

Brombal Family

Antonio Brombal (1894-1986)

Antonio, "Tony", Brombal was born February 7, 1894 in Fietta Del Grappa, Italy to Angelo Antonio Brombal and Paolina Consalter. His father was a farmer in this community of northeastern Italy. Tony's brother was **Giovanni** (Johnnie) and his sisters were **Regina** and **Brigida**.

One of Tony's earliest memories was when his father came home from Brazil where he had gone with his cousin Moro to work in a coffee plant. His father had been gone for three years. Angelo's cousin later immigrated to America.

Tony began school when he was 6 ½ and had lots of his cousins in his class. Many of the children in his class later immigrated to the United States. In 1910, at the age of 16, Tony immigrated to the United States with \$20 in his pocket. His cousin Moro was in a town just above Redding, California where he worked at copper smelting and at a Kenat mine. Tony and Moro then went to Weed, then Ardan, Nevada, and on to Las Vegas. He worked in a mine and made cement for about a year. Then the boss changed so five or six of the Italians tried striking. It didn't work out too well for the striking Italians as Tony was the only one who the foreman let stay.

After Las Vegas, Tony moved to Santa Barbara and stayed at the Flower of Italy, an Italian boarding house, on the corner of De La Guerra and Anacapa Streets. He paid \$12 a month for room and board which included getting his clothes washed.

Tony worked in the San Roque area chopping gravel that was used to pave the Hope Ranch road. When he worked in Hope Ranch, he lived in a tent near Hope Ranch Lake but continued to eat at the Flower of Italy restaurant.

Tony worked at several different jobs over his life. He worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad, helping plant palm and pine trees along the road to Hope ranch; he milked cows at the Hope Ranch Dairy where Vieja Valley School is now located. He built stonewalls in the back of Mission Canyon and then he worked on San Julian Ranch near Las Cruces.

Mary Varni was born June 3, 1895 in Santa Barbara, California to **Stefano Varni** and **Agostina Re**. Stefano and Agostina immigrated to the United States from Fascia, Italy. The oldest of Mary's siblings, Catarina and Angelina, were born in Italy, and the others, Natale, Teresa (Lillie), Joseph, and Rosie were all born in the United States.

In 1914 Mary worked at the Enterprise Laundry which is now the Fish Enterprise Restaurant. Mary was 17 years old when she met Tony. They were married on March 5, 1916 at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Santa Barbara. They had three children, Paolina, Rose, and Angelo. The family lived in many different places in Santa Barbara and surrounding communities.

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In 1923 they moved to property off Old San Marcos Road and started the San Marcos Dairy. They had the dairy for 3 ½ - 4 years and then sold it to Tony's cousin, Giuseppe Brombal, for \$12,500. His cousin eventually moved the dairy to Goleta.

Tony kept a few heifers and leased property off San Antonio Creek Road where he built a house. In 1930, he left Mary and the children and returned to Italy for six months to buy a piece of property in his hometown.

In 1932, Tony took his family back to Italy to live in the house he had purchased. In 1939, shortly before the outbreak of World War II, the American Council waned them to leave Italy, otherwise they would not be allowed to leave. Paolina, at 21, left immediately and the rest of the family soon followed.

When they returned to the United States, they rented property for a time, then bought eleven acres above Tuckers Grove. Tony started buying property after he and Mary married.

Tony and Mary came from very humble beginnings, lovingly raised their three children and endured some very difficult economic times. With only three years of primary education, Tony managed to support himself and his family. He started with manual labor, then taught himself many skills and too advantage of the opportunities offered in America. He lived at the home he built at 955 San Antonio Creek Road until he died August 3, 1986 at the age of 92. After his death, Mary moved to Santa Barbara near her son's home. She died December 11, 1993, at the age of 98.

Courtesy of Millie Brombal

SOURCE: Adapted from *Antonio Brombal Family History* by Millie Brombal.

Her book has many of the Brombal family history and memories from interviews with Tony and Mary Brombal. It is available at the Sahyun Genealogical Library, 316 Castillo St., Santa Barbara, California. Call No. 929.2 BROMBAL BRO

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