

# WW2 – Africa and Italy (1942-45)

The Japanese surprise attack December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941 on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into World War 2. Roosevelt asked for a declaration of war against Japan the following day, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Hitler, in his haste, declared war on the U.S. as a sign of solidarity with Japan at the same time. While the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union had been carrying the bulk of the fighting, it wasn't until November 1942 the U.S. engage in military activity. Stalin had requested a second front to help relieve pressure on Soviet armed forces. By eliminating the Axis presence in Africa, it would set the stage for invading southern Europe. The U.S. assistance in North Africa would give the U.S. Army much-needed experience against Germany and Italian forces.

## Operation Torch

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North\\_African\\_Campaign](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_African_Campaign)

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation\\_Torch#Western\\_Task\\_Force %E2%80%93 Morocco](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Torch#Western_Task_Force_%E2%80%93_Morocco)

Both links above describe the U.S. participation in North Africa. The second link provides the order of battles and the units that participated.



**Figure 1 Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=187802>**

## Prisoner of War Records

Fold3 – Updated POW records: <https://blog.fold3.com/new-allied-pow-records-on-fold3/>

National Archives, POW records: <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=GP24>

Findmypast: <https://www.findmypast.com/articles/world-records/full-list-of-united-states-records/military-service-and-conflict/world-war-ii-pows>

Ancestry: <https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8919>

Cyndi's List – WW2: <https://www.cyndislist.com/ww2/>

Family Search – WW2 POW:

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United\\_States\\_World\\_War\\_II\\_Prisoner\\_of\\_War\\_Records](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_World_War_II_Prisoner_of_War_Records)

#### Allied North African Cemeteries:

- United States: <https://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries-memorials/africa/north-africa-american-cemetery>
- Great Britain: <https://www.cwgc.org/>
- French: <https://www.globalgayz.com/tunisia-tunis-world-war-ii-cemeteries/>
- <https://www.tracesofwar.com/sights/5848/French-War-Cemetery-Gammarth.htm>

#### Axis North African Cemeteries

- German: Egypt – World War II El Alamein German war cemetery in [El Alamein de: Deutsche Kriegsgräberstätte El Alamein](#)
- Italian: <http://www.travelguidepress.com/italianmemorialatbari.html>
- <http://www.our-egypt.com/en/travel-guide/lower-egypt/el-alamein/>

Tunisia: Traces of War website compendium of Northern African War Cemeteries:

<https://www.tracesofwar.com/sights/country.asp?type=255&rank=7&show=list&countryid=46>

The following link is the main website for “Traces of War”. They post: **What kind of website is this?** TracesOfWar is a STIWOT project. The subject is the history of global warfare, told from military, political and social viewpoints. This website is the compilation of the previous websites Go2War2.nl, Oorlogsmusea.nl, WW2Awards.com, and WO2Actueel.nl. The website is divided into five domains: Articles, Points of Interest, Current Events, Persons and Awards. In the part [Themes](#), parts of these domains are compiled thematically. We are striving to present the contents of the website in two languages, Dutch and English. (**NOTE:** look under the tab “Sights” for a list of countries.) <https://www.tracesofwar.com/default.asp>

### Italian Campaign (1943-1945)

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian\\_Campaign\\_\(World\\_War\\_II\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_Campaign_(World_War_II))

After North Africa was secured by the Allies, their attention turned, after much debate and squabbling, to Italy. The U.S. and Great Britain had different ideas about their next move in the Mediterranean theatre. A compromise was reached to take Italy out of the war and hopefully tie up German resources providing the Soviet Union additional relief.

#### Allied invasion of Italy order of battle:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allied\\_invasion\\_of\\_Italy\\_order\\_of\\_battle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allied_invasion_of_Italy_order_of_battle)

<https://ww2db.com/country/italy>

These two links above will provide the military units and where they served during the Italian Campaign. If you know your ancestor’s military unit, it might help provide context to where they served in Italy.



Figure 2 <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Invasionofitaly1943.jpg>

American Battle Monuments Commission: <https://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries-memorials>

British Common War Graves Commission: <https://www.cwgc.org/>

Google Search - Gurkha military records ww2:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=Gurkha+military+records+ww2&spell=1&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiYoJSSkufgAhWTxIMKHWv1APMQBQgrKAA&biw=1258&bih=809>

Google Search – Australian military records ww2:

[https://www.google.com/search?biw=1258&bih=809&ei=amV8XMvMFavEjwSpwbaYAAQ&q=australian+military+records+ww2&oq=Australian+military+records+ww2&gs\\_l=psy-ab.1.0.0.106295.115563..117794...4.0..0.200.3962.9j25j1.....0....1..gws-wiz.....0i71j35i39j0i131j0i67j0i131i67j0i20i263j0i10j0i22i30.XA6D713oF0Y](https://www.google.com/search?biw=1258&bih=809&ei=amV8XMvMFavEjwSpwbaYAAQ&q=australian+military+records+ww2&oq=Australian+military+records+ww2&gs_l=psy-ab.1.0.0.106295.115563..117794...4.0..0.200.3962.9j25j1.....0....1..gws-wiz.....0i71j35i39j0i131j0i67j0i131i67j0i20i263j0i10j0i22i30.XA6D713oF0Y)

War Cemeteries in Italy by Region: <https://www.gentracer.org/cemeteriesregions.html>

Italian Genealogy Website: <https://www.italiangenealogy.com/forum/italian-genealogy/36763>

German War Graves Commission:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German\\_War\\_Graves\\_Commission](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_War_Graves_Commission)

Italian Military Records: [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italy\\_Military\\_Records](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Italy_Military_Records)

<http://www.surnamesinitaly.com/genealogicalrecords/military-records.php>

Paper: The Italian Military Records of the Second World War

<https://www.google.com/search?q=The+Italian+Military+Records+of+the+Second+World+War&oq=The+Italian+Military+Records+of+the+Second+World+War&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i6113.2139j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8> (Note: I was having trouble getting a specific link to work, so I just included the Google search. Any of the following websites will work.

Journals.sagepub.com, jstor.org, or researchgate.net. They may require signing up for an account. )

(\$\$) <https://www.italiamerica.org/id132.htm>

Map Archive (Russia): <http://www.maparchive.ru/index.php/italian-military-records-1935-43.html> (This site gives a very good description of the Italian Armed Services organization. It includes local militias.)

Trivia: <http://dctourguideonline.com/the-german-soldier-in-arlington-national-cemetery/>