

Carols gambino



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Carlo Gambino was born on August 24, 1902 in Palermo, Sicily. His family had been part of the Honored Society, for centuries. A brotherhood that used codes of honor and millions of Italian Liras to control their own destiny and free them from repression. Only 5'7" and with a prominent hook nose that gave him caricature, Carlo was respected and tough, and not afraid to confront those who owed money to the Honored Society, carrying out orders with a charismatic ruthlessness that was soon noted. Gambino was "made" or inducted into the Society on his 19th birthday.

At age 19 in November 1921, using his family connections from his mother's family, the Castellanos, who were already established in New York, Gambino left Palermo, Sicily for America. He was smuggled aboard a freighter among crates of wine, olive oil and anchovies that anchored at Norfolk, Virginia. Never becoming a citizen of the United States, Carlo was on the rise to the top of one of the most powerful American Families. Carlo began as an enforcer for the local Society chieftain, Don Vito Cascio Ferro.

Carlo would have been happy to remain in Sicily and succeed Don Vito, but the atmosphere of the rise of fascism under Vito Mussolini made it difficult for the Honored Society. Mussolini declared publicly " he would break the organization". He worked during the era of prohibition for the Castellano family as a rum runner, a driver and sitting shotgun, eventually moving to another family working for Joe the Boss Masseria's bootlegging racket. Masseria's rival was Salvador Maranzano. Carlo joined forces with Lucky Luciano to better serve their enterprises.

Luciano wanted to oust both Masseria and Maranzano. On April 15, 1931, Masseria was murdered while at a meeting with Luciano at a Coney Island

restaurant. Luciano joined with Maranzano, as the new bosses. Maranzano was shot and stabbed to death in his New York offices on orders from Luciano. This left the door open for Luciano to become the top boss. Luciano divided up the New York turf that turned the Society into a business commission, with each family getting an equal vote. Gambino was assigned to Vincent Mangano, who controlled the Brooklyn wharf.

At 29, Carlo was named a capo of his own crew. He brought in Paul Castellano as his aide. Gambino married his first cousin, Paul's sister, Catherine Castellano, in 1932, at age 30. They raised 3 sons and one daughter, living in a modest row house in Brooklyn. Although it was modest, it was elegant and expensive and it stood out among the other "modest" row houses. His only real evidence of vanity was his license plate on his Buick, CG1. In 1933, with Prohibition lifted, Gambino moved contraband liquor, selling alcohol without paying government taxes.

He was arrested and charged with tax evasion, but he was able to beat the rap, released with a suspended sentence. Gambino invested his profits in a business that was low-key and taboo, running "Gay Bars" for homosexuals. In 1951, Gambino's boss Vincent Mangano mysteriously disappeared and Albert Anastasia, a vicious killer, took over the family, leading many to believe he had ordered Mangano's killing. He organized Murder Inc., which some say never existed. Crime Inc. was supposed to be Anastasia's hit squad to keep the families in order. He made Gambino his under boss in 1956.

Anastasia was murdered on Oct. 25, 1957, while he was getting a shave at the Park Sheraton Hotel in midtown Manhattan. With a hot towel on his face, two gunmen rushed in and shot him to death. On that day, the Gambino

dynasty began. In 1962, Gambino's eldest son Tommy married the daughter of rival boss Thomas Lucchese. Gambino was shrewd about FBI surveillance, speaking little during meetings and devising a code to discuss business. Carlo's elusive behavior drove the feds crazy. He was deliberately elusive and low profile, dressing down and refusing comments to reporters during brief encounters.

In 1969, the Gambino Family had over 25 crews with more than 950 men. Carlo was close to Vegas star Frank Sinatra, who did not run from associating with the Gambino family. New York City police kept a car parked in front of Gambino's home, that was marked "Organized Crime Control Bureau." He was under constant surveillance. It was in 1969 that a Gambino crew member, John Gotti, was arrested for hijacking a truck. Carlo Gambino was charged the same year for masterminding an armed robbery truck hijacking. The case was delayed over and over again.

In 1971, his wife Catherine died of cancer. Carlo was also in bad health. The loss of his wife was devastating to him. The feds tried hard to deport Gambino to Sicily. Gambino's doctors proved he had heart trouble and would never be able to make that trip. When the feds were ready to finally deport Gambino, his family, aware of Carlo's health, bought off two powerful but always unnamed US Senators, to allow him to remain in the United States. They were to be paid \$25,000 a year each for life, if the deportation order could be stopped. It was.