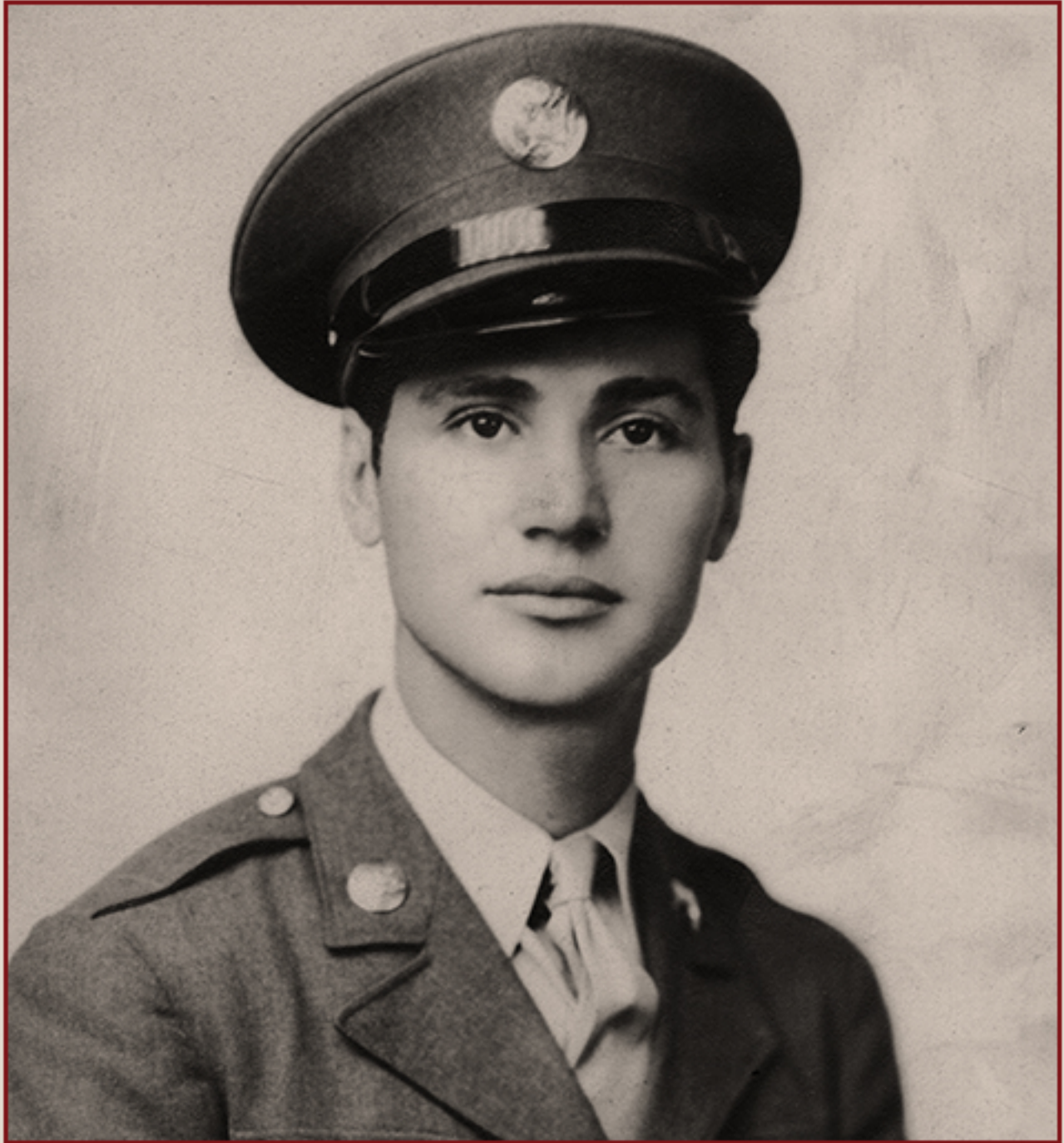


CHAPTER NINE

PATRIOTISM



VICTOR MONTRONE
SERVED IN WORLD WAR II

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Chapter 9: Military Patriotism

Introduction

Throughout the histories of Italy and the United States, Italians and Italian Americans have served and sacrificed for their countries during numerous periods of conflict – which never seemed to end. This kind of patriotism has been a motivator for Montrone and Gaudenzi family members for generations. This has continued in both families with Paul’s nephew, Marc, joining the U.S. Coast Guard, and Sandra’s great nephew, Alex, in the U.S Air Force. Gene (G3 - M) Montrone reflecting on his son Marc’s military service in the Coast Guard said:

What motivated [my son] to go in, of course, was patriotism. That’s what motivated all of my relatives who served in the military, particularly both my Uncle Victor [Montrone] and Uncle Mario (G2 - M). And my son knew about that service. He had to. Put yourself back in the days and look at their perspective. Their parents were immigrants. This country had opened its arms to immigrants. They were all about patriotism for the

opportunities the country gave their parents, and for defending, quote unquote, the little guy. So, that's what motivated them.¹

Military Service in Italy

In Italy, until the end of the draft in 2000, all Italian men born after 1842 were subject to compulsory military service. The term of service usually lasted for three years. Civil birth registers (*atti di nascita*) were used by the local military office (Ufficio Comunale di Leva) to determine all those over the age of 20 and thus eligible. Alternatively, a young man could enlist as a volunteer at age 17, before he was drafted for his compulsory military service.

In World War I, men who were born between 1896 and 1900 were drafted before their twentieth birthdays. As a result, about 6 million Italians were called to arms for that war. The number of soldiers selected during any given year, whether in peacetime or wartime, was based on quotas. Emigration did not prevent Italian “citizens” from being

drafted, and those living abroad who did not report for duty were considered draft dodgers, a crime punishable with jail time if prosecuted. About 304,000 Italian-born men living abroad returned to Italy for service in World War I, including Paul's grandfather, Eugene (G1 - M) Giancini.²

The Italian conscription experience touched the lives of many immigrant family members in varying ways. For example, Antonio (G1 - M) Montrone was drafted twice for Italian service. He was first selected on May 6, 1905, to complete his compulsory military service. However, he was declared a draft dodger (*renitenza*) at the end of January 1906 since he had immigrated to the United States and did not report for duty. Within months of returning to America with his Italian bride in 1907, to correct his record, Antonio reported to the Italian Consul in New York but was rejected. He was again drafted into the Italian army on May 2, 1916, but that December he was declared unfit for military service due to living abroad.³

Similarly, born in 1883, Iginio (G1 - G) Emiliani would have been eligible for service in 1903, but he left for America in 1901. According to his conscription card, he was on indefinite leave until the World War I call to arms. On July 16, 1916, he was declared a deserter for failing to respond when his birth-year class was called up to serve. Almost ten years later, he received amnesty, and he was restored to his position of indefinite leave on 30 December 1930.⁴ On the other hand, David Mercanti (Sandra's maternal great uncle), who also had been in the United States, returned to Italy and completed his service during World War I.⁵

Unfortunately, this conscription, especially during World War I, often brought pain or death to Italian men. Helen (G2 – M) (Montrone) Mastro recalled that her mother's first cousin, Alfredo De Cristofaro, was in World War I and saw his brother die at his feet. "He never really got over that. . . I often heard the story from my mother."⁶

Another survivor, a Giancini relative, Francesco Felice Colapietro, told his son Bruno (G2 – M) about the harsh realities of his time serving in Italy. Bruno described it:

You know, [my father Francesco Felice] was in World War I in the trenches. . . I think it made him bitter against war. He didn't like the idea of . . . the Italian military . . . [having] officers who knew nothing about the military. And my father claims that many of them were shot in the back by their own men because they made ridiculous demands. Like, in World War I, somebody blows a whistle, you run out, and you get machine-gunned down. Then the other side blows a whistle, they run out, they get machine-gunned down. So it's not a good experience. Thank God he came back because I would not have been born. But his brother was wounded at the end of the war [and] died on the train back home.⁷

Before permanently settling in the United States, Eugene Giancini served his old country through both his compulsory three years of service and the First World War. His service is acknowledged by placement of a brick in the walkway

approaching the World War I Memorial and Museum in Kansas City, MO. “See, Italy went to war about 1914, and they got him right over,” explained his son David (G2 - M). “He was wounded, I guess a little bit, and he had a hard time. . . He said he was supposed to die in the war [which he felt was why] he was there. Why did he come back?” Eugene’s daughter Flo (G2 - M) corroborated her brother’s impressions,

And my father saw a lot of stuff that was very hurtful. . . And he was gassed, then wounded . . . He says on this [particular] Christmas Eve that they didn’t have anything to eat, and they landed in somebody’s backyard that had cabbages that were frozen. . . That’s why he decided that . . . none of his sons would ever go to the war again.⁸

Thus, when the Italian military sent draft papers to David in America come 1924, his father “tore the whole thing [up]. He says, ‘I say, they kill[ed] me, they’re not going to kill my children.’ And he was wrong. One of his children got

killed.”⁹ However, that child, Mario, died on behalf of America rather than Italy.

Military Service in America

In America, soldiers were drafted in preparation for war. As of 1917, potential soldiers registered based on age through the Selective Service System. The first few draft registrations during World War I included only those over the age of 21, but the draft age was lowered to 18 in the final round. In all, more than 24 million American men registered for the draft, and 2.7 million were conscripted throughout World War I.¹⁰ The age remained at 18 for World War II, so about 36 million men registered during the years of American involvement in that war, 1941–1945. Of that number, about 10 million were drafted.¹¹

In the United States, enlisting was encouraged but still could not bring in the same numbers as the draft. During World War I, there were more than 300,000 volunteer enlistments of the 4 million soldiers in the American Expeditionary

Force (AEF).¹² The AEF, a formation of the United States Army, was established on July 5, 1917, by President Woodrow Wilson. Led by General John F. Pershing, the soldiers fought alongside our allies on the Western Front against the German Empire.¹³ During World War II, the enlistment rate was higher. Of the 16 million soldiers in the American Armed Forces, 38.8 percent were volunteers and 61.2 percent were draftees.¹⁴

Registering for the draft or enlisting required that each potential soldier be inspected to ensure his physical and mental capability for fighting. In both Italy and America, registrants could not, for example, be underweight or have flat feet. In the United States, those rejected for service were designated Class 4-F.

A health-related rejection impacted a few family members, including Angelo (G2 - M) Montrone, who had back problems,¹⁵ possibly inherited from his mother, who became a hunchback in her later years. Nevertheless, Angelo worked

in a factory that, like many during wartime, took on military duties.¹⁶ “During World War II, his factory was producing all kinds of military blankets and later, all the woolens that were going over to the Russians at the time (for the Marshall Plan),” said his son Gene.¹⁷

Angelo’s brother, Albert (G2 – M), was rejected because of a spinal deformity with which he was born. But his brother, Victor (G2 – M), did serve during World War II. Gene Montrone further elaborated on his Uncle Victor’s service,

He was a medic in World War II, so he was treating wounded soldiers. He was based in Burma. Although Uncle Victor did not die in battle, he developed kidney disease while serving in Burma, from which he died not many years after being discharged from the service in 1945. ¹⁸

Two of the Giancini brothers failed to qualify for the military due to health-related issues. The elder, David, was drafted and attended basic training in 1943, but due to a

rupture he experienced as an infant, he was “saved from going to the service.”¹⁹

Younger brother Dominick (G2 - M) had polio, infantile paralysis, or some other problem as a child which “left the muscles in his one leg not developed like the other leg.” His sister Marie (G2 - M) continued, “Of course, I never saw it because he never wore shorts or anything. . . But that was the reason he was turned down.”²⁰

Unfortunately, the youngest of the Giancini brothers, Mario, was drafted. He served in the U.S. army in Germany and was killed in Aachen in 1944 as the allies advanced to the Battle of Bulge. The Giancini family never fully recovered from his loss. Mario was one of the 116,000 American soldiers killed during the war.²¹

Box 9.1: Mario Giancini's Sacrifice & Wright Museum Honor

Paul's Aunt Marie (Giancini) Teot's husband, Roger Teot, was also in the service. Marie told the story:

Roger went into the army right after he graduated from high school. He went in in 1946 and came out in '48 and that was when we met. He and his buddy joined together; his buddy was sent to Japan and Roger was sent to Alaska, where he told me 'there was a girl behind every tree, only there were no trees.' He was a Tech III or a Tech IV, something like that; it was basically a desk job. He was quite smart, so maybe the army decided he would be more useful behind a desk. ²²

Jerome (G2 - G) Gaudenzi did not serve because he was married—and also had a hernia. “He was turned down,” remembered his daughter Gerry (G3 - G). “I remember being anxious about his going into the military, but he was rejected because of a health situation.”²³ Alternatively, both of Jerome's brothers, Frank (G2 - G) and John (G2 - G), fought in World War II, one in Germany and one in South Asia. Both were wounded during the war, but as John's injury came outside of battle, he did not qualify for a Purple

Heart. “I always remember being proud of them and they’d come back with stories,” remembered Gerry.²⁴

Box 9.2: Frank Gaudenzi’s Military Experience

Not surprisingly, family memories of the draft in America often revolve around the interconnections between civilian and military life. Frank Gaudenzi recalled:

I was going to college at the time, and I was going to join the Marine Reserves. It was football season. That Sunday we were playing against St. Bonaventure, and I broke my leg playing up there. So the Marines wouldn’t take me in. I had to wait until my foot got better, and then I’d be drafted. I went in the service—I was drafted in. And what happened was, I had a pretty good IQ, so they gave me a color-blind test. The fellow said to me, “Well, congratulations, you’re in.” And I said, “I’m in what?”

He said, “We’re going to send you to become an air pilot.” . . . I said, “Can I refuse?” He said, “Yeah.” I said, “I refuse.” So I went into the infantry. . . Not that I

wanted to, but I just didn't want to be up there because we were never in a plane, at the time.²⁵

For his part, Paul joined the ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) in college. It was during the Vietnam War and he chose ROTC as a better option than the draft. Upon graduation, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army and later served his two years of active duty in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis. He was honorably discharged with the rank of Captain. Paul was proud to serve and gained experience that has benefited him in many ways throughout his life.

Box 9.3: Paul Montrone's Civilian Military Experience

Benefits for Military Service – Italy and America

In the Italian military, professional soldiers and wartime soldiers were entitled to a pension. Those with peacetime compulsory service were not. Veterans could also lose the right to a military pension if they lost their Italian

citizenship or were convicted of or conducted certain crimes. U.S. veterans who had been honorably discharged could receive a variety of monetary and medical benefits as well as college tuition as compensation. Families of those who lost their life in service could also receive some monetary benefits.

For better or worse, military benefits played a crucial role in the lives of the men returning from service, as family members made clear in their recollections. Their comments often reflect a bitter sense that not enough was done for those who had given so much.

Beatrice (G2 - M) observed that because her father Eugene Giancini returned to fight with Italy in World War I, he was entitled to “a suit and a free passage wherever he wanted to go. So he came back to America. . . No pension or anything. . . That’s why he didn’t want to stay there [in Italy].”²⁶ His sons David and Dominick also complained about their father not receiving his due. Dominick felt that the American

soldiers received much more than the Italian servicemen.

Regarding his father Eugene, Dominick said:

They [the American military] gave him the option [and] said, “Do you want to stay here? Fight with the American Army, and we’ll give you citizenship and all.” And the biggest mistake he ever made in his life, which he didn’t make too many, was he refused [he went back to Italy to fight]. . . Now there was some [of his Italian American friends] that stayed here [in America]. . . They made out like bandits. They had pensions, all kinds of benefits from the Government because they stayed and fought.”²⁷

David Giancini, the eldest of Eugene’s children, agreed that their father should not have returned to Italy. “If he stayed here, he would have been better off. Not only that, maybe he would never have gone, you know, with three, four kids, or more than that, you know? . . . Did he get the medals? Ever? No, he didn’t ever get anything.”²⁸

Even upon Eugene’s later death, Dominick noted that his family did not receive much recompense from the Italian

military. “After he died, they had some kind of system there when an Italian veteran died. My mother sent into the government the death certificate and all saying that he was dead. They sent her back for all the military [service] and everything that he ever did a whopping fifty-two dollars. . . Imagine that.”²⁹

The benefits received by at least one American family member seemed to highlight those differences between Italian and American benefits. In early 1950, Frank Gaudenzi applied for World War II compensation from the bureau in Pennsylvania. It was determined that with his eleven months of active domestic service and sixteen months of foreign service he was entitled to \$350.³⁰ He apparently also took advantage of the college tuition benefit, as noted by Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi.

Then [my husband Frank] went in the service. And when he came back from the service, he went back to the University (of Scranton). He didn't play football then, but he coached a lot. . . But he didn't graduate. He had, I would say, post-traumatic stress syndrome . . . before they

knew what it was, you know, after World War II. After the Vietnam War, they started finding out. So he left school, started in art school. He went to art school then, and that was when I met him. . . He was in the army, yeah. And he received a Purple Heart. He was in Germany.³¹

Back Home

On the home front, those who could not serve, and the families of those who did, had to keep everything running in the absence of the servicemen (and women). Then the soldiers returned home and had to readjust to daily life. As Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi said, “It’s hard to re-acclimate. And then there aren’t that many jobs because, you know, it’s the same happening now. . . Because the war plants are laying off, too . . . They’re all getting laid off. And it tumbles down like a domino.”³²

During World War I, Settimia (G1 - M) (D’Annibale) Giancini was raising three children in Ceccano, Italy, while her husband Eugene fought. One of these children, Beatrice,

admired her mother's abilities to keep them fed during this time.

She was a go-getter. She had a lot of courage, my mother. She had more spunk than her two sisters, and during the first World War, my mother was not afraid to just push her way through crowds to get to the stores because food was rationed. . . She procured this food for us, her children and her family, and for her mother and the other sister.

One sister at the time was in America. She lived in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. . . [In Italy] I remember Maria Antonia [Tiberia], she was my mother's aunt. . . She would be my great-aunt, and she was really instrumental during the war, too . . . because she was buying for this famous family that she was housekeeper [for them], so she sent a lot of food down to us.³³

Beatrice's older brother David Giancini also attributed their family's survival in part to this aunt. "The aunt was . . .

orphaned at an early age, and she went with these people. At the end, she was the boss because everybody else died, you know? So we ate all right through World War I.”³⁴ Then when David’s father, Eugene Giancini was wounded, his wife Settimia brought their daughter, Beatrice, to visit. Although she had not been born yet, their younger daughter Flo told the tale.

Of course, when [my father] was wounded . . . he was in a hospital far away. This was from the war. My mother got permission to visit him, and she brought [Beatrice] with her. She was on the train that is all full of soldiers . . . And they asked her, “Where are you going?” “My husband’s wounded.” “Oh, and this little doll, you’re bringing her to see her father.”³⁵

Gene Montrone added to this story: And my mother replied, “Yes he’s been away several years and I’m not sure she will recognize him.” Then some of the soldiers who were in similar situations began to cry.³⁶

The Second World War deeply impacted Italians such as Paul’s first cousin once removed, Anna (IT – M) Battista.

She had horrible experiences while her husband Carlo, captured by the Nazis, was a prisoner of war in Germany. She remembered:

The war was absolutely awful. I remember so well. I went to work as a teacher; the schools had just re-opened for about a month. There was a teacher who was one year older than I, and our mothers were friends. We were walking together and had to walk through a little forest. As soon as we entered the forest two Indians approached us.

Her son Michele Battista (IT – M) continued:

An Indian soldier tried to rape her. A friend who was with her told the Indian soldier, ‘When we come back we all go together to have a good time with the women.’ But they did not return the same way. They took a different route on their way back.³⁷

Anna’s granddaughter Annamaria (IT – M) Altomare also spoke of her grandmother’s experiences during the World War II.

My grandmother [Anna] has a lot of stories about that period because she was starting to work like a teacher during the World War . . . like during the *fascima*. . . So like during the World War, what is really important was that as the men went to fight . . . the women remained at home, and they had to take care of all the family. So they worked a lot. And for my grandmother, it was a very strong moment. At the same time they couldn't receive any more [supplies] from Aunt Rachele [who was in the U.S.] because everything was stopped from the United States. So they started to work.

But it was not so easy for the poor . . . For example, after her graduation, she started to study at the university, English, but she had to stop . . . because [of] . . . the war. Okay. For this reason, she can speak a little bit of English. Not a lot, because she started languages at University in Naples, but studied only one year. And then she had to stop.³⁸

In the United States, Italian Americans also had a difficult time during World War II. The U.S. Government labeled all

Italian American's as "enemy aliens." Paul's distant cousin, Bruno, spoke of his experiences and those of his parents, Francesco Felice and Vincenza (Ricci) Colapietro.

[My parents] were both citizens early on . . . I think early forties. Interesting thing was that even though they were citizens, we could not have a short-wave radio . . . during World War II, because we were Italian. . . A lot of people don't know that there were over 1,200 Italians who were interned in Montana³⁹ . . . just not as bad as they did to the Japanese . . . They just sent them [away]. . . They didn't take their businesses away. They didn't do what they did to the Japanese. Terrible.

I was six years old at the time it started. There was rationing. There were black-outs . . . You would read in the paper that some neighbors' young man got killed in the war. . . There was an alien living upstairs in my mother's and father's house . . . an alien who was a citizen, yes. And I remember, my bedroom was on the front. Three patrolmen, three plain-clothed men went up. . . They had a search warrant. And went through his apartment, found that he had a little Brownie camera in the eaves. . . And you're not supposed to have a camera

because of IBM and the Endicott Johnson Shoe Factory. . . They whisked him away. And for two months, nobody knew where he was. . . As it began to sink into me later in life, I said, “How could you do that? This is America.” But apparently when you [in the government] get panicky, you start doing things like that.⁴⁰

Although times were difficult, communities also banded together in response. In Bound Brook, New Jersey, Grace (G2 – M) (DeCristofaro) Sferra claimed that her “school experiences were greatly influenced by WWII.”

There was rationing, some school activities were curtailed, but there was such a unity to spirit in school and in the community. We volunteered as part of the war effort. The saddest memory, however, was of friends who enlisted in our junior and senior years and were killed in the war effort. . . When I was young, life was less complicated; therefore, when I read well enough to read the newspaper, I was dismayed to learn of war going on in the world and that people could hate so much. . . I don’t think that my feelings have changed but they may

have intensified. I still am very idealistic and hope for a better, peaceful world.⁴¹

During these difficult war years, the Montrone and Giancini families did their part on the home front. Antonio Montrone was employed at the Endicott-Johnson Company in the manufacture of combat boots, while his son Angelo directed the production of uniforms for the armed forces in conjunction with the Marshall Plan. Angelo's sister, Anna Montrone, served as a practical nurse in the Red Cross Nursing Reserve. Beatrice's brother, Dominick Giancini, was a welder at Sun Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, building and repairing tankers and other naval vessels.

Those who served their countries have not been forgotten, and those who expressed their patriotism by supporting them from home were all touched profoundly by the experience of war.

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- ¹ Eugene Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 13 January 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ² The following resources were referenced to gather all information about the Italian military for this essay. F. Cappellano, *Cenni sull'evoluzione del reclutamento obbligatorio nell'esercito italiano in Fare il soldato: Storie del reclutamento militare* (Milano: Unicopli, 2007); P. Del Negro, *Esercito, stato, società. Saggi di storia militare* (Bologna: Cappelli, 1979); M. Tumbarello, *Pensioni normali-privilegiarie ordinarie e privilegiate di guerra degli ufficiali, cappellani militari sottoufficiali, militari di truppa delle forze armate e dei loro congiunti* (Senigallia: Scuola Tipografica Marchigiana, 1935).
- ³ Lista di Leva-Citation from Rhonda-
- ⁴ Have Rhonda help with citation
- ⁵ Have Rhonda help with citation
- ⁶ Helen (Montrone) Mastro, daughter of Maria Carmina Vincenza (De Cristofaro) Montrone, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁷ Bruno Colapietro, son of Francesco Felice Colapietro, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁸ Fausta (Giancini) D'Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁹ David/Diodata Giancini, son of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ¹⁰ Mitchell Yockelson, "They Answered the Call: Military Service in the United States Army During World War I, 1917-1919," *Prologue* 30.3 (Fall 1998); online at www.archives.org/publications/prologue.
- ¹¹ "America Goes To War," website of The National WWII Museum: New Orleans, online at <http://www.nationalww2museum.org/learn/education/for-students/ww2-history/america-goes-to-war.html>.
- ¹² Mitchell Yockelson, "They Answered the Call: Military Service in the United States Army During World War I, 1917-1919," *Prologue* 30.3 (Fall 1998); online at www.archives.org/publications/prologue.
- ¹³ <https://www.revolvy.com/page/American-Expeditionary-Forces>
- ¹⁴ "America Goes To War," website of The National WWII Museum: New Orleans, online at <http://www.nationalww2museum.org/learn/education/for-students/ww2-history/america-goes-to-war.html>.
- ¹⁵ Tony Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ¹⁶ Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 30 January 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ¹⁷ Eugene Montrone, interview by Rhonda McClure, 13 January 2013, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ¹⁸ Eugene Montrone, interview by Karen Keyes, 15 June 2016, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ¹⁹ David/Diodata Giancini, brother of Dom Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ²⁰ Fausta (Giancini) D'Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of David and Dom Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ²¹ www.reference.com/history/many-americans-died-world-war-de6a4c923862bfa6
- ²² As related by Marie (Giancini) Teot, 21 November 2019 in a conversation with Karen Keyes
- ²³ Geraldine (Gaudenzi) Colizzi, interview by Mary Tedesco, 12 February 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ²⁴ Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, brother of John Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 5 August 1996; Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi, sister-in-law of John Gaudenzi, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011; Geraldine (Gaudenzi) Colizzi, niece of John and Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, interview by Mary Tedesco, 12 February 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ²⁵ Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, son of Francesco Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 5 August 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ²⁶ Dominick Giancini, Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 30 September 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ²⁷ Dominick Giancini, Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 30 September 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ²⁸ David/Diodata Giancini, son of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ²⁹ Dominick Giancini, Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, and Marie (Giancini) Teot, children of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 30 September 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

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- ³⁰ Frank Thomas Gaudenzi Application for World War II Compensation, Batch 61102, World War II Veterans' Compensation Bureau, Pennsylvania, Records of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, RG 91, Series 19.92; Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
- ³¹ Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi, wife of Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ³² Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi, wife of Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ³³ Beatrice (Giancini) Montrone, daughter of Settimia (D'Annibale) Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, undated, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ³⁴ David/Diodata Giancini, son of Settimia (D'Annibale) Giancini, interview by Brian O'Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ³⁵ Fausta (Giancini) D'Annibale, daughter of Eugenio and Settimia (D'Annibale) Giancini, interview by Rhonda McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ³⁶ As further amended by Gene Montrone on 26 August 2022, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ³⁷ Anna (Buontempo) Battista, with translations from son Michele Battista, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 2 October 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ³⁸ Annamaria Altomare, granddaughter of Anna (Buontempo) Battista and granddaughter of Philomena (Montrone) Buontempo, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ³⁹ <https://www.revolvy.com/topic/Fort%20Missoula%20Internment%20Camp>
- ⁴⁰ Bruno Colapietro, son of Francesco Felice and Vincenza (Ricci) Colapietro, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.
- ⁴¹ Grace (DeCristofer) Sferra, "Family History DeCristofer Family," email message to Rhonda M. McClure, 19 Feb. 2013.

Box 9.1

THE SACRIFICE OF MARIO GIANCINI



AND WRIGHT MUSEUM HONOR
Mario “Mikey” Giancini

Box 9.1

Mario Giancini's Sacrifice and Wright Museum Honor

In the Wright Museum of World War II in Wolfeboro, NH, an exhibit called the “Mario J. Giancini Ice Cream Parlor” memorializes the life and death of a true Italian American patriot and an uncle of Paul’s. The following overview of his military service during World War II appears at the beginning of the exhibit.

In March 1943, Mario (G2 - M) was drafted into the United States Army and after basic training joined the 310th Regiment, 78th Infantry Division (The Lightning Division). It was with the 310th Regiment that he fought in battle for our country and world peace. Private First-Class Mario J. Giancini was killed in action on November 19, 1944, during a ground and air assault on the fortification around Aachen, Germany.

No exhibit could adequately convey how Mario’s service and subsequent loss affected his family. The words of his siblings

serve as a lasting tribute to what he meant to those who knew him best.

In Service to his Country

When Mario was drafted into the army, his mother Settimia (D’Annibale) Giancini (G1 - M) made sure her son would be protected, according to her daughter Flo (G2 - M). His father, Eugene (G1 - M), “had this pouch with the saints in them that he carried” throughout the First World War. It was said to have been made by Mario’s grandmother, Fausta Felicia Maria Angela (Leo) D’Annibale, who used duck cloth, or canvas. It was tied with a string. His mother-in-law’s pouch kept Eugene safe, “so naturally when Mario left, [his] mother gave them to him. . . He lost them in Camp Butner, North Carolina . . . before he even went over. . . It was painful to her because she said . . . he had lost his protection.”¹

Settimia tried her best to keep in touch with her son and help him during his time in the army. Flo (G2 – M) shared one story of her brother’s care packages.

They were on maneuvers, and we were always sending packages. But this time he says, “We’re on maneuvers, Mom. We can’t get food. We won’t be able to get nothing.” I wish you could’ve seen the box we sent out. A jar of fried chicken . . . a jar of meatballs and sauce. And homemade bread. . . It would spoil . . . but, see, it was cold. Cold weather. . . We sent it to him [anyway], and then he was so thrilled. He wrote us a letter, “You saved our lives! The mail truck was not captured, and this is what we all ate. Everybody wants to meet you. They all want to meet and see who is the person that did this.”²

Youngest sister Marie (G2 - M) (Giancini) Teot noted, “They ate it whether it could be spoiled or not. . . Of course if the chicken was done in olive oil, olive oil is like a preservative . . . and there was no stinting on olive oil in those days.”³

As the family learned later, Mario acquired several items when he was abroad with the army. His collection included a ring, a watch, and a cigarette lighter. Regarding the lighter, Flo knew that he “probably got that from somebody over there.” She and her sister Marie went on to relay a story from one of his letters.

Flo: The one time that they were on the march, they hit this town. And he met one of his friends there. . . He grew-up with this one . . . Tarts.

Marie: It was his nickname.

Flo: He was curled up in a foxhole in the sun. Sleeping . . . And I don’t know what made Mario talk to him, but he spoke to him. And this boy was also killed afterwards. And then they hit [the] countryside. It might have been in Holland. I don’t know where it was. Guess what? They came out with a basket of eggs. “Boy, did I have my fill.”

Marie: This other boy was . . . missing, then presumed dead. They never found a trace of him.⁴

Unfortunately, Mario never received his last package containing the Christmas gift his sister Flo worked on every Sunday afternoon. “You had to mail all your Christmas stuff . . . quite a bit ahead of time in order for it to get there because it [mail service] was different during the war.” In this case, sadly, Flo got back all the gifts in the package that the family had sent. “He never got it.”⁵

A Patriot’s Passing

After training in Camp Butner, NC, Mario (also known as Mike or Mikey to his family) was transferred to Germany. He knew it was a risky transfer and perhaps he had a premonition about what would happen as he wrote to his sister, Fausta (who he called Flo, or the diminutive, Fa) on June 19, 1944.

See his letter below; now preserved at The Wright Museum:

Jan. 19, 1944

My Dear Sister Flo,

I have a funny premonition that things around here are going to pop pretty soon so I decided to write you this letter. I am mailing you two plaques which I want you to keep for me. In money they have no value but for old times sake they are worth a lot to me. One of them has the names of almost all the boys in my company the other has the names of the boys in my platoon. You see it's going to be a mighty long time before I ever come home again and there is a possibility that I may never see home again. If anything should ever happen to me I want you to keep them, get a couple of frames if possible and hang them in my room. Take care of them. I'd, these boys are about the best bunch of boys to be found anywhere and they have done much for me. You may not hear from me for a week or so but don't worry as I will just be traveling and will

With Love.

Your Brother
Mike

Mario lost his life in Aachen, Germany, on November 19, 1944. He was twenty years old.⁶ Mario's oldest brother, David (G2 - M) Giancini, remembered:

[My father's] youngest boy never came back. He was killed in Aachen, Germany. Why, I didn't know it. You know why? We killed him, our soldiers. They miscalculated. They were going so fast they broke the lines. They were too far ahead. There were no walkie-talkies at that time [so] that they could not talk to the plane. . . [so he was killed by bombs from our own planes]. I knew it was something wrong because they had a lot of friends in school, and nobody ever talked to my mother. . . 1944. So we paid it twice. My father was wounded . . . my brother [got] killed. So we gave enough.⁷

Further investigation did provide additional information for Flo.

I don't know where the wound was, but Jean Rose worked in the War Department, and she told Nonni [Settimia] that she found his records and that he had died

in the hospital. November 19th. . . It was just prior to the Battle of the Bulge.⁸

More than forty years later, Mario's eldest sister, Beatrice (G2 - M), wrote of the profound effect Mario's death had on her mother: "My mother . . . never got over the tragic death of our brother Mario in W. W. Two. Twenty years old, just starting in life."⁹ Younger sister Marie confessed, "After my brother died, my mother became a different person."¹⁰ She went on to say, "Because things changed when my brother was killed. We had [to] literally mourn for a whole year. We weren't allowed to laugh. We weren't allowed to put the radio on, go to the movies. But I snuck [out sometimes]. . . I didn't have to wear black, but my mother wore black. I think my sister wore [black] a lot. For the whole year."¹¹

Bringing Him Home

It was only natural that the family wanted to have Mario's body transported home again. His sister Flo was instrumental in making that happen.

They [first] buried him in . . . Margraten, Holland. Because they don't bury on enemy territory. . . And I even sent flowers over there on Memorial Day, you know. . . I figured that Aachen has got to be near Margraten. . .

After the war they started having these meetings about people who wanted their sons brought back. . . What happened was, they sent letters, and of course I was at home. . . I knew that he would want to come home. He was a homeboy. . . He loved the home. He loved the kids. . . So we went to all the meetings. My mother and I used to go . . . and we didn't tell the rest of the family anything. . . There were a lot of meetings because you had to decide. Then there were a lot of people who were not sure that they wanted to do this because they said, "How do we know they're our sons or our husbands?" . . . They [Graves Registration Officers] told us that they had more sophisticated means of identifying them.

We got the final details. It must have been around Christmas or a little after. We still didn't say anything. But after the holidays is when we told them [the rest of the family.]. Of course, Dave [David] hit the ceiling and bounced back, because he was the oldest one, and he felt he should have done this. And I said you have your own family. And I said . . . we didn't want to spoil everybody's holiday. . . They brought him to the house.¹²

Mario was returned in a sealed, closed coffin upon which his portrait was placed. An honor guard came and stayed with the coffin. His family was given his hats, letters, and other personal items, but his dog tags were likely left with him inside the coffin. "Then we had the funeral. Had beautiful funeral. And he's buried at Cathedral Cemetery in the family plot," said Flo. On 13 April 1949, Mario's mother Settimia ordered a headstone to be placed in Cathedral Cemetery in Scranton.¹³

Fifty years after Mario was returned to his family, his sister Marie reflected on the loss of a promising young man whose time was cut short: “We don’t even know what Mikey’s life would have been like.” However, she never forgot the brother she knew for only her first thirteen years.

I remember him as being more happy-go-lucky, fun-loving, jovial. . . He’s the one that . . . me and Flo would go with to the piano. We had a player-piano . . . and I don’t know who would pump. Was it Mike [Mario] or me? . . . We’d sing . . . through those rolls. . . And the three of us would sing. My mother would love that.¹⁴

To honor those that died in service to our nation, President Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote to the family:

“He stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live and grow and increase its blessings. Freedom lives, and through it, he lives—in a way that humbles the undertakings of most men.”¹⁵

Wright Museum Dedication

Sixty-two years after his burial, Mario's spirit was enlivened once again in The Wright Museum located in Wolfeboro, NH. This World War II Museum is devoted to the U.S. home front during the war years. It is a jewel of an institution founded by David Wright, a neighbor and friend of Paul and Sandra. The Montrones have a home in Wolfeboro and have supported the Museum since its inception. They convinced the Giancini family to dedicate a special place in the Museum to permanently honor the service and sacrifice of Mario for his country.

The result is the Mario Giancini Ice Cream Parlor, a recreation of a soda fountain from the early 1940s. The Giancinis donated all of their Mario wartime memorabilia, which are now displayed so the public can better understand a World War II family experience.

The dedication of the ice cream parlor took place in the summer of 2006, and a large part of the family attended. The

local American Legion participated in the ceremony providing several veterans, including a flag bearer. There were flags, speeches and Jamie Teot (who would have been Mario’s grand niece), a music major, played taps on her trumpet. Plenty of tears were shed, but it was a happy event nonetheless as the family was pleased that their loved one would be permanently honored in such a way and that he would be there in spirit for all who visited, that they may be inspired by his sacrifice.

Sandra observed that “it was a beautiful and moving event, and a satisfying close to a sad chapter in the Giancini family’s lives. May he rest in peace and enjoy his eternal life.”¹⁶

¹ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

² Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

³ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone..

⁴ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁵ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁶ Marie (Giancini) Teot, sister of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Rhonda McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁷ David/Diodata Giancini, son of Eugenio Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, 25 July 1995, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁸ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

⁹ *My Memories: A Written Record of My Life and Times to Hand Down to My Family* (Metropolitan Museum of Art); completed by Beatrice M. Giancini Montrone in 1985, held by Paul Montrone.

¹⁰ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹¹ Marie (Giancini) Teot, sister of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Rhonda McClure, 23 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹² Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹³ National Archives and Records Administration; Washington, D.C.; *Applications for Headstones for U.S. military veterans, 1925-1941*; National Archives Microfilm Publication: *A1, 2110-C*; Record Group Title: *Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General*; Record Group Number: 92.

¹⁴ Fausta (Giancini) D’Annibale and Marie (Giancini) Teot, sisters of Mario J. Giancini, interview by Brian O’Connell, transcribed between 10 December 1996 and 21 April 1997, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

¹⁵ <https://www.quotetab.com/quote/by-franklin-d-roosevelt/he-stands-in-the-unbroken-line-of-patriots-who-have-dared-to-die-that-freedom-mig>

¹⁶ As edited by Sandra Montrone on 11 October 2023.

Box 9.2

FRANK GAUDENZI'S MILITARY EXPERIENCE



The Gaudenzis

LtoR: Frank, Mary, John, Jerome, Clem and Francesco

Box 9.2

Frank Gaudenzi's Military Experience

Frank (G2 - G) Gaudenzi provided a detailed description of his wartime service from 1943 to 1945 and beyond:

When I was in the service, I was in the infantry and [in] Germany. I fought through the war. In fact, I got hit in the chest. . . After the war, we stayed as occupation Troops. I was a Staff Sergeant . . .

Well, I went to a couple of different [training] camps in the U.S. But I ended up going to Camp Shanks in New York, and from Camp Shanks I went over to Glasgow, Scotland. From Glasgow, Scotland, I went all the ways down to the English Channel. We crossed the English Channel, and I went to Le Havre.

We landed in Le Havre, and I joined the 102nd [Infantry Division] there. . . I first went up to the front lines. The Lieutenant got us together, and, you know, we were sitting down, and [he] said, "Look on your left." And he

said, “Look on your right.” He said, “By next week, one of you’ll be gone.” That’s the way they put it. You had to face the facts. Yeah, and it was true.

[I] had at least four close calls. Then finally, I got hit in the chest. They got me back to a station, and I went to the hospital in Paris. 48 General Hospital was what I remember. Where you came out of the gate of the hospital, you were on Place Pigalle. That’s where all the night spots were. And it didn’t hurt me that much, so I talked the nurse into letting me go out. I used to go out every night and go enjoy myself, you know? . . . But then I went right back to my outfit when I got better. . . Yeah, went back into combat. . . This was shrapnel that I got hit with . . . from a shell. . .

I fought in the winter. We were . . . right on the bend of the Bulge. And we were on this side, and they didn’t hit us. But they were going to encircle us. They were going to go up and go around. But we had a skeleton crew in a defensive position there. Maybe if they hit there, they

would have gotten through. . . There were so many other places [we] had to defend, you know?

But that was it, as far as the service. . . By the end—the last month of the war, I'd say—we had them on the run, the Germans. We were just moving from one town to another. And we were riding tanks really, you know? . . . On top of tanks, yeah. But [the Germans] were all giving up there. Yeah . . . I've had experiences, a lot of experiences.

I stayed there with the Occupation Troops for a while. Then I wanted to get home. And in fact, we were right on the Elbe River. We were about one of the closest outfits to Berlin. But they wouldn't let us cross the Rohr River . . . because they wanted the Russians to take Berlin. Like I say, we were about forty some kilometers. . . The Germans would have let us because they didn't want the Russians to take Berlin . . . and most of them were giving up to us. They [the Germans] were crossing the river and giving up to us . . . because they didn't want to give up to the Russians. Russians were brutal. . . We had so many

of them [the Germans] give up to us. Like, I'd be on guard, and the guy'd be hollering. . . We took 'em as they came. I mean, you wanted this war to end, you know? Like, we had SS troops and all gave up to us.

The way we'd do it was we were just a company, and we'd have parts of a battalion give up to us, you know? That's how many, you know? And we'd lined 'em up like maybe about forty, fifty. We'd take their rifles off them. Then we'd line them up and go for their watches and stuff . . . as souvenirs, right? . . . I must have had about eight different kinds of pistols. They said . . . you could only bring one home with you. So I gave the others away. But I wished I had saved them because they were all different. . . Yeah, not all [Lugers]. A Walther is all I have. But I gave Lugers away. I gave all types away. Belgian 45. Yeah. But it was an experience, you know? . . .

We were around Czechoslovakia at the end of the war, and I could see the Russians setting everything up where they were gonna take over. You could see it. And when, before the war ended, Germans gave up to us. We'd take

their weapons away from them, and they'd be wondering why we took their weapons away. Because they thought that we were going to go straight through to take Russia. . . But this [is] the way they felt it, you know? . . . That they would be fighting with us . . . Then we did meet the Russians after the war. They came across the Rohr River because they had us stay there, and that was it. . . They were happy, jovial. They liked to drink. . .

We took some photographs of prisons where we were keeping the Germans and stuff like that. . . Like Buchenwald and . . . yeah. We were at one in Flossenbürg where we kept their prisoners, but it wasn't a prisoner-of-war camp before. You'd see piles of shoes and stuff of the victims that they [the Germans] put through the furnaces. And, like I say, I saw the furnaces. I saw, you know, the whole thing. You know? . . . You could see how many prisoners, how many people that they did eliminate. Really. You know, I mean clothes piled up, everything. . . Well, you were used to it. You see, even like seeing all the victims and everything, you were numb from it. Like we had prisoners give up to us, and you joked, you know?

This is the way it was, you know? And you were, like I say, you were happy to be alive. . .

We have a fellow that lives right up here, a good friend of mine, who won the Medal of Honor. We have a Medal of Honor winner in this town. . . Well, that's up and beyond your duty. Now, from what I understand, what happened to him was he was at a machine gun nest. And the Germans came through. They infiltrated and shot nearly everybody down. And he played dead, you know? After a while, he got up, and he had knocked, I forget how many Germans he had killed with a machine gun . . . Well, some of that, most of it, is history. It is in the books, and you could get [the] story on what they did really. . . They have to write it up to get the medal. And I imagine he was a hero. . . You had to be, you were in the position where you had to. It was a case of survival. . . I know a few instances where you didn't know whether you were going to come out of it. . .

For a while, when we first came out, we did communicate with different people, but then after it, [we fell out of

contact]. . . I haven't gone to any of the reunions. I wished I could have, but we were raising a family. . . I was making just so much money, and that's it. I couldn't afford to be going to a reunion. Now I can, but it's a little late. I probably wouldn't know most of the people now, you know? I think it [the big fiftieth anniversary of D-Day in 1994] was well deserved. And a lot, a lot of people relish in it. They enjoy it. I mean, I belong to the VFW in this town, but I'm not active. I'm just a member, and that's it.

Then I worked for Max Corporation. That was an electronics corporation. I went out to the Orient for them for about a month. . . Well, I had to fix missiles out there during the Vietnam War. I was right north of Thailand where the planes used to take off to bomb near the Cambodian border. And that was another interesting thing. . . I was in Subic Bay in Manila. I was, you know, on Okinawa. All over where we had missiles. We had to fix the missiles. We had to reinforce the missiles. We used to make an air-to-ground missile and an air-to-air missile, and we went out there to reinforce them. . .

You had to be careful because they had guards all over the place. Like in Thailand, that was the time Johnson was president, and they [the Administration] were saying about having no American soldiers in Thailand? We had over twenty-five thousand. . . It was a nice experience for about a month and a half, I think it was.¹

Frank's wife, Jean, added:

With his work as a missile-maker or whatever they did to them, during the Vietnam War, he went to Cambodia. Of course, nobody was supposed to be there. He and three others from the plant went to make adjustments on some of the missiles that were over there. And [when] he came back, he looked like he'd been in a prisoner-of-war [camp]. Because he doesn't eat strange foods. So, he didn't eat very much. And then it was a warm country. . . But yeah, they were there, and they were in Colorado at another plant out there for a while. That was interesting. I think he enjoyed himself after he came back, but he wasn't a traveler. . . He was more of a homebody.²

¹ Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, interview by Brian O'Connell, transcribed 5 August 1996, transcript held by Paul Montrone. This transcription has been reordered and divided into paragraphs for clarity.

² Jean (Miles) Gaudenzi, wife of Frank Thomas Gaudenzi, interview by Rhonda McClure, 24 July 2011, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

Box 9.3

PAUL MONTRONE'S CIVILIAN MILITARY EXPERIENCE



Paul M. Montrone
with Sandra and Beatrice

Box 9.3

Paul Montrone's Civilian Military Experience

Paul Montrone describes his decision to serve as an Army officer.

When I went to college at the University of Scranton, it was during the Vietnam War. Every student was required to take two years of Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) for the U.S. Army. You got credit for the courses, and afterward most students went no further. If you wanted to become a commissioned officer upon graduation, you took two more years of ROTC college courses and you went to military training camp in the summer between junior and senior year. When you graduated, you were commissioned a -second lieutenant, the lowest officer rank.

There were a few things that motivated people like me to continue in ROTC throughout college. You can't eliminate the love of country and patriotism, so I'm not

going to throw that out completely, but it wasn't simply that.

We also had a draft, so you were looking at that. If you wanted to be a commissioned officer, you would commit to further studies of military, training camp, etc., and then a requirement for two years of active duty followed by joining the reserves.

The other possibility was that you may or may not be drafted into active duty. You'd be taking your chances. If you were drafted, then you would go in as a non-officer, you would serve your time (usually two years), and you would also come out as a member of the reserves. If you were drafted, you might also have the option at that point of trying to become an officer through OCS (Officer Candidate School) but your active-duty time requirement would be longer – 3 or 4 years. So that was a factor.

On the other hand, you might never be drafted, or not qualify for the draft, in which case you would never have to serve in the military.

Another factor was that if you took the last two years of ROTC in college, you actually got paid. It wasn't a lot of money, but if you're working your way through college, which I was, and you were paying most of your own bills, then, that extra little money was helpful.

So considering these different equations, I chose the ROTC officer route. I thought it was an opportunity to serve. I didn't know what the future would bring, and if I were going to serve, I would rather serve as an officer and have some options because you could kind of express your views as far as the military branch you wanted to be in. You didn't necessarily get it--nothing is sure in the military--but the right branch could add some worthwhile future career experience.¹

Choosing the ROTC route in college was very worthwhile. The military courses and summer military field training taught me elements of strategic planning, execution and the importance of communications that were not taught in business courses. And above all, one

quickly learns the value of training and practice, over and over again. In brief, my training and active duty was a phenomenal experience and the skills I learned have stayed with me throughout my entire career.²

Paul was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army on the day he graduated from the University of Scranton in 1962. He was assigned to the Adjutant General's Division, but his branch training school, which would normally be the first step in active duty, was deferred since he was going to graduate school.

Although temporarily deferred from active duty, during his three years at Columbia Business School (CBS), he continued to earn years of service in the military, and by the time he went on active duty, given his tenure he had been automatically promoted to First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army.

While in graduate school, among other areas, Paul studied operations research, which was a relatively new field involving the application of mathematics and computer modeling (computers were relatively new then) to business problems and opportunities.

During that time, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara started a new Systems Analysis branch of the Office of Secretary of Defense (OSD), under a new Assistant of Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis – OSD(SA). The first appointee to that office was Alain Enthoven, who had done extensive operations research at the Rand Corporation.

On the Columbia Business School faculty was a professor named Reynold Sachs, who happened to be a friend of Alain Enthoven. He connected Paul to Alain and Paul was reassigned from his military branch to the OSD(SA). Once again, a “contact” of Paul’s orchestrated his next career step.

Paul departed New York City in 1966 with Sandra and their baby Michele, and they took up residence in Arlington, VA. Although many active military officers serve in the OSD, it is a federal government civilian office. Hence, Paul began at the OSD(SA) in the Pentagon as a civilian government employee and worked there for several months before being activated for duty by the U.S. Army. The move from civilian to military officer meant no change to his job. At the end of his active duty, he remained in OSD(SA) for several months once again as a civilian employee. He left his active duty having been promoted to Captain, and honorably discharged.

The mission of the OSD(SA) was to determine the military equipment and systems necessary for potential future wars, and what capabilities were needed for these scenarios. When this was determined, the defense department budget could be established and military arms and equipment properly designed and procured.

Paul was assigned to the logistics division of OSD(SA). This division's objective was to find the most cost-effective way to bring required troops and battlefield equipment to future threatened or actual war zones in a timely manner to meet the needs specified by the military.

This analysis required sophisticated computer modelling and Paul became a specialist in programming the massive Pentagon computers to simulate these war needs.

Since he served on active duty in 1966, during the Vietnam era, as Secretary McNamara became more and more involved in that troubled situation, the OSD(SA) gradually shifted some of its resources to the problems in Vietnam. Paul reoriented his analytics to that theater and helped to determine the optimal way to manage the airlift and sealift forces necessary for logistical operations to support that war effort.

Although he served during the Vietnam War, Paul was fortunate in never having to go there on active duty. Paul observed:

Reynold Sachs has always claimed that he saved my life. Whether he saved my life or not, I definitely owe a debt of gratitude to Reyn.

Beyond avoiding combat, because I was serving in a civilian office in Washington, D.C., my military service was like my first job after graduation, although at a lower pay than a civilian job. I was able to use and develop my analytical and computer skills and, although they weren't applied to business challenges, the problems to be solved were quite complex.

I developed my programming skills in the basement of the Pentagon on the most advanced computers then in existence, the IBM 7094's. I initially programmed in assembly language and later, to my relief, in FORTRAN.

But the real bonus of the assignment was being able to live privately with my family while still utilizing the military benefits. Sandra and I lived on the first floor of a simple rental home in Arlington, VA with a nice backyard. In addition to Michele, Angelo was born when I was on active duty, so Sandra went to Walter Reed Military Hospital. We were able to shop in the military PX (which stands for post exchange) which is where you bought all sorts of useful things, and a commissary which was the military grocery store, and also utilize the nearby Fort Myers facilities. Although we had little money, Sandra and I had a Checker Manhattan car and enjoyed a simple life in the Washington D.C. area, often visiting sites and playing tourist. Sandra devoted most of her time to raising our two tiny tots and supporting my efforts which often ran into the wee hours of the night.

When compared to the military lives of my ancestors engaged in warfare, my service was light duty. Our assignment had to do with using taxpayers' money in our defense budget as effectively as possible. And our country's citizens were the benefactors of our efforts. We did, in fact, find the lowest cost alternatives to meeting

the military requirements forecasted for the succeeding 20-30 years.

The solutions we recommended saved our U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars, often over the objection of the military personnel who usually preferred more costly, but more militaristic alternatives (for example, flying bombers for defense rather than sitting next to underground defensive missiles).

Curiously, the Boeing 747 came out of the efforts of our logistics division. We invited Boeing and Lockheed to submit designs for a massive aircraft to move a large number of troops and equipment to meet military needs quickly. Boeing lost the competition and went on to use the same design for the 747. The size of this aircraft, and its efficiency, enabled a whole generation of civilian passengers to enjoy flights all over the world with lower cost tickets than their existing choices. Lockheed won and the military version, the C-5A, which has proven to be a major success in many military scenarios.

My colleagues in the other divisions of OSD(SA) – such as strategic offense and strategic defense – were equally effective in determining the lowest cost, most highly effective alternatives to meet or exceed military objectives. Once again, this saved billions of taxpayer dollars and increased the military effectiveness of our defense budget. But sadly, the military often didn’t like many of the results.

In the end, the military won this battle. When Robert McNamara stepped down as Secretary of Defense, the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis was dissolved.

¹ Paul Montrone, interview by Rhonda R. McClure, 30 January 2014, transcript held by Paul Montrone.

² As relayed by Paul Montrone 24 March 2018.