

NAME OF PROJECT: *Italian Canadians as Enemy Aliens: Memories of WWII*

DATE OF INTERVIEW: August 17, 2011

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Ottawa, ON

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: Trina Costantini-Powell

NAME OF INTERVIEWER: Travis Tomchuk

NAME OF VIDEOGRAPHER: Stefanie Petrilli

TRANSCRIBED BY: Louanne Aspillaga

DATE TRANSCRIBED: November 5, 2011

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PROJECT NOTE:

Please note that all interviews have been transcribed verbatim. The language in this transcript is as it was provided by the transcriptionist noted above. The project staff have not edited this transcript for errors.

ABSTRACT

Trina Costantini-Powell talks about the framed double sketches of her grandfather, Giuseppe Costantini, which hang on her wall. These sketches were created at Camp Petawawa by fellow internee and artist Guido Casini while Giuseppe was interned there for 12 months. Trina talks about the importance of having sketches like these out in the open, so as to educate the public about this event in Canadian history.

INTERVIEW

TCP: Ms. Trina Costantini-Powell, interviewee

TT: Travis Tomchuk, interviewer

[Title screen]

[Fades in at 00:00:11]

TT: Okay the, uh—what can you tell us about, uh, the sketch, uh, the sketches on the wall? Who is it?

TCP: The sketch on the wall is, uh, my grandfather, Giuseppe Costantini. And, um, these are sketches that were, um, drawn in the, uh, Petawawa internment camp, um, during the, uh, the 12 months he was, he was interned. So—in and around 1940, 1941. And, uh, they're sketches done by the war artist, uh, [Guido] Casini, I believe the name is. And, uh, a famous, uh, war artist who sketched, you know, many of the men that were interned.

TT: And why, why are there two? Is there a story behind this—

TCP: I don't know the full story behind the two, whether it's to show almost a...[gestures hands back and forth] you know, beginning and an end or I never really, uh—oh, I guess it was never fully, um, understood why the two of them were there, but, uh, the two of them were, um, rolled up together. And, uh, I guess it had been told to my father, that, that these were pictures that were taken almost like a before and after, but it's, you know, that, the, the images are, are very different, but it is the same person. So, but the, the full reason why two, I don't know.

TT: And how did they come to be in your possession?

TCP: Um, I would gather that my grandfather brought them home from Petawawa camp and probably put them away and never being discussed. And, um, and in the process of, uh, I guess following his death and when the family home was, uh, was sold, I believe my, um, my father, uh just asked for them, uh, they were there and whether they were going to be, uh, you know, whether they, the, the historical value of them was realized at that time, but he brought them

home and, and put them away, uh, up in a closet I can remember. And, um, only maybe in the last 20 years or so, 20, 25 years had them framed and, and mounted and, uh, um, after his, um, after his death in 2000, they were passed along to, to me by my, uh, by my mother because it was—this was a project that I was interested in, something I always had a lot of interest in.

[Nods]

TT: What do the sketches mean to you?

TCP: Well, um, as, uh, my aunt Gloria [Giroux] had said earlier, it's, uh, it was a, a lost of, uh, a period of someone's life, a very, a very vital life. And a period in time that, um, uh, shouldn't have happened, but, but did happen. And, uh, profiling, you know, men and, and the families that, uh, that were affected by it all. And so when you look at that you think of the freedom that was taken away. Um, freedom taken away from Canadian citizens for a period in time. And, and to me, uh, the more, uh, the more the sketches are, are out there and the, the more that, um, uh, people are able to see them, hopefully it will educate, uh, people as to this period in, in Canadian history.

TT: Okay.

[Fades out at 00:03:23]

[Fades in at 00:03:24]

[Camera focused on both sketches]

[Voices in the background, unclear]



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[Fades out at 00:03:31]

[Fades in at 00:03:32]

[Camera focused on sketch on the right, then pans to sketch on the left. Camera moves back and forth between the two and then zooms out]

[Voices in the background, unclear]

[Fades out at 00:04:14]

[End of interview]