, *Giustizia e Libertà*, that anti-Jewish opinions were given voice. Trombetta was an ex-Anarchist who found a

new life as a Fascist. In addition to his newspaper, he had a weekly radio program on a New York radio station which he used to promote the Fascist cause and denounce Jews as being part of an "unholy alliance of Communists and financiers."

Italian-Americans were forced to choose sides on the issue. The Catholic Church, with its double message of the culpability of all Jews for the crucifixion of Jesus and acceptance of Jews as people of God's Word, did not make the choice easier.

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Pa told us about his meeting with Otto and Abie at dinner that evening. Otto had returned to his store, Pa said, and Abie had lingered to smoke a cigarette. He was sitting in one of the customer chairs facing Pa, who continued to work on resoling a pair of shoes.



"You know, Michael," said Abie, contemplatively, "I have never understood the Christian view on the guilt of Jews for crucifying Christ. Everything that Jesus did was predicted in our Bible. I've read your New Testament and it says that Jesus did this or that according to the scriptures. It seems that Jesus had planned his life in order to make the predictions come true, and he could do that because he was God.

So, if he was God—and I'm not saying that he was or wasn't—and he got the Jewish leaders to bring him to the Romans so he would be crucified, isn't he to blame and not the Jews?"

"Just for the record, Abie," Pa said that he answered, "I don't blame you or any other Jewish person for killing Christ. I believe in letting bygones be bygones, and to carry a grudge for a couple of thousand years is taking things too far."

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The letters INRI usually appear above the head of Jesus on crucifixes. Sometimes the letters are carved in the cross and sometimes they are inscribed on a parchment that is nailed to the cross. The Gospel of John (19:19) explains this inscription.

The Gospel According to St. John Chapter 19

Jesus Sentenced to Be Crucified

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

- 2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,
- 3 And said, *Hail, King of the Jews!* and they smote him with their hands.
- 4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, *Behold, I bring him* forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.
- 5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, *Behold the man!*
- 6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, *Crucify him, crucify him.* Pilate saith unto them, *Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.*
- 7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.
- 8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;
- 9 And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, *Whence art thou?* But Jesus gave him no answer.
- 10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?
- 11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.
- 12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, *If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.*
- 13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.
- 14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, *Behold your King!*
- 15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.
- 16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.



17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

18 Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was *Jesus Of Nazareth The King Of The Jews*.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was night to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

(Latin for "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" is "Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum" and the acronym for this title is INRI. Latin uses the letter "I" instead of the English "J", and "V" instead of "U" (i.e., Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum). The English translation is then "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.")

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

Some historians claim that Pilate justified executing Jesus by using the Roman treaty with the Jews that allowed them a form of self-government. The chief priests claimed that Jesus was disturbing the peace and challenging their government by holding himself outside of their authority. When Pilate asked Jesus directly to deny that he was called 'King of the Jews', Jesus refused to respond. But other scholars interpret John 19:21-22 as an acceptance by Pilate that Jesus was indeed the Jewish Messiah, and therefore was King of the Jews. It is believed by the Eastern Orthodox Church that Pilate converted to Christianity and has a feast commemorating his sainthood on the 25th of June when he was martyred by a double crucifixion. Eastern Orthodox inscriptions are written INBI, substituting Greek for Latin, *Iésous o Nazóraios o Basileus tón Ioudaión*.

THE 2ND OF MARCH, 1939



THE CATHOLIC CARDINALS elected a new pope to succeed Pope Pius XI on the 2nd of March, 1939. His name was *Eugenio Maria Giuseppe Giovanni Pacelli* and he took the name Pope Pius XII. He was born in Rome on the 2nd of March, 1876, sixty-three years to the day of his election as Pope. His predecessor had died on the 10th of February, seventeen years and four days after having ascended to the Papal throne. Those seventeen years had been difficult ones for the Church and for the Pope. During all of those years, he had the able assistance of Father, then Bishop and finally Cardinal Pacelli.

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"Maybe the new Pope can do something about Germany," said one of the men at the meeting of the Holy Name Society.

"I think our old Pope, God rest his soul, did his best," offered another.

"The new Pope should start by doing something about Italy and Mussolini," said a third. "They're just as bad as Germany and Hitler."

Once a month, on the Thursday evening before the first Sunday of the month, the Holy Name Society met in the basement of St. Lucy's Church. Most of the men in the parish were members of the Society, and everyone was welcome to attend the meetings, but it was the Society's officers and committee chairs who were there regularly. The main topic was the program for the Society's breakfast after eight o'clock mass on the following Sunday, when members and their sons sat down for a hearty breakfast prepared by the able hands of the Society's own members.

"What can the Pope do? He already excommunicated Hitler years ago. A fat load of good that did."

"He can tell the Catholic soldiers not to fight."

"Hitler would give them a choice: Renounce your religion or get shot. There'd be some martyrs and a lot of converts. Either way, the Church loses members."

"You know the new Pope, don't you Father?"

Father Florey had been listening quietly to the conversation. Although he was still new to his post at St. Lucy's, he grew up only a few yards away from

where he was now living in the rectory of his new parish. He knew the men, both young and old, who were sitting in the meeting room. Pa wasn't feeling well, he had a bad cold, so he sent me to sit in on the meeting for him. Pa always thought his Godson, Salvatore, and my sister Vee would make a good couple. They played together when they were very young. But even at a young age, Salvatore knew he had a calling. Some priests wear the vestments, but they remain men. Others, like Father Florey, were full-time priests. I guess Popes must be full-timers as well. You might be able to fool regular Catholics, but I don't think you can fool other priests, and especially not the Cardinals.

"When we were in Rome, we novitiates saw the Pope and the men around him. So, yes, I saw the new Pope when he was Cardinal Pacelli. Before he was created a Cardinal in 1929, between 1917 and 1929, he was the Apostolic Nuncio to Austria, Germany and Prussia, so he had first-hand experience with the Germans. He was actively involved in negotiating the end of the fighting by Germany and Austria in the First World War. He saw the events that eventually led to the rise of Hitler and the Nazis. He also witnessed the formation of a Communist government in 1918 and 1919 in southern Germany and its eventual end at the hands of remnants of the German Army. These experiences give him unique insights to the two major threats to the world and to the Church, Nationalism and Communism. He was a good friend to Pope Pius XI and he was the best choice to succeed him."

"And the Church and war, Father? What does the Church say about war?"

"The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches the just defense of a nation against an aggressor. It is called the Just War Doctrine. It can be traced back to St. Augustine of Hippo in the fifth century. Over the centuries it was taught by the Church, and it is formally part of Church doctrine. What it says is that all citizens and all governments are obliged to work for the avoidance of war. But sometimes it becomes necessary to use force to secure a just result. This is the right and the duty of those who have responsibilities for others, such as civil leaders and police forces. Individuals may renounce all violence, however those who must preserve justice may not do so, though it should be the last resort, once all peace efforts have failed."

"In other words, it's alright for me to be a conscientious objector, but countries have to be prepared to fight."

"Yes, that's what the *Just War Doctrine* says. Hitler and Mussolini have no possibility to apply the *Doctrine* to their wars. They are the aggressors, and they are aggressing with the intention of subjugating people, not freeing them. Their racial positions on the Jewish people as well as others expose their intentions as evil, as Pope Pius XI continually pointed out with the assistance of our new Pope. The Church teaches the unity of the human race, so there can be no justice in singling out any people for persecution."

"So what should the Church do, Father?"

"It is for those who have the responsibility for the common good, the governments of countries like America, to determine if the conditions of engaging in a war are met. The Church's role is to clearly enunciate the principles, to help form the consciences of men and to insist on the moral exercise of a just war. The Church cannot and should not do more, but we shall be vigilant in ensuring that the combatants do not engage in forbidden actions, such as attacking and mistreating non-combatants and wounded soldiers, performing acts of genocide, indiscriminately destroying whole cities with their inhabitants."

"It sounds like there is no way to avoid a war, not with all the evil things that Hitler and Mussolini are doing," pined one of the men.

"There is another danger confronting the world today, particularly people of faith," replied Father Florey, "and that is Communism. When I was in Rome, I understood that the Church viewed Stalin and the Soviet Union as more of a threat than Mussolini and Hitler because Stalin saw all religions as being inconsistent with Communism. Pope Pius XI issued an encyclical letter in 1937 on Atheistic Communism, called *Divini Redemptoris*. Since the time of the Russian Revolution, the Church has criticized Bolshevism, the form of Communism practiced in the Soviet Union, as one that takes away man's liberty, strips him of his personality and of all dignity, and eliminates all forms of moral restraints on an individual's actions. Bolshevism, Fascism and Nazism have been growing at the same time, since the end of the Great War, and the Church has tried its best to call the attention of the world's leaders to the threats that each of them presents.

"For many years, it seemed that Hitler and Mussolini had the same opinion of the Soviet Union as the Church. They preached anti-Communism to gain the support of the wealthy and businessmen who feared the rise of trade unions. Mussolini outlawed the Communist Party in 1926. But now it seems that Stalin has convinced Hitler and Mussolini that they can rule the world together. Our greatest fear is that they will make a pact of the devil and divide up Europe among themselves before extending their reach to America, Asia and the rest of the world."

"I think all of the Italian Communists have come to America."

"And this is also a problem," said Father Florey. "America is more anti-Communist and anti-trade union than anti-Fascist, anti-Nazi or even anti-Mafia. There are a disproportionately large number of Italians and people of the Jewish faith represented in the American trade unions and the Communist Party, and so they are labelled un-American. When Italians come to America to escape from Mussolini's oppression and the Jews who flee from Hitler's death grip both join the Communist organizations, they actually help Mussolini and Hitler by making it more difficult for the country's political leaders to speak out against these dictators."

A penny dropped for me when I heard this. I had never in my life been interested in politics. When I read the newspaper I went first to the comics and then to the movie section. I voted in elections, but I didn't really feel that my vote made any difference, and I wasn't sure if there was any difference between one candidate and another based on their party. FDR was doing a good job, I thought, to get people back to work. Since I came back from Brooklyn and started working at the Laceworks, things had gradually been getting better. Pa's business was good. Now, listening to Father Florey, I realized for maybe the first time that what men like Mussolini and Hitler were doing would have a very big effect on my life and the lives of all my family and friends. It also struck me that I was being judged by what other people like me, Italian-Americans, were doing. It wasn't just name-calling anymore. This was more serious. What if Italy and America go to war and someone claimed that I was a sympathizer of Mussolini because I produced the program for the Natale di Roma? How could I defend myself? Both Mussolini and I have our pictures in the program. What if all the people at that event were called un-American. My whole family would be put in jail. Will people remember that back in 1933, even the President thought Mussolini was a swell fellow? I doubt it.

There is something else. St. Lucy's is the center of my social life, and

most, if not all of my close friends are members of the church: Carl Savino, Joe Notortommaso, Dominic Aielo, Louie Scalpi, all of the Fricchiones, Ferraros and Ferrarios. We are all sons and daughters of parents who emigrated from Italy, and some of us were actually born there. Will we all be under suspicion for being spies for Italy? For the first time in my life I began to worry about my Italian heritage.

On the 15th of March, 1939, Germany invaded Czechoslovakia, thereby breaking the *Munich Agreement* it had signed with Great Britain, France and Italy the year before, on September 30th, 1938. According to this agreement, of which Czechoslovakia was not a signatory party and called it a 'betrayal', a portion of Czechoslovakia that had been renamed by Germany as 'Sudetenland', would be annexed by Germany. Hitler had promised Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain of Britain that in return for being allowed to annex the so-called Sudetenland, Germany would make no further demands on Czech territories. Chamberlain believed him. So he felt personally betrayed when it was learned that Hitler had lied. The invasion finally convinced the British and the French leaders that Hitler could never be trusted to honor his agreements and that he would continue to use his military forces to envelope all of Europe, including their own countries.

The meeting in Munich at which the *Munich Agreement* was signed was proposed by Chamberlain. It was viewed as a last attempt to avoid a war that Hitler threatened. The Czechs had rejected any negotiation with Germany concerning their territory and had ordered a general mobilization of their forces the day before the meeting. France had also begun to mobilize its troops. Hitler agreed to the meeting, as did Mussolini. There are different views on whether the plan that was submitted by Italy at the meeting, called the *Italian Plan*, was actually drafted by Italy or by Germany, but it was prepared in the German Foreign Office. It was almost identical to the plan the Czechs had already rejected, but it was adopted. The Czechs were told by Britain and France that they would not receive any aid or support if they chose to resist the occupation of their lands by Germany. With no chance of winning against the Germans, the Czechs chose not to fight.

Chamberlain returned home to cheering crowds. In his speech, he said that he had "achieved peace with honor," and further that "I believe it is peace for our time." Winston Churchill, his rival and chief critic, responded to Chamberlain's claim by stating, "You were given the choice between war and dishonor. You chose dishonor and you will have war." Mussolini was credited with providing the words on paper that appeared to guarantee Europe would remain at peace. His reputation as a statesman was enhanced, at least for the moment.

On the 22nd of May, 1939, in Berlin, Adolf Hitler, Joachim von Ribbentrop and Galeazzo Ciano signed the *Pact of Steel*, a military and political alliance between the Kingdom of Italy and Nazi Germany. Originally, it was meant to be a tripartite agreement that would also include Japan. However, Japan wanted the agreement to be focused on the Soviet Union as the *Pact*'s primary adversary. Italy and Germany wanted it to be aimed at Britain and France. The *Pact* comprised a declaration of trust and cooperation between the two signing parties, and a Secret Supplementary Protocol that called for a 'union of policies concerning the military and the economy'. Germany and Italy were now officially allies.

On the 23rd of August, 1939, in Moscow, the nightmare that leaders of the free world had feared came to pass. The Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a non-aggression agreement, known as the *Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact* after the foreign ministers of the respective countries, Vyacheslav Molotov of Russia and Joachim von Ribbentrop of Germany. The countries gave each other a formal guarantee that neither government would ally itself to, or aid, an enemy of the other. The agreement included a secret protocol that divided territories of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, and Romania into German and Soviet "spheres of influence", anticipating "territorial and political rearrangements" of these countries. A year earlier, Stalin had tried to convince Britain and France to enter an agreement with the Soviet Union against Germany, but his advances had been rebuffed.

On the 1st of September, 1939, Germany began the invasion of Poland by land and from the air with the comforting thought that its forces would not be attacked from the East by those from the Soviet Union. Britain and France declared war on Germany on the 3rd of September. On the 17th of September, 1939, Joseph Stalin ordered the invasion of Poland by the Soviet army.

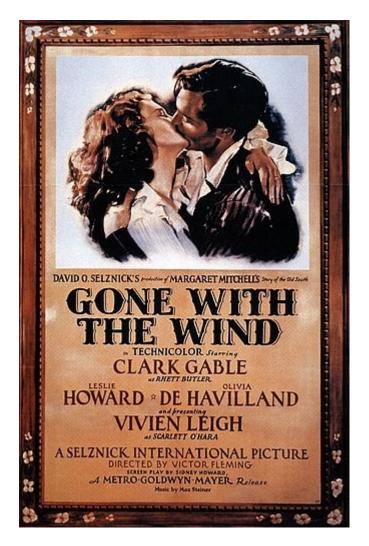
On the 20th of October, 1939, Pope Pius XII issued his first encyclical: SUMMI PONTIFICATUS - ENCYCLICAL OF POPE PIUS XII ON THE UNITY OF HUMAN SOCIETY. The headlines in the New York Times following the publication of the Pope's Encyclical read: <u>Pope Condemns Dictators</u>, Treaty Violators, Racism; Urges Restoring of Poland.

"A powerful attack on totalitarianism and the evils which he considers it has brought on the world was made by Pope Pius XII in his first encyclical, issued today from his summer villa at Castel Gandolfo. In this document he raises the banner of Christianity against totalitarian paganism, which idolizes purely human values, and against atheism, which denies the existence of God...The Pontiff proclaimed his determination to step forward boldly into 'the immense vortex of errors and anti-Christian movements' and to fight the enemies of the church, defending the rights of the individual and the family."

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1939 was a terrible year. Europe is at war now and people in America are arguing over whether we should help the British and the French again, like we did in World War I, or let them fight amongst themselves. With Italy now an ally of Germany, rather than an ally of America, it's more complicated for those of us with an Italian heritage. Pa and Zio Nicola are finally now on the same side of the fence on the subject of Mussolini, although Zio is more worried about our relatives who are still there. He doesn't want a war with Germany or Italy. The last thing I want to do is become a soldier and get a bullet in my head. I can think of a lot of better ways to die. But if America decides to fight Hitler and Mussolini, I don't have a choice.

At least one good thing happened this year. I met Mary. Fannie had told me that her new boyfriend, Charlie Rosati, had a sister. He was going to bring her with him in his car from Old Forge, pick up Fannie and the three of them were going to go to the movies. The new movie, *Gone with the Wind*, with Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh, was playing at the Comerford Theater on Wyoming Avenue. Did I want to join them? I decided to tag along. That was the best decisions I ever made.



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THE 16^{TH} OF JUNE, 1940

THE EIGHT MALE cousins sat at a table in Preno's Bar and Grill in down-town Scranton across from the Hotel Casey on Adams Avenue. Our families were there for the wedding reception of Rosalina Ricciardi's sister's daughter. At the table were me and my brother Franky, Larry and Danny Ricciardi, and Jimmy, Franky, Joey and Mikey Sena from Brooklyn. We were talking about what had happened on Monday of that week. Italy had declared war on France and Great Britain.

"Danny and I have decided to change our name from Ricciardi to Richard. We'll be fighting over there pretty soon, and we don't want to have any trouble with people asking us whose side we are on."

"Why not Richards?" asked Joey Sena. "Ricciardi translates to Richards, doesn't it?"

"The Welsh have James, Thomas, George, David and even Lawrence and lots of other first names as last names, and they are all singular," replied Danny, "so we decided that it should be Richard."

I think Lawrence sounds like a good name.

"What about Edwards and Daniels?" asked Franky from Brooklyn.

"We liked the sound of Richard, but, O.K., maybe we'll change it to Richards instead of Richard. We'll see," answered Larry.

What does Zio Vincenzo say about it? Pa told Franky and me that if we changed our name we would bring a curse on the family.

"Pa said the same thing to us," said Joey.

"Pa said that one out of two families in *Sant' Angelo dei Lombardi* is named Ricciardi, so we should have changed it a long time ago," answered Danny.

"Sena isn't really an Italian name anyway," offered Mikey, "so it's just as well we keep it. I've met people in our neighborhood who come from Spain and Portugal with the name Sena, and they all say it's a common name there."

"Aren't Spain and Portugal on Germany's side," said Franky from Brooklyn. "Maybe we should be thinking about changing our name too." "How about if we changed the letters around and made it Sean, an Irish name?" offered Mikey.

"What, are you nuts?" yelled Joey.

"I hope we don't have to fight in Italy," commented my brother. "I don't know if we will be able to tell the generals that we don't want to go to Italy."

I think we go where they tell us to go.

"When do you think we'll start to be called up?" Danny asked as an open question to everyone else sitting around the table.

"We're not in the war yet," replied Joey. "Maybe Hitler will decide he doesn't need England and they'll all agree to sign treaties to stop the fighting."

"That's a dream," scoffed his brother Franky. "The bookies are giving odds that America will be in the war within a year or less. They know more than the politicians."

"I ain't fighting in Italy," declared my brother. "That's all I have to say about it."

Just then, our three fathers approached the table.

"Who aren't you going to fight in Italy, Franky?" asked Pa.

"The Italians, Pa," replied Franky. "It just doesn't seem right."

"When I was a boy, the Piemontese, who we called *gli Italiani*, were still shooting the Avellinese," said Zio Nicola, "and they didn't even blink an eye."

"We don't want any of you fighting anyone," interjected Zio Vincenzo.

"The British and French will make quick work of Germany and Italy and it will all be over."

"I hope you're right, Vincenzo," commented Pa.

On the 31st of March, 1939, the United Kingdom understood that its previous approach to Hitler's aggression, appearement, was only resulting in embarrassment to itself and the gradual extinction of borders between Germany and its neighbors. In a speech given in the House of Commons on that day, the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, proposed a military alliance

with Poland. In his speech he said, "In the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence, and which the Polish Government accordingly considered it vital to resist with their national forces, His Majesty's Government would feel themselves bound at once to lend the Polish Government all support in their power." In addition, he added the following: "I may add that the French Government have authorized me to make it plain that they stand in the same position in this matter as do His Majesty's Government."

One week later, Italy invaded the Albanian Kingdom. Within five days, the country's meager forces were defeated, King Zog I fled and Albania became part of what was now being called the Italian Empire. Strategically, controlling Albania meant that Italy would have domination over the Strait of Otranto and the entrance to the Adriatic Sea. Italy had occupied the southern portion of Albania during World War I, but it was forced to abandon it in 1920. Mussolini must have viewed a re-conquest as a way to make up for the former loss, but also to show that it was an equal partner to Germany in what would become the Pact of Steel, *Patto d'Acciaio*. It was signed on the 22nd of May, 1939 in Berlin with Adolf Hitler presiding. The most important article of the Pact was Article III:

If it should happen, against the wishes and hopes of the Contracting Parties, that one of them becomes involved in military complications with another power or other Powers, the other Contracting Party will immediately step to its side as an ally and will support it with all its military might on land, at sea and in the air.

The last move that Hitler made on the European chess board was to reduce the possibility that the Soviet Union would ally itself with one or more of the countries Germany had in its gunsights. The *German-Soviet Non-aggression Pact*, was signed in Moscow on the 23rd of August, 1939. According to the *Pact*, neither government would ally itself to, or aid, an enemy of the other party. In a secret attachment to the Pact, the countries defined their spheres of influence, dividing the territories of Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania into one sphere or the other.

One week after the *Pact* was signed, Hitler's troops moved against Poland from the north, south and west and pushed back the Polish troops to what the Poles believed were defensible positions. On the 3rd of September, France

and the United Kingdom declared war on Germany, and the Poles were confident that they would quickly receive aid from those two countries. Whatever aid that was sent was of limited utility, mainly because neither of these two allies was really prepared to wage war, and because they expected that the Polish army would be able to hold out against the Germans longer than a few weeks. Neither the allies nor the Polish government expected what happened next. On the 17th of September, Soviet forces invaded Poland from the east. The Polish government ordered all of its troops to retreat to Romania, supposedly to live to fight another day. On the 6th of October, Poland capitulated. Germany annexed the western portion of Poland, incorporating it into its own boundaries. The remainder of the country was merged into either the Soviet Republic of Belarus or the Soviet Republic of Ukraine. Poland ceased to exist, except in the form of a government in exile.

What was happening in America while all of this was occurring? Isolationists and non-interventionists were in the majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, and they were able to pass a series of four laws, called the *Neutrality Acts*, between 1935 and 1939. The objective of these Acts was to keep the United States from repeating what the non-interventionists believed had been the mistake made during World War I, which was to enter it. They were convinced that President Wilson had been fooled by bankers and the makers of armaments into believing that America's participation in the War was essential for the country's own security.

Congress passed the first *Neutrality Act* in 1935. It established a general embargo on the trading of all types of arms and materials used in wars with any party involved in a war. Roosevelt used this *Act* in October, 1935 to prevent arms and ammunition shipments to both Italy and Ethiopia. He went further and declared what he called a "moral embargo" on both countries, restricting all types of trade. In the second *Neutrality Act of 1936*, which extended the first one for an additional fourteen months, loans and credits were forbidden to warring parties. However, parties in a civil war were not covered by its restrictions and materials that could be used for non-warring purposes, such as trucks and oil, were also outside of its reach. Francisco Franco exploited these exceptions and purchased vehicles and oil on credit.

In 1937, Congress closed these loopholes with the *Neutrality Act of 1937*, specifically outlawing sales to the combatants in Spain. Expiration of the *Acts* was left open. Neither persons nor articles could be shipped to warring

parties, and U.S. citizens were forbidden from traveling on ships to countries that were engaged in wars. A provision was added at the urging of President Roosevelt, called the 'Cash-and-Carry' provision. This allowed the President to permit the sale of materials and supplies to warring parties in Europe as long as they paid immediately in cash and carried the materials in their own ships. This clause was due to expire in two years. After it expired, Germany invaded Czechoslovakia. Roosevelt asked that the Cash-and-Carry provision be renewed, but Congress declined. When Germany invaded Poland, and the United Kingdom and France declared war on Germany, Roosevelt asked for a new Act that would allow the United States to provide assistance to these two countries. He succeeded in convincing the Congress, and on the 4th of November, 1939, the fourth *Neutrality Act* was passed. American citizens and ships were barred from entering war zones that were designated as such by the President, and in order to sell or purchase arms, a license was required from the National Munitions Control Board.

Mussolini issued a declaration of war on France and Britain on the 10th of June, 1940, nine months after these two countries had declared war on Italy's ally. It appeared that Italy was repeating its posture during the start of World War I, when it was also formally allied with Germany. It did nothing for the first year of that war and then decided to abandon Germany and join in the hostilities on the side of France and Britain. This time it kept its promise to Germany after a nine-month delay. Its first action was to attack southwestern France on the 20th of September, a move that was totally unnecessary from a military standpoint and which resulted in a standoff with the French forces, who were better equipped and were led by superior commanders. Paris was already being occupied by German forces. Hitler is reported to have said: "First they were too cowardly to take part. Now they are in a hurry so that they can share in the spoils." Mussolini's hesitation and Hitler's reaction would set the tone for the relationship between these two newly tested allies for the remainder of the time that the two countries would be fighting on the same side.

Italy then invaded Britain's forces in Egypt. Italian forces were out-maneuvered by the British and had to call for help from their German allies. In October, Italian forces went into Greece. Apparently, Hitler had warned Mussolini against making the attack, perhaps because he had already made plans for doing so himself at a more appropriate time. Mussolini did not like

to be told what to do and went ahead with his invasion, and once again, his troops and their leaders were not up to the task. Germany moved against Greece and Yugoslavia in April, 1941.

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Some people at the Laceworks made wisecracks about whether we were going to lose some of the Italian-American workers when they join Mussolini's army. People who came here from Italy like my father and mother hate Mussolini. I was born here and am more American than most people who call themselves American, I would say when I heard that. We had to keep reminding people all the time that we weren't Italians, but Americans whose parents came from Italy, just like their parents maybe came from England or Wales or even Germany. Most of those who came over, like Ma and Pa and our aunts and uncles, have been citizens for many years. When the time came for America to fight Mussolini and Hitler, we would be right there with all of the other Americans to sign up.

The Irish, who were normally the ones making the most noise about Italians, were very quiet. I didn't understand what was going on between the Irish and the British, and I didn't really care. It seemed like the Irish hated the English, but they were still part of the group of countries that had the King of England as their official leader. Canada is one of them too, and so are Australia and India. But I read an article in THE SCRANTON TIMES that tried to explain why there was an Irish parliament and why it had decided to declare that Ireland was neutral in Britain's war with Germany and Italy. Canada, Australia and India were not neutral, but Ireland seemed to have the right to be, and it took that right. Well, Irish Americans weren't going to be able to declare themselves neutral, so if America went into the war, the Irish boys were either going to have to sign up, go to jail or go back to Ireland. If an Italian didn't want to fight for America, he could go back to Italy, but he'd be given a gun and put right in the front lines. So at least there weren't any wisecracks from the Irish, and that was something to be thankful for.



Figure 24: Frank Sena, Margaret Tama (fiancé to Frank), Michele Sena, Giovanna Sena, Rose Sena Pinto, Jimmie Pinto, Larry Sena, Joe Sena, "Joe Giunta, Fannie Sena

As the months passed, it felt like we were all on a big barge moving slowly along on a huge river. When we finally reached the mouth, we would be going to war. There didn't seem to be any way to get off the barge, and the river kept flowing. On the 16th of September, 1940, the Congress passed the *Selective Training and Service Act*. All the papers said that it was the first peacetime conscription in the history of the United States. Every man who had reached their twenty-first birthday, but had not yet reached their thirty-sixth birthday, would have to register with the local draft boards. The only one of the first cousins in the family who didn't have to register was Jimmy in Brooklyn. Rosie's husband, Jimmy Pinto, had to register, but not Vee's husband, Joe Giunta.



Figure 25: This photo was taken in front of the entrance to Nicola and Pasqualina Sena's home at 831 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, New York. From left: Filomena (Fannie) Sena, Maria (Mary) Rosati, Celeste (Charlie) Rosati, Giuseppe (Joe) Sena, Giacamo (Jimmy)Pinto, Francesco (Frank) Sena and Michele (Pitts) Sena. Joe, Frank and Pitts are brothers and sons to Nicola and Pasqualina. The photographer is undoubtedly Lorenzo Sena.

President Roosevelt was re-elected on the 5th of November, 1940 to become the first President who would serve a third term. His Vice President, John Nance Garner, tried to take the Democratic nomination from Roosevelt. He was rewarded by being thrown off the ticket, replaced by the Secretary of Agriculture, Henry A. Wallace. Roosevelt's opponent was Wendell Willkie, who had defeated Robert A. Taft and Thomas E. Dewey for the Republican nomination. Both of the Presidential candidates were from New York. Roosevelt carried thirty-eight of the forty-eight states, including New York, won 449-to-82 in the electoral vote and collected 54.7% of the popular vote. Roosevelt promised that if he were re-elected, there would be no involvement in foreign wars. People wanted to believe him, but no one really did. The barge was still moving after he was elected.

We listened on the radio to President Roosevelt's third Inaugural Address on the 20th of January, 1941. Try as we could, we did not hear him say that we would not join the fight against the tyrants. What we heard was the opposite:

"On each national day of Inauguration since 1789, the people have renewed their sense of dedication to the United States.

In Washington's day the task of the people was to create and weld together a Nation.

In Lincoln's day the task of the people was to preserve that Nation from disruption from within.

In this day the task of the people is to save that Nation and its institutions from disruption from without.

To us there has come a time, in the midst of swift happenings, to pause for a moment and take stock- to recall what our place in history has been, and to rediscover what we are and what we may be. If we do not, we risk the real peril of isolation, the real peril of inaction.

Lives of Nations are determined not by the count of years, but by the lifetime of the human spirit. The life of a man is threescore years and ten: a little more, a little less. The life of a Nation is the fullness of the measure of its will to live.

There are men who doubt this. There are men who believe that democracy, as a form of government and a frame of life, is limited or measured by a kind of mystical and artificial fate that, for some unexplained reason, tyranny and slavery have become the surging wave of the future—and that freedom is an ebbing tide.

But we Americans know that this is not true."

We did not have to read between the lines to understand that he was speaking to those of us who would end up carrying the battle to Hitler and Mussolini. He ended his speech like this:

"The destiny of America was proclaimed in words of prophecy spoken by our first President in his first Inaugural in 1789-words almost directed, it would seem, to this year of 1941: "The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered. . . deeply, . . . finally, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people."

If you and I in this later day lose that sacred fire—if we let it be smothered with doubt and fear—then we shall reject the destiny which Washington

strove so valiantly and so triumphantly to establish. The preservation of the spirit and faith of the Nation does, and will, furnish the highest justification for every sacrifice that we may make in the cause of national defense.

In the face of great perils never before encountered, our strong purpose is to protect and to perpetuate the integrity of democracy. For this we muster the spirit of America, and the faith of America. We do not retreat. We are not content to stand still. As Americans, we go forward, in the service of our country, by the will of God."

All the papers on Monday, the 23rd of June, 1941 carried the headlines: <u>Germany Invades the Soviet Union</u>. It was called *Operation Barbarossa*. It seemed at first that the Germans were doing what they had done in all of their invasions, namely, winning. Then the news shifted in favor of the Soviets. By October, the Germans had reached Moscow, and that's where and when things began going badly for them.

All the while the barge was moving, from the end of 1939 until the end of 1941, I saw Mary as often as I could. I learned to know her family and she learned to know mine. The fact that her brother and my sister were as hopelessly in love as Mary and I were, meant that we found more reasons to be together. Mary's mother was the opposite of Ma, and her father, a coal miner, hunter, fisherman, vegetable gardener, animal raiser and someone who enjoyed a few glasses of wine before dinner, was as far from Pa as any two men could be. As I came to learn, his large front porch also served as the gathering place for the men in the neighborhood who all had a propensity to support Socialist and anti-Mussolini ideas. Finally, Pa and Mr. Rosati could barely understand each other because of the difference in their dialects. I understood that Mr. Rosati would have preferred to see his daughter with a doctor or a lawyer or else anyone who came from the same part of Italy as they had come from. It was impossible to explain to him what I did to make a living. What does it mean to design the pattern for a lace tablecloth? Mrs. Rosati didn't care what I did; she just saw how her daughter looked at me and I looked at her. That's all she needed. Gradually, our two families were doing more and more things together on Sundays, including taking picnics out to the surrounding countryside, picking mushrooms or visiting in our back yards, like in the photo below.

On Orchard Street, where Mary lived, everyone spoke Italian. When I was there I felt like I was in a foreign country, even though it was only five miles away. It was so different from my own neighborhood, from what it was like in Scranton. We were both born in America, but her life had been very different from mine.



Figure 26: The Rosati, Notari, Baldrica and Sena families enjoy a warm, early spring day in the backyard of Francesco and Rosa Rosati's home in Old Forge, on Orchard Street. In the front row, from left to right, are Rosa Rosati, Elena Rosati Baldrica, Antonio Baldrica (Elena's and Ernesto's son), Olivia Notari (Tommaso's daughter), Giovanna Sena, Filomena Sena, and Maria Rosati. In the back row, from left to right, are Francesco Rosati, Michele Sena, Ernesto Baldrica, Tommaso Notari (Rosa Rosati's brother), Lorenzo Sena. The dog is one of Francesco's hunting beagles that Rosa has rescued and made her own pet. The photo is being taken by Celeste Rosati, who, like Lorenzo, has always had a strong interest in art and photography.

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THE 14TH OF DECEMBER, 1941

IT WAS SUNDAY, the 14th of December, 1941, four days after Italy and Germany declared war against the United States and one week following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. It was also the Third Sunday in Advent, called in Latin *Gaudete* or 'Rejoice' Sunday. Ma sat in her pew at St. Lucy's Church. "We should all be rejoicing because Christmas is now less than two weeks away," said Father Florey from the pulpit. Ma had said before we left home, "This is not going to be a happy Christmas. Will we ever have a happy Christmas again?" Franky and I might be fighting against our families in Italy, and maybe we would not come home alive.



Ma usually attended mass alone, rising early, walking up the steeply inclined Scranton Street, passing the building where they first lived when they were married and where all of their children had been born. Then she would return home to start making the Sunday dinner. Today, Pa, Franky, Fannie and I, and Vee with her husband Joe, were sitting with her in her regular pew near the back of the church. Rosie was with her husband, Jimmy Pinto, at their church in Dunmore. In the pew behind sat Ma's brother, Zio Vincenzo with his wife, Zia Rosa, two sons, Larry and Danny, and their daughter, Filomena. Father Florey was giv-

ing the sermon in Italian. Pa was listening, out of respect for his godson, but Ma's mind was on her children. She was, as usual, saying her rosary. Vee's husband would not be called to the war, but Rosie's husband Jimmy, Fannie's boyfriend, Celeste Rosati, Franky and I would be drafted along with her two nephews, Larry and Danny.

Father Florey was explaining what he had read in the Epistle, that St. Paul, in his *First Letter to the Tessalonians*, told the Greeks they should always rejoice, they should pray without ceasing, and they should always give thanks. "We should do this because we have seen the light as members of the Catholic Communion," he said. "Christ was born on Christmas Day to give

us this message." Did the Nazis hear this message? Many of them were Catholics and other kinds of Christians. Were they sitting in their churches today rejoicing, giving thanks? The Japanese, who killed over two thousand sons and daughters of American mothers, had not heard this message because they were not Christians, but surely the Italians who now wanted war with America were aware of it. If they were not, shouldn't the Pope, who lives in the same city as Mussolini, remind them?

I saw Fannie circle her arm under Ma's, and rest her head on Ma's shoulder. I heard the sobs coming from my sister. Pa wrapped his right his arm around Ma's shoulders and stroked Fannie's hair. Franky and I sat with our heads bowed and I struggled to hold back tears. Ma began to weep. The entire congregation sitting in St. Lucy's Church on the Third Sunday in Advent, 1941, wept with her and her family. Those who would not be going to war themselves, along with those who would, would feel the pains of this war in many, many ways until the fighting ended. For some, the pain would never end. Each Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation there would be fewer men and boys in the pews as they were drafted and left for duty. At each mass, where there had been a woman or girl wearing a colorful dress, there would instead be a woman or girl dressed all in black with a black lace veil covering her face.

What could Father Florey do? He stopped his sermon and wept with his parishioners. Ma, Fannie, Vee and Joe and many others left the church. Pa stayed and we stayed with him. Father Florey descended from the pulpit and returned to the altar to finish mass as if he was alone, requiring no response from those who remained in their pews until the Communion Rite and the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Padre Nostro, che sei nei cieli,
Sia santificato il tuo nome.
Venga il tuo regno,
Sia fatta la tua volontá,
Come in cielo, così in terra.
Dacci oggi il nostro pane quotidiano,
E rimetti a noi i nostri debiti
Come noi li rimettiamo ai nostri debitori.
E non ci indurre in tentazione,
Ma liberaci dal male. Amen.

He offered communion to all who wished to come to the altar, and then concluded the mass.

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The Sena and Ricciardi families sat around the table in our dining room after an unusually simple Sunday lunch. Ma and Zia Rosa and the girls continued to weep. Pa was holding a copy of the day's IL PROGRESSO. He read the front page article aloud:

"There is only one reality which predominates: we are at war, and a simple, supreme duty guides us—loyalty to America and its government. The American people of Italian origin who are loyal to the United States need have no fear because the Government will protect them in their right and liberty and justice. Every human sentiment in our hearts for the land which gave us birth cannot distract us from our precise and intelligent duty which is to confirm without the slightest shadow of mental restriction our full loyalty which is the fruit of our appreciation and affection for America of which we are proud citizens and where we have been able to carry on our careers, create our families and where we gave birth to our children who are today as always ready to serve our country."

"Less than ten years ago, he was falling all over Mussolini," said Ma, "and now he's the big patriot."

"He's probably trying to make sure that the FBI don't arrest him and close down his newspaper," added Zia Rosa.

"Everybody's going to forget how much they praised Mussolini," said Zio Vincenzo. "People are going to start to hate Italians. I saw how it was in the last war for the Germans. Maybe we should put an American flag in our shop windows."

"I'm going to keep looking everyone in the eye," said Pa, "and if anyone thinks he's more American than I am he's going to have to prove it."

"I'm signing up tomorrow," declared Larry Ricciardi.

"Me too," said my brother. "I want to get into the motor pool."

I'll wait until my draft papers come in the mail. I think it's a good idea to put an American Flag in the shop windows, and I'll paint God Bless America signs.

What happened in the coming months was nothing that any of the Italian-Americans could have expected. On the 19th of February, 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. It stated the following:

The President

Executive Order

Authorizing the Secretary of War to Prescribe Military Areas

Whereas the successful prosecution of the war requires every possible protection against espionage and against sabotage to national-defense material, national-defense premises, and national-defense utilities as defined in Section 4, Act of April 20, 1918, 40 Stat. 533, as amended by the Act of November 30, 1940, 54 Stat. 1220, and the Act of August 21, 1941, 55 Stat. 655 (U.S.C., Title 50, Sec. 104);

Now, therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, and Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, I hereby authorize and direct the Secretary of War, and the Military Commanders whom he may from time to time designate, whenever he or any designated Commander deems such action necessary or desirable, to prescribe military areas in such places and of such extent as he or the appropriate Military Commander may determine, from which any or all persons may be excluded, and with respect to which, the right of any person to enter, remain in, or leave shall be subject to whatever restrictions the Secretary of War or the appropriate Military Commander may impose in his discretion. The Secretary of War is hereby authorized to provide for residents of any such area who are excluded therefrom, such transportation, food, shelter, and other accommodations as may be necessary, in the judgment of the Secretary of War or the said Military Commander, and until other arrangements are made, to accomplish the purpose of this order. The designation of military areas in any region or locality shall supersede designations of prohibited and restricted areas by the Attorney General under the Proclamations of December 7 and 8, 1941, and shall supersede the responsibility and authority of the Attorney General under the said Proclamations in respect of such prohibited and restricted areas.

I hereby further authorize and direct the Secretary of War and the said Military Commanders to take such other steps as he or the appropriate Military Commander may deem advisable to enforce compliance with the restrictions applicable to each Military area here in above authorized to be designated, including the use of Federal troops and other Federal Agencies, with authority to accept assistance of state and local agencies.

I hereby further authorize and direct all Executive Departments, independent establishments and other Federal Agencies, to assist the Secretary of War or the said Military Commanders in carrying out this Executive Order, including the furnishing of medical aid, hospitalization, food, clothing, transportation, use of land, shelter, and other supplies, equipment, utilities, facilities, and services.

This order shall not be construed as modifying or limiting in any way the authority heretofore granted under Executive Order No. 8972, dated December 12, 1941, nor shall it be construed as limiting or modifying the duty and responsibility of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with respect to the investigation of alleged acts of sabotage or the duty and responsibility of the Attorney General and the Department of Justice under the Proclamations of December 7 and 8, 1941, prescribing regulations for the conduct and control of alien enemies, except as such duty and responsibility is superseded by the designation of military areas here under.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

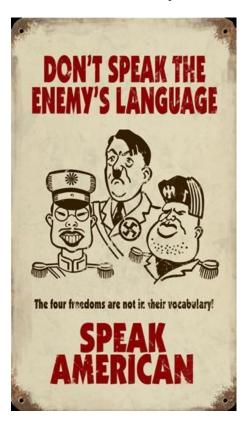
The White House,

February 19, 1942.

Estimates of the number of Italian-Americans who were relocated away from the East and West Coasts as a result of EO9066 varies. Some sources claim it was as many as 10,000 while others state that it was only 3,000. In addition, over 600,000 Italian-Americans had their movements restricted. Agents from the FBI and the Office of Strategic Services (what has become the Central Intelligence Agency) carried out the Order. They had assistance in locating the Italian-Americans who would be subject to these restrictions from the files collected as a result of the Alien Registration Act of 1940. According to this Act, all non-citizens of the United States who were 14 years old or older were required to register with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. Following the signing of EO9066, Italian-Americans who

were not citizens were labelled 'Enemy Aliens'. They needed to carry a photo ID at all times and required a permit to travel more than five miles from home.

Whether it was a law or not, propaganda posters urged people not to speak the languages of the enemies: German, Japanese or Italian.



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Within three months of the bombing of Pearl Harbor I had been drafted. From March, 1942 until I left for Europe a little more than two years later, I was sent around to parts of the country I had never before visited nor ever thought of visiting. In fact, before I made my first journey to an Army base in Texas at the age of thirty-one, I had never been anywhere outside of Eastern Pennsylvania, the middle of New Jersey, New York City, Washington, DC and Rochester, New York. It was a country that I was now going to prepare to give my life for if that was what was required, but one which I barely knew.

During the last year-and-a-half before I shipped out, Mary and I were together. We were married on Saturday, the 23rd of January, 1943, in St. Mary's Church in Old Forge and had our reception at Preno's in Downtown Scranton. After the reception, we took the train to New York City for a two-

day honeymoon, leaving from and returning to the DL&W train station a short walk from Preno's. I travelled back to camp in Texas with the troop train and Mary followed on her own a month later. It was the first time she had been anywhere outside of Eastern Pennsylvania, the middle of New Jersey, New York City and Washington, DC. We had no idea how much time we would have together before the war took me away. We made the best of it. Mary turned each little room we were given into a home.

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\times The 20^{TH} of January, 1946 \times

IT'S FOR MY daughter. An elderly woman seated next to me on the train had been staring at the oversized Teddy Bear I had on my lap since she boarded. My daughter Joann is fourteen months old. She was born five months after I shipped out. I've never seen her, but I have pictures of her and my wife, Mary, if you'd like to see them.

"My son never got to see his son," said the lady and then she started to cry.

I'm sorry. There was nothing more I could say. The train pulled away from Hoboken Station and I turned to look out the window. My eyes wanted to close. I shouldn't be tired. I had slept on the train all the way from Vienna to Le Havre, except for meals and when we had to change trains. I slept like a baby every night during the week when we were crossing the Atlantic. I shivered every time I remembered the sailing over after we left Brooklyn in June of '44, the sea sickness and nervous stomach whenever I thought about being shot at. "Think positive!" they had told us in training. "Never think you are going to die." I guess it worked. I'm here, but except for the time on the ship, I keep waking up with the dreams, the nightmares, the bombs dropping and machine gun fire.

I wonder how Russo is doing. He went to Penn Station to catch the train home to Boston. We promised to stay in touch. I hope we do. I never would have made it through the war without Benny to talk to. He said he had come to America from Florence the year before Mussolini passed laws against Jews. He said he never practiced his religion until he came to America, but he decided if people were going to get killed because they were Jewish, he should practice out of respect for them. He said his family took the name 'Russo' centuries ago when they came to Italy because it was one of the names the church allowed the Ashkenazi Jews to take. He didn't know if his ancestors were Russian or from some other place in the East. It didn't matter. He was an Ashkenazi Jewish Italian, Beniamino Russo. "Call me Benny," he had said when we met.

He got his citizenship papers a few months before Italy declared war on us, and he said he was first in line to sign up for the army on Friday, the 12th of December. They rejected him because he had bad eyesight, but he kept going back, and when they finally needed to fill the quotas, he got in and was

assigned to the 36th Division. That was in the summer of '42. Then he kept trying to get transferred to part of the 36th Division fighting in Italy. He wanted to be there when they finally got Mussolini. But they never let him go over. It's just as well. He couldn't shoot any straighter than I could and he would have gotten himself killed.

It wasn't just his eyesight that kept him from getting into the army and, when he finally did, getting the assignment he wanted. He told us about the raids that were made in the North End by the FBI and other government agencies. Men were taken and put into detention camps without being charged with a crime and held there without being able to talk to anyone or have a lawyer. "We didn't have too many Japanese in Boston, so they picked on the Italians," he said. When we asked them why they didn't do the same thing with the Germans, they laughed and said: "Suddenly, all the Germans come from Sweden."

I got drafted on the 31st of March, 1942, the day before my 31st birthday, and, like Benny, was assigned to the 36th Division. How an Italian-American



Jew from Boston and an Italian-American Catholic from Scranton ended up being assigned to a Division that was part of the Texas and Oklahoma Army National Guards could never be explained to either of us. I suspected that they sent Italian-Americans to units in the south because there weren't that many people of Italian heritage down there and they wouldn't have any prejudices against us or think of us as the enemy. In any case, Benny and I looked forward to getting the arrowhead signifying Oklahoma with the T signifying Texas that showed we had been in combat with the Division.

After we met at Camp Swift in Texas we were together for most of the rest of the war until a few hours ago.

Mary and I were married on the 23rd of January, 1943. I have some nice anniversary presents for her in my bags, so I hope this train doesn't break down. I don't want to miss our second anniversary after missing the first. We had a short honeymoon in New York City and then I had to go back to Texas. Mary followed in March. We lived off the base and Benny was a steady guest at our little bungalow. Mary asked him if her cooking was like the real Italian cooking he ate when he lived in Italy, and he assured her that her *fettuccine con ragu* was the closest he had come to Italian home cooking since he left

the country. One night in July, after Mary and I had eaten dinner, there was a loud knock at the door. When I opened it, Benny was standing there with a newspaper in his hand looking very excited. "Mussolini's been arrested!" he yelled. We read the paper together. It was his own Grand Council of Fascism that kicked him out. His son-in-law even voted against him. They said all the military failures the country had suffered were his fault. The Italian soldiers in Sicily gave up without fighting. It was our Division they were surrendering to. Can you imagine, said Benny! *Il Duce* didn't even say anything to defend himself. He met the King, Victor Emanuele III, after the meeting with the Grand Council or the next day, the journalist wasn't sure about this detail, and when he came out from the meeting he was arrested.

Benny got to go home to Boston for two weeks' leave in September of '43, just when the Italian government led by the King signed a peace treaty with the Allies on the 8th of September. Whatever was left of the Italian army would now be fighting on our side. Benny and his family and their friends organized a street party in their neighborhood in the North End to celebrate. Some of the Fascists in another part of the North End heard about it and came over dressed up in black shirts and started a fight. The police were called in and arrested all of the Fascists for 'sedition'. That's the word Benny used. It meant they were doing something against the America. Benny said that some of them didn't have citizenship and were still in jail when we shipped out overseas in June of '44. How stupid could they be? Four days later, a German commando unit landed on the island where Mussolini was being held and took him to Germany and then back to Italy, to a town in the north on Lake Garda where he led a puppet government. "Maybe I can still be there when they hang the bastard," said Benny. The Germans had moved quickly into Italy to defend it against the allies. "It's not going to be easy to push them out," said Benny.

Sister Rosie gave birth to a boy in September, so now I was finally an uncle and my new nephew was named Joseph. Rosie's husband, Jimmy, had been drafted but he got a deferral until after Joe was born. Like my brother Frankie, Jimmy got the Pacific Theater. Mary and I moved to a base in Louisiana and then to New Jersey where I went to radio school at Rutgers in New Brunswick. Benny was with the rest of the Division on the Fort Dix base. Mary and I lived with Pa's first cousin, who is also named Michele Sena. Everyone calls him Mickey. He came over from Italy just before the First

World War. His wife, Mildred, is a real sweetheart. We lived with them and their two children, Phyllis and Anthony, in a nice town called Somerville until about a month before I shipped out, and Mary went back to Scranton, four months pregnant with Joann. Our daughter arrived on the 18th of November, 1944.

Our first port of call after leaving Brooklyn was Southampton in England. We arrived on the 6th of July. D-Day had been a month before. We were ashore long enough to figure out that the British didn't like us Yanks very much. The civilians we met mostly ignored us, but the soldiers who talked to us said we had let them fight Hitler on their own for five years and were coming in now to take the spoils. Even though we knew the next time we climbed aboard a ship we would be on our way to combat, we were all pretty tired of the English and hoped we didn't have to count on them to cover our backs when the shooting started.

On the 15th of August, as part of the U.S. 6th Army Group, our Division made an amphibious landing in a place called Saint-Raphaël-Fréjus on the southern coast of France. I drove a jeep off the landing craft once the beach was secured. I had a colonel with me. We moved quickly up the Rhone River Valley meeting only light resistance, and by the middle of September we were in the area of France called Alsace. We thought we would be home by Christmas. All I could think about was getting home to Mary and Joann. Then our advance slowed and we began taking heavy losses through October and November. From the middle of December through the end of January, we were in hell. The Germans had attacked in what would be called The Battle of the Bulge. They caught us totally by surprise. The colonel I was driving said the bad weather made it impossible to do any aerial reconnaissance. One of the men said there were rumors that some big chiefs were being criticized for being overconfident and not being prepared.

Our casualties were mounting and the bombing from the German artillery seemed like it never stopped. Day and night they pounded our positions. It was impossible to sleep until you were so exhausted that even exploding bombs couldn't stop your eyes from closing. Christmas 1944 was one I would like to forget, but will never be able to. The bombing stopped for a few hours around noon, but then it all started again. On top of it all, it was very cold. I wrote a letter to Mary every day, but it was impossible to send them. I hoped that if I did get killed, it would not be by a bomb that would

blow me up along with all the letters. I said a rosary every night and promised myself that if I survived this battle and the war, I would do everything I could to make sure my daughter did not have to go through what Mary was going through now, and that if we were blessed with a son, he did not have to go through a war.



Gradually, we started gaining ground and entered Luxembourg from the south. The weather cleared and we were able to get our bomber and fighter planes up in the air again to start our counter offensive and begin to cut the enemy's supply lines. Reinforcements began arriving for us and the Germans started pulling back. When the bombing finally stopped and the battle was over, they said we had nineteen thousand Americans killed. We followed the German retreat, first south, back into Alsace. In February, we were in a French town called Gougenheim, northwest of Strasbourg where this picture was taken. That's Benny on my right and Sargent Syd Foreman from Dallas, Texas. Our clothes look pretty scruffy, but we're all clean shaven. Most of the buildings had bullet holes like the one above us. In March, we were in the area of

Strasbourg after major battles along the way. I took this picture of the Magi-

not Line that the French had built along the border with Germany. It didn't do them much good.

It was on the 28th of April when we were close to the big



city of Munich that we heard about Mussolini being killed. Benny said he had mixed feelings. He was happy that it was finally over, but he said he wanted to see him stand trial and be properly executed for all the bad he did. Mussolini, along with his girlfriend, Clara Petacci and a few others, had been shot by Italian partisans and hung upside down in the same place in Milan where fifteen partisans had been executed a year earlier by Mussolini's soldiers. Two days later the really big news came, that Hitler had killed himself by swallowing cyanide and then shooting himself with his sidearm, just for good measure. He took his wife of one day, Eva Braun, along with him.

About the same time as the two major instigators of this awful war were meeting their ends, parts of the 36th Division were led to work camps close to Munich. These work camps were dug into the sides of hills and in tunnels made by the prisoners. They were used to build weapons and planes, safe from our bombs. When our men got to one of the camps at Kauferling, it was mostly empty, except for the men who were too weak to move with the other inmates. We learned that the inmates who had left had been forced to walk to Dachau, the main concentration camp. Our Division didn't go to Dachau, but we heard stories about what the prisoners did to their German guards when they were freed by the Americans.

On VE Day, the 8th of May, we were in the German town of Denklingen, a tiny village about half way between Ulm and Munich. We had been moving east and west, north and south for weeks and ended up here. As one of the last events of the war before victory was declared, we captured the big General Field Marshall, Gerd von Rundstedt. On the same day, I used my rifle for the first time. I was taking a dump in the latrine we had made in the forest where we were camped. I was just finishing up when a teenage boy dressed in a German army uniform appeared before me with his hands raised in the air. He had to wait for me to pull up my trousers before I could lead him to the MPs. He thanked me. Can you imagine that? For the rest of the time, until we shipped out in December, we were in a town called Blaubeuren in Germany, close to Ulm.



In July, four of us took the jeep to Ulm after it had been cleared of Germans. It seemed like the only building left standing in the city was the cathedral. I really felt sorry for the people there. We had bombed the city in December while we were getting shelled during the Battle of the Bulge. Then we bombed it again in March and April. I heard that less than two thousand of the original thirteen thousand buildings in the city were left standing. The photo was taken by a GI who was

passing by. He must have shook the camera because it came out blurry. I'm on the rightend, the little guy.



For a few months we didn't know what we would do next. Would we stay in Europe as part of an army of occupation, would we be reassigned to the Pacific Theater to fight the Japanese, or would we go back to the States? In early August, after American planes dropped two atom bombs on Japanese cities, the first on Hiroshima and the second on Nagasaki, killing over 100,000 Japanese people when the bombs exploded, we had a strong feeling that the war in Japan would soon come to an end. On August 14th Japan officially surrendered, and the announcement was made the next day. The formal signing of surrender took place on the 2nd of September, 1945, the day that World War II came to an end. I sent this photo home to Mary and Joann on the 21st of September with a note on the back: "Hoping to be home soon. Your loving husband & daddy, Larry XX." I always signed my cards with kisses.

No one in our family had been killed or wounded in the war. During the time after the war ended, all of us talked a lot about the men who would not be returning home with us from our Division. It was a major topic of conversation, like remembering them would somehow make it alright that we were still alive. How does a bullet decide which man to kill? When Benny and I were alone, we talked about what would be waiting for us when we returned. For some reason, what Ma had said to my sisters all those years ago, about the differences between Italians who came to America, came back to me and I told Benny the story. Benny said that Ma had put her finger on the major problem that we Italian-Americans had in America. It wasn't so much that we were not homogeneous as a group. Immigrants from most countries took with them their local dialects, food preferences and even religions. But with Italians, there were so many differences among the people who were all labeled 'Italian' when they passed through Ellis Island. Pa couldn't understand what Mary's father said, and Mr. Rosati could not make heads or tails of what Pa was saying to him. All of them had been citizens of different countries that were united into a single country called Italy. Some of those countries, like the southern Kingdom of Naples, where Ma and Pa came from, and the Papal States, where the Rosatis lived, were united by force, while others, like Veneto, were brought in by economic coercion. Benny said that Risorgimento was not every Italian's dream. It was more of a vision than a reality, a myth that was created to smooth the process of unification.

"At least Italy ended the war on the right side," Benny had said. "If we know what's good for us, we should just say we are Italian-Americans and leave out the details."

On the voyage back home, Benny and I talked about what we were going to do with the rest of our lives. We didn't mention a word about what we had just been through for the past twenty months. We left it behind when we boarded the ship back home. Benny said that he was going to try to get accepted to college and earn a law degree, then run for Congress. "If Fiorello La Guardia could do it, I can too," he said. I said I still had my dream of moving to California and working for Walt Disney. It might have to wait until Joann is a little older and we put a little money aside. At least on the trip back we didn't worry about being hit by a torpedo. I didn't even get seasick.

The train pulled into Scranton's DL&W station just after 1.30 p.m. Everything looked the same as it did when I left. I saw Mary on the platform holding Joann. She was surrounded by almost everyone in both of our families. I was home.



EPILOGUE

MY GRANDFATHER SENA bought my father a house across the street from his own house on South Seventh Avenue. He did this sometime between when my father was drafted and when he returned home after the war. He put the house in my father's name. If it was his way of trying to keep my father from leaving for California and working for Walt Disney as soon as he returned, it wasn't necessary. My mother had no interest in picking up stakes and moving to a place where she had no family. She grew up in a community, a borough of Scranton, where people in her neighborhood not only were all Italian, they came from the same region of Italy, most from the same town of Sigillo in Umbria. Many were related in one way or another. They spoke Italian all the time, and carried on with the same traditions of food, religion and politics that they had in 'the old country'. To this day, Old Forge is known in some circles as the *Pizza Capital of the World*, although I think Napoli has had something to say about this.

Whatever Italian influence I had growing up came from weekly visits to Old Forge and my close relationship to my mother's side of the family. My mother's family and upbringing could not be more different from my father's. My maternal grandfather was a coal miner who, in his spare time, fished, hunted, tended his huge garden, kept a pig, chickens and pigeons. He could neither read nor write and he never attended mass. He spoke English because he had to communicate with his laborers and with his bosses, who were not Italian, but he never spoke English with us. Both of my maternal grandparents had brothers and sisters still in their home village in Italy during the WWII. They had nephews who fought on the side of Italy. This was never spoken about. When the war ended, Italy was on the side of the Allies; that was all that mattered.

My sister and I attended the same grade school as my father and his siblings, and had the same kindergarten teacher as he had, Miss Mayo. There was no Italian spoken in our house. Even if Mom and Dad wanted to, their dialects were impossible for each of them to understand. Louie Daverne cut my hair, Mom shopped in Mr. Meyer's market and we bought our bread, milk and Dad's Lucky Strikes (a left-over habit from the war that he quit in 1959) in Newman's. Flannery's Beer Garden got some competition, although none of the beer gardens got any business from the Senas. My grandfather died

when I was five, but my memories of him are very clear. He spoke English to us. I would sit in one of the customer chairs and watch him work while Mom shopped at Meyer's or walked into town. I can still hear the shoe repair machines whirring.

Dad was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars until he was in his seventies, marched in the 4th of July parade each year and attended the funeral of every veteran in his Post, carrying a flag for the family. The bombs that fell around him during the Christmas of 1944 continued to fall in his dreams, but the only stories he told of the war were light-hearted ones. His favorite holidays were Thanksgiving and the 4th of July, which we celebrated just like all the other Americans. We never celebrated an Italian holiday and did not know what they were. Dad didn't belong to any Italian-American clubs after the war and never encouraged us to restrict our friendships to 'your own kind'. And he never, ever showed us his first major work of art, *Natale di Roma*.

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Figure 27: A photo taken from the front yard of Larry and Mary Sena's house at 120 South Seventh Avenue. Michele Sena's shoe repair shop is the two-storey building in the middle of the photo with three windows on the second floor. The three-storey house to the left was owned by Michele. In one of the three apartments lived Vincenza Sena Giunta with her husband Joe.

₩ H.R.2442 ₩

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AT THE SECOND SESSION

BEGUN AND HELD AT THE CITY OF WASHINGTON ON MONDAY,
THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY OF JANUARY, TWO THOUSAND

AN ACT

TO PROVIDE FOR THE PREPARATION OF A GOVERNMENT REPORT DETAILING INJUSTICES SUFFERED BY ITALIAN AMERICANS DURING WORLD WAR II, AND A FORMAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUCH INJUSTICES BY THE PRESIDENT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

THIS ACT MAY BE CITED AS THE 'WARTIME VIOLATION OF ITALIAN AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES ACT'.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

THE CONGRESS MAKES THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS:

- (1) THE FREEDOM OF MORE THAN 600,000 ITALIAN-BORN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES AND THEIR FAMILIES WAS RESTRICTED DURING WORLD WAR II BY GOVERNMENT MEASURES THAT BRANDED THEM 'ENEMY ALIENS' AND INCLUDED CARRYING IDENTIFICATION CARDS, TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, AND SEIZURE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY.
- (2) During World War II more than 10,000 Italian Americans living on the West Coast were forced to leave their homes and prohibited from entering coastal zones. More than 50,000 were subjected to curfews.
- (3) DURING WORLD WAR II THOUSANDS OF ITALIAN AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS WERE ARRESTED, AND HUNDREDS WERE INTERNED IN MILITARY CAMPS.
- (4) HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF ITALIAN AMERICANS PERFORMED EXEMPLARY SERVICE AND THOUSANDS SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES IN DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES.
- (5) AT THE TIME, ITALIANS WERE THE LARGEST FOREIGN-BORN GROUP IN THE UNITED STATES, AND TODAY ARE THE FIFTH LARGEST IMMIGRANT GROUP IN THE UNITED STATES, NUMBERING APPROXIMATELY 15 MILLION.
- (6) THE IMPACT OF THE WARTIME EXPERIENCE WAS DEVASTATING TO ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES, AND ITS EFFECTS ARE STILL BEING FELT.

(7) A DELIBERATE POLICY KEPT THESE MEASURES FROM THE PUBLIC DURING THE WAR. EVEN 50 YEARS LATER MUCH INFORMATION IS STILL CLASSIFIED, THE FULL STORY REMAINS UNKNOWN TO THE PUBLIC, AND IT HAS NEVER BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED IN ANY OFFICIAL CAPACITY BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

SEC. 3. REPORT.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SHALL CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE TREATMENT BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OF ITALIAN AMERICANS DURING WORLD WAR II, AND NOT LATER THAN 1 YEAR AFTER THE DATE OF THE ENACTMENT OF THIS ACT SHALL SUBMIT TO THE CONGRESS A REPORT THAT DOCUMENTS THE FINDINGS OF SUCH REVIEW. THE REPORT SHALL COVER THE PERIOD BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 1, 1939, AND DECEMBER 31, 1945, AND SHALL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- (1) THE NAMES OF ALL ITALIAN AMERICANS WHO WERE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY IN THE INITIAL ROUNDUP FOLLOWING THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR, AND PRIOR TO THE UNITED STATES DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST ITALY.
- (2) THE NAMES OF ALL ITALIAN AMERICANS WHO WERE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY.
- (3) THE NAMES OF ALL ITALIAN AMERICANS WHO WERE INTERNED AND THE LOCATION WHERE THEY WERE INTERNED.
- (4) THE NAMES OF ALL ITALIAN AMERICANS WHO WERE ORDERED TO MOVE OUT OF DESIGNATED AREAS UNDER THE UNITED STATES ARMY'S 'INDIVIDUAL EXCLUSION PROGRAM'.
- (5) THE NAMES OF ALL ITALIAN AMERICANS WHO WERE ARRESTED FOR CURFEW, CONTRABAND, OR OTHER VIOLATIONS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 9066.
- (6) DOCUMENTATION OF FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION RAIDS ON THE HOMES OF ITALIAN AMERICANS.
- (7) A LIST OF PORTS FROM WHICH ITALIAN AMERICAN FISHERMEN WERE RESTRICTED.
- (8) THE NAMES OF ITALIAN AMERICAN FISHERMEN WHO WERE PREVENTED FROM FISHING IN PROHIBITED ZONES AND THEREFORE UNABLE TO PURSUE THEIR LIVELIHOODS.
- (9) The names of Italian Americans whose boats were confiscated
- (10) THE NAMES OF ITALIAN AMERICAN RAILROAD WORKERS WHO WERE PREVENTED FROM WORKING IN PROHIBITED ZONES.
- (11) A LIST OF ALL CIVIL LIBERTIES INFRINGEMENTS SUFFERED BY ITALIAN AMERICANS DURING WORLD WAR II, AS A RESULT OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 9066, INCLUDING INTERNMENT, HEARINGS WITHOUT BENEFIT OF COUNSEL, ILLEGAL SEARCHES AND SEIZURES, TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, ENEMY ALIEN REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS, EMPLOYMENT RESTRICTIONS, CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY, AND FORCED EVACUATION FROM HOMES.
- (12) An explanation of whether Italian Americans were subjected to civil liberties infringements, as a result of Executive Order No. 9066, and if so, why other Italian Americans were not.
 - (13) A REVIEW OF THE WARTIME RESTRICTIONS ON ITALIAN AMERICANS

TO DETERMINE HOW CIVIL LIBERTIES CAN BE BETTER PROTECTED DURING NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

SEC. 4. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.

IT IS THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS THAT--

- (1) THE STORY OF THE TREATMENT OF ITALIAN AMERICANS DURING WORLD WAR II NEEDS TO BE TOLD IN ORDER TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THESE EVENTS HAPPENED, TO REMEMBER THOSE WHOSE LIVES WERE UNJUSTLY DISRUPTED AND WHOSE FREEDOMS WERE VIOLATED, TO HELP REPAIR THE DAMAGE TO THE ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY, AND TO DISCOURAGE THE OCCURRENCE OF SIMILAR INJUSTICES AND VIOLATIONS OF CIVIL LIBERTIES IN THE FUTURE;
- (2) FEDERAL AGENCIES, INCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES, SHOULD SUPPORT PROJECTS SUCH AS--
- (A) CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND LECTURES TO HEIGHTEN AWARENESS OF THIS UNFORTUNATE CHAPTER IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY;
- (B) THE REFURBISHMENT OF AND PAYMENT OF ALL EXPENSES ASSOCIATED WITH THE TRAVELING EXHIBIT 'UNA STORIA SEGRETA', EXHIBITED AT MAJOR CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES; AND
- (C) DOCUMENTARIES TO ALLOW THIS ISSUE TO BE PRESENTED TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC TO RAISE ITS AWARENESS;
- (3) AN INDEPENDENT, VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED COMPRISED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF ITALIAN AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS, HISTORIANS, AND OTHER INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS TO ASSIST IN THE COMPILATION, RESEARCH, AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING THE TREATMENT OF ITALIAN AMERICANS;
- (4) AFTER COMPLETION OF THE REPORT REQUIRED BY THIS ACT, FINANCIAL SUPPORT SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC THROUGH THE PRODUCTION OF A DOCUMENTARY FILM SUITED FOR PUBLIC BROADCAST; AND
- (5) THE PRESIDENT SHOULD, ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, FORMALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THESE EVENTS DURING WORLD WAR II REPRESENTED A FUNDAMENTAL INJUSTICE AGAINST ITALIAN AMERICANS

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

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