

My Grandfather's History Book

Before many people immigrated to America, they fought in World War II, under a different leader. This is the way the situation was with my Grandfather, Nino Forcellese. He fought under the leadership of Benito Mussolini. Italy, at the time was a monarchy, ruled by King Vittorio Emanuele the third; however, there was a Fascist Party under it.

Mussolini chose to take the Axis side because he saw Hitler as a great power. He figured if he took the Allied side, Germany would defeat Italy. To increase Italy's power Mussolini declared war on Abyssinia, and soon after, conquered Abyssinia. At first, Mussolini did not want to enter the war because he felt the Italian Army was weak; however, feeling Italy would be left out of the war, they entered the war in 1940.

That was the year my Grandfather was drafted into the Italian Army, known to Italians as the "Esercito Italiano". The exact date was March 21, 1940. He was sent to Boot Camp in Bologna, in the Northern Region of Emilia. He was placed in the "third regimento Artiglieria, Ippo Trainato Divisione" in Pistoia. This meant that he was in an artillery regiment, which was a cavalry unit. This unit was a horse drawn division.

Italy declared war on the French June 11, 1940. My Grandfather, Nino, and his regiment became involved in a ten day war in the Alps. On the front line, Nino's duty was on the assembly line. He gave the missiles to the cannon loader. Off the front line

each soldier had horse chores. For every soldier, four horses were assigned for them to clean and care for.

While my Grandfather fought in this battle, his brother, Silvio Forcellese, was in a battle on the coast of azure, near Niece. The motive of this battle was to capture Niece from the French. During World War I, in 1915, the French had captured it from the Italians, so the Italians were trying to get it back in World War II. Although the French surrendered, many casualties occurred, one of them was Nino's brother, Silvio. Nino and his two remaining brothers, who were also in the war, were discharged and exempt from the war, since Silvio was killed. In all, my grandfather was in the war for only a few months.

For a year and a half, Nino worked in Rome as a tailor until 1942, when he was drafted for a second time. This time he was stationed in Teramo. After a few months in Teramo, he was transferred in June of 1943 to Monopoli, a Southern Italian city. He remained in Monopoli until September of 1943, when Italy surrendered to the American and English forces.

During the wartime, while Italy was still on the Axis powers, the Italian people had entrusted Mussolini to do the best for their country. According to Nino, much of the Italian people like my Grandfather, were raised under the dictatorship of Mussolini. They had entrusted him to do good things for Italy without such a harsh dictatorship. Nino believed Mussolini made a mistake joining forces with Hitler. Nino was also certain that if Mussolini acted more

diplomatically and listened to the people, he would not have chosen to follow Hitler.

Nino remembers that in the beginning of 1945, Mussolini's popularity began to decrease while the anti-fascist, anti-Mussolini Partisans rose in popularity. During this time, Mussolini tried to flee Italy to get to Germany in a German military truck. Near Milan, however, the truck concealing Mussolini was stopped by the Partisan Barrier setup. Mussolini and his lover, Clara Petacci, were taken to a farm building outside Milan. My grandfather recalls that the Peoples Tribunal had sentenced him to death. Still in the farmhouse, Mussolini was about to be shot when Clara Petacci threw herself in front of him. She was shot and killed. Soon after, Mussolini was then shot and killed. Clara Petacci's and Mussolini's bodies were taken to the Piazza Loreto, which was a square in Milan. The Italian people hung their dead bodies up-side down in the square for the world to see.

In 1945, my Grandfather ended his service in the army. At this time, life was rough for Nino, for Italy was very impoverished and much of the country was destroyed.

Nino states that in 1945, Italy was still considered a monarchy, but that changed. An anti-Mussolini political party gave the people a choice and formed a republic. They soon exiled the King to Lisbon, Portugal, where he died. A coalition of the weak Christian Democrats, the Communists, and the Socialists formed the Italian Parliament.

The war may have been over but reforming had just began. He knew it was a time to rebuild the Italian government, to be the "peoples choice." It was also a time for rebuilding the country all together.

Bibliography

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This is very interesting, although you might have done better on some things carried out a bit further in the U.S. your family end up in the U.S.?

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