

The story of the estate

IL CANTO DEL SOLE

(the song of the sun)
(ex Estate "Casino")



IL The estate "Il canto del sole" today.

The historical and geographical area of the estate 'Il canto del sole' (ex Casino)

The area on which the estate was built long time ago is known as "Arbiola".

Very close to Cuna and Tressa (when it was still called St. Angelo in Tressa), the entire area, in the second half of 1200, fell under the hegemony of the hospital **Santa Maria della Scala** in Siena.

And this is an obvious consequence because in 1314 the entire village of Cuna became the more important 'Grancia' of the Ente senese. But the area was already known to the archives since 1081, when, thanks to a privilege of the Emperor Arrigo IV (Diplomatico Archivio Opera Metropolitana di Siena, Giugno 3. Ind. 4. D. 0,42 1/2 0,44.), we know it was dominated by the Monastery of St. Eugene, located in the countryside of Siena, in a place called Pilosiano (Costafabbri).

But the area of Arbiola, despite the proximity to Cuna, has always been an autonomous territory with his own "sindico" (mayor), "camerlengo" (chamberlain), coat of arms and so one of the so-called "Comunelli delle Masse" of Siena. A research led by Odile Redon about the "Comunelli" of the Republic of Siena ("Comunelli" means small communes) confirms that in 1263 this small community already existed .

His territory included the current estates of Arbiola, Istiola, Colombaio, Caggiole, Villa Canina, all still existing, and the Church of St. Peter, which became later the Estate of St. Pietrino: this estate no longer exist but we know it was precisely placed between the Casino (Canto del sole) and the current estate Arbiola.

In **1334** (Patti e Censi delle Comunità ASS c.46r) this community was paying to the city of Siena the so-called "Censo" and was counted among the municipalities that were part of the "Masse del Terzo di San Martino":

"La Massa del Terço di San Martino, co' le ville et comunità con essa conferenti le quali sono qui sotto scripte et debano conferire ogni comune per la parte che lo tocca secondo la tassa loro debono offerire un palio di velluto di grana foderato di sciamitello di valuta et di stima (2) el dì de la vigilia dell' Assumptione de la vergine Maria di meço agosto.....Arbiuola: 1 cero da 15 libre , 1 libra di cera per i fiori, 2 ceri da 1 libra."

. THE ESTATE CALLED 'IL CASINO'

This estate has the typical architecture of dozens of other structures built or renovated in this area during the sixteenth century and especially since the mid-1500. In particular, the arches at the entrance and the well in front of the arches seem to confirm this period; on the other hand seem to be impossible a dating before because it lacks the so-called "muro a scarpa", a feature of 1300 and of the medieval buildings.



The Estate Corsanello



The Estate Arbiola

Even the very near estates of Arbiola, Caggiole, Corsanello and others, have the same kind of arches even though they are older: this is because they were modified at the mid-1500.

But we can't rule out the hypothesis that even the Casino was older, like all the other sites of this area and the Church of St. Pietrino, that is close to us.

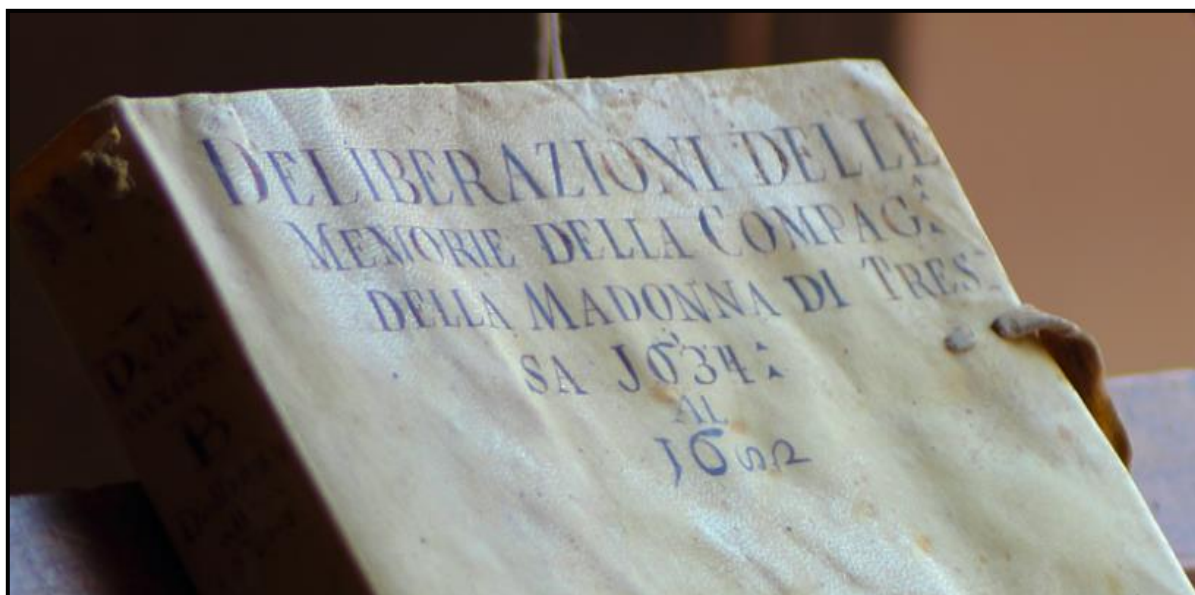
We are informed that in 1336 this area was devastated by a Company of Fortune called "San Giorgio" that, besides attacking Isola d'Arbia, Cuna and Tressa, also devastated Arbiola and burned the estate "Colombaio", just 200 meters from here (dal Volume "Mercenary Companies and the Decline of Siena", pag. 69 e ASS CG 191 cc, 62v-63r).

Captain of Ventura Hannekin Baumgarten, which in the dialect of Siena was called 'Anechino', had also kidnapped workers from the village of Cuna and he had forced the Hospital of Siena to redeem them for 31 guilders for each worker, the punishment would have been the life.

DOCUMENTATION

1645

The oldest document we have found dates from 1645 and it concern the secular company "Santissima Vergine Maria detta di Cuna", that was based in Cuna.



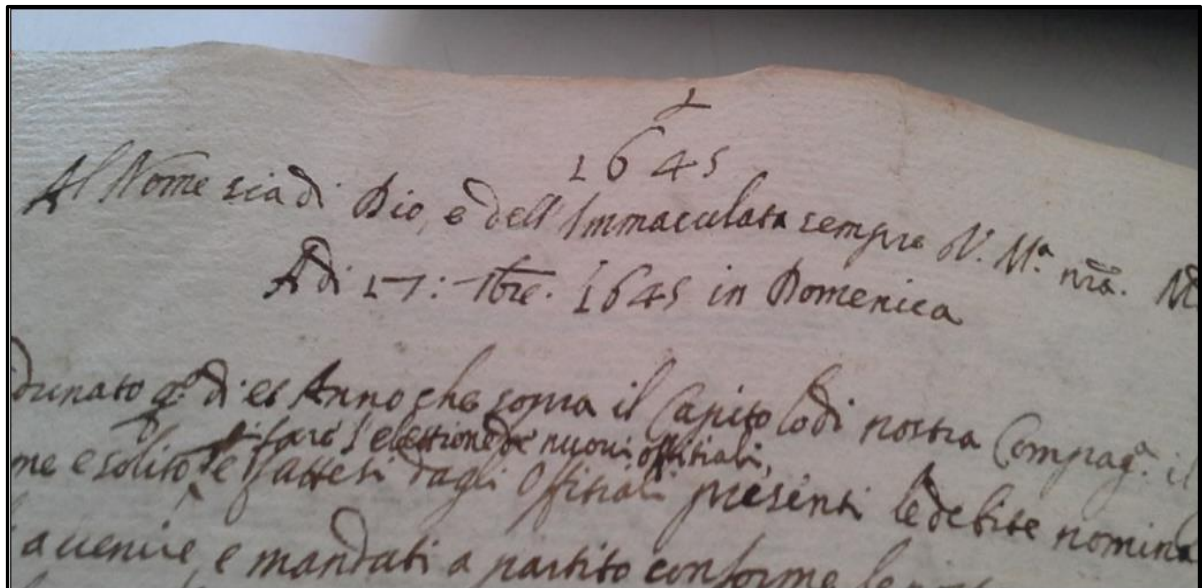
(ASS "Fondo Resti Ecclesiastici"- dal 1576 - Volume n. 1207)

In the State Archives of Siena, in the bottom called the "Ecclesiastical Remains" this is the volume **1207**, in which are collected all the acts of this great association that had a few hundred members ("Brothers and Sisters").

The Company had arisen in the nearby Cuna since 1575 at the Church of St. Giacomo and had soon spread to the surrounding countryside.

The volume, written entirely by hand, begins to be drawn up by the Brothers in the early 1600s and at the beginning, the scribe shows the events that led to the birth of the Brotherhood.

In the meeting of **1645** it appears for the first time the name of a brother from the "Casino":



The beginning of the manuscript of the meeting of 1645

Al nome sia di Dio e dell' Immacolata Concezione Maria Santissima madre Amen.

A dì 24 (?) 1645 di Domenica

Convocato e radunato (.....) che sopra il Capitolo di nostra Compagnia il giorno dopo il Vespero conforme e solito fare l' elezzione dei nuovi officiali e fattesi agli officiali presenti le debite nominationi de i soggetti per essere officiali a venire e mandati a partito conforme le nostre constitutioni restorno per maggior numero di lupini bianchi gli infrascritti:

Priore (Prior)

M^o Gio Battista Partini

Camerlengo (Camerlingo)

Niccolò da Radi

Consiglieri (Councillors)

Crescentio Sampieri a Tressa

Alessandro Giannotti alle More

Signori della Festa (gentlemen of the Feast) Bernardino Sani alla Strada

Augustino di Francesco alle Case Nuove

Pasquino di Lino Lippi

Antonio di Annibal Savelli

Sindaci (mayors)

Bartolomeo Ciaccini

Bartolomeo Cenni all'Isola

Infermieri (nurses)

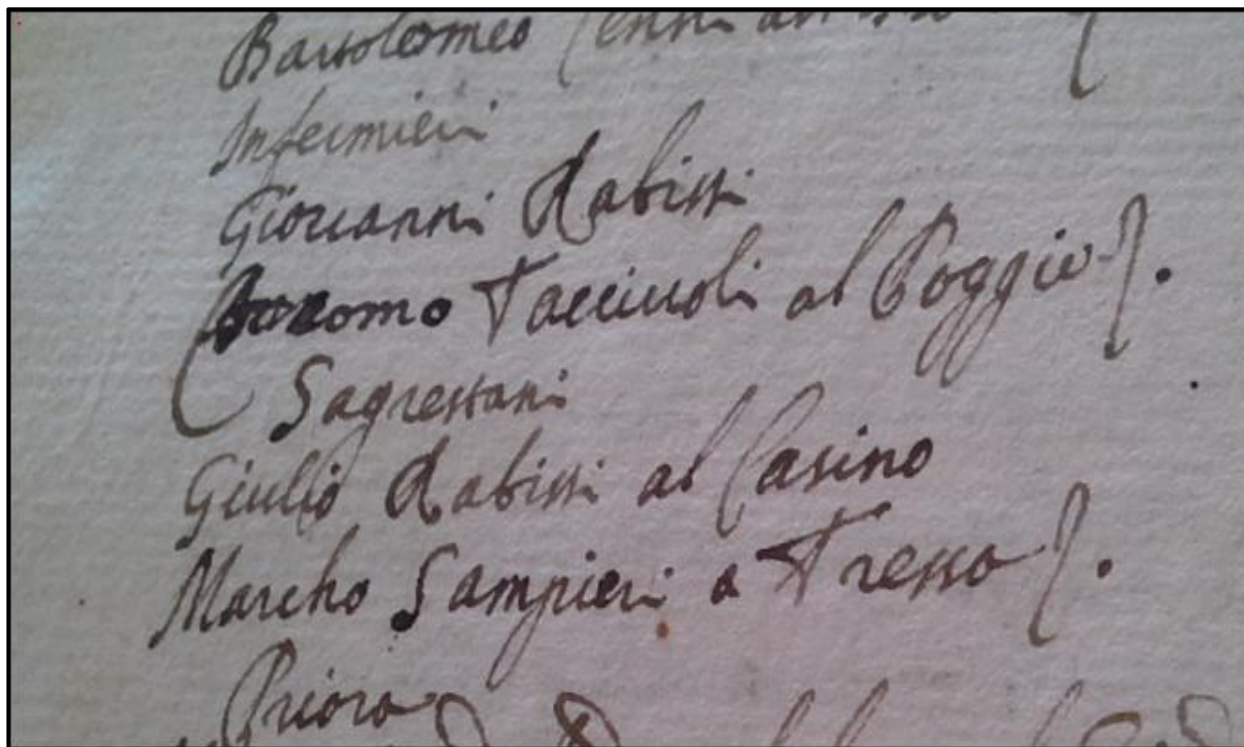
Giovanni Rabissi

Jacomo Tacciuoli al Poggio

Sagrestani (sacristans)

Giulio Rabissi al Casino

Marcho Sampieri a Tressa



(ASS Vol. 1207: Adunanza del 1645: "Giulio Rabissi al Casino")

1686 (ASS "Fondo Resti Ecclesiastici"- Volume n. 1208)

In the next Volume, yet regarding the aforesaid Company but relating to a meeting of **1686**, we find that in this year a certain Jerome Fracassi lived this estate:

PRIORE (Prior)

Pavolo Vigni a San Fabbiano

VICARIO (Curate)

Jacomo Brogi alla Casanuova

CAMERLENGO (Camerlingo)

Silvestro Corbelli all'Isola

CONSIGLIERI (Councillors)

Giulio Vigni a San Fabbiano

Domenico Regoli alla Troiola

INFERMIERI (Nurses)

Girolamo Fracassi al Casino

Domenico Panciatici alla Piaggia

Probably the Estate called "**Casino**" had already become property of the Hospital Santa Maria della Scala in Siena and these people were sharecroppers who lived there and who worked the land.

In fact we will find both Mr Rabissi and Mr Fracassi in other estates of the Hospital in subsequent periods.

The Hospital Santa Maria della Scala did not deal directly with the "allogagioni" (allocation of land, houses, mills ...), but it delegated the entire

administration to the Grange of Cuna that looked after it to an area of expertise identified with most of the Val d 'Arbia (at the end of 1500 it comprised about 53 farms, several houses and dovecotes, 8 furnaces, 4 mills and 4 taverns).

The hospital decided when and how to hire and work his own lands, although in most cases the agreements with the farmers were "sharecropping" agreements.

The Inventory of the estates of Cuna in **1596** (ASS OSP 3085), shows visits to all the states of the Grange, but the **Casino** is not included.

Are included instead, the nearby Caggiolo, Istiola and Villa Canina, but nearly a century later, even our estate will become part of the property of the aforementioned entity.

1692

(ASS Fondo Quattro Conservatori e dal volume di Lucia B. Conenna "La proprietà fondiaria fra il XVII e il XVIII secolo", pag. 172 e ASS Fondo Quattro Conservatori)

In **1692** in fact, the Comunello of Arbiola is formed in the following way:

ESTATE	OWNER
Arbiola	Bernardino Becarelli
Caggiuole	Ospedale S. Maria della Scala (Hospital)
Casino	Ospedale S. Maria della Scala (Hospital)
Istiola	Ospedale S. Maria della Scala (Hospital)
S. Pietrino	Curato (Priest) Monteroni
Villa Canina	Ospedale S. Maria della Scala (Hospital)

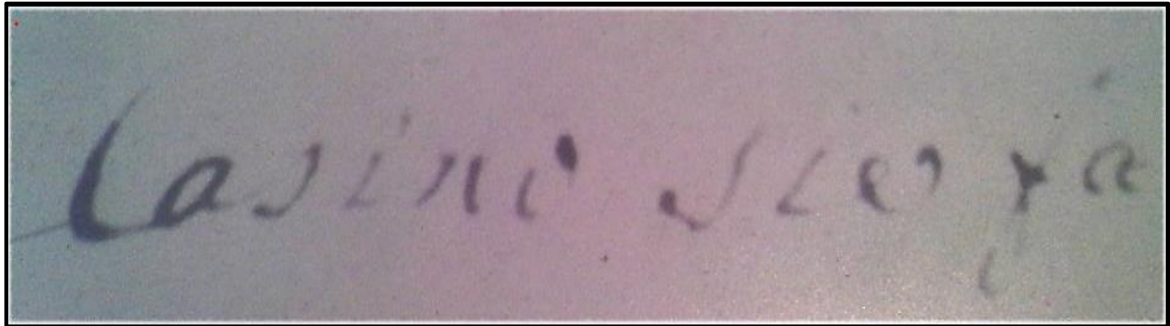
1693 (ASS "Fondo Resti Ecclesiastici"- Volume n. 1208)

From the same volume of the Brotherhood we find that in this year **Girolamo Fracassi** still lives at the **Casino**

1747 (ASS OSP 1404, p. 0374)

The **Casino** is still owned by the **Santa Maria della Scala** and it is being visited by a manager appointed by The Granciere of Cuna. He has to check the status of the building and report if there is need for maintenance.

The inspector finds the estate fortunately in good condition.



(ASS OSP 1404, anno 1692, Visita al Podere il Casino)

1776 (ASS OSP 1404, p. 0360)

It is still one of the estate of the Grange of Cuna for which the sharecroppers pay some duties to the hospital, including the duty on wine, as well as a donation in kind "Capponi, Pollastre e Uova" (Capons, chicks and eggs.)

As in the whole area around the Grange, also in the **Casino**, the vineyards and thus the production of grapes and wine had a considerable importance.

1784 (ASS OSP 1404, p. 0392)

In this volume there are some taxation that estates of Cuna had to pay the hospital and especially for the Feast of the Assumption in mid-August.

In 1784, the estate **Casino** paid:

"4 capons, 4 chicks and 200 eggs"

After **1785** the Hospital of Siena, and also the Grange of Cuna, victims of a financial crisis, yielded and sold many of their assets such as the great Mill of Monteroni which in 1786 was acquired by the noble Scipione Ballati Nerli and Pietro Cosatti.

So even in the early 1800s, with the arrival of the French, many ecclesiastical property they ended up in the hands of the nobility.

The **Casino** had the same fate between **1785 and 1826**.

With the birth of the Municipality of Monteroni d'Arbia (February 1809) ceased to exist all those little "Comunelli" that since mid-1200 had survived the centuries and so Arbiola, of which our estate was part.

1826 (ASS, CATASTO LEOPOLDINO, SEZ. B-MONTERONI E CUNA F. 2)

In the first Grand Ducal Cadastre called Leopoldino, that in our area was made in **1826**, we have an initial mapping of the **Casino** as they designed and measured in that year.

From the plant emerge some very curious.

First, you can check that in the last two centuries the body of the farm has undergone very few changes in shape.



(ASS CATASTO LEOPOLDINO, SEZ. B-MONTERONI E CUNA F. 2)

The current road which, coming from the Cuna, you get to Il Canto del Sole did not exist in the last stretch.

In **1826** the main street had its way higher up in the hills and came from Caggiole.

The road came down from the hills with three separate paths toward Colombaio, Casino and Arbiola.

From a magnification of the same sheet, we can finally retrieve the number of particle which, in our case, corresponds to "56".



(idem)

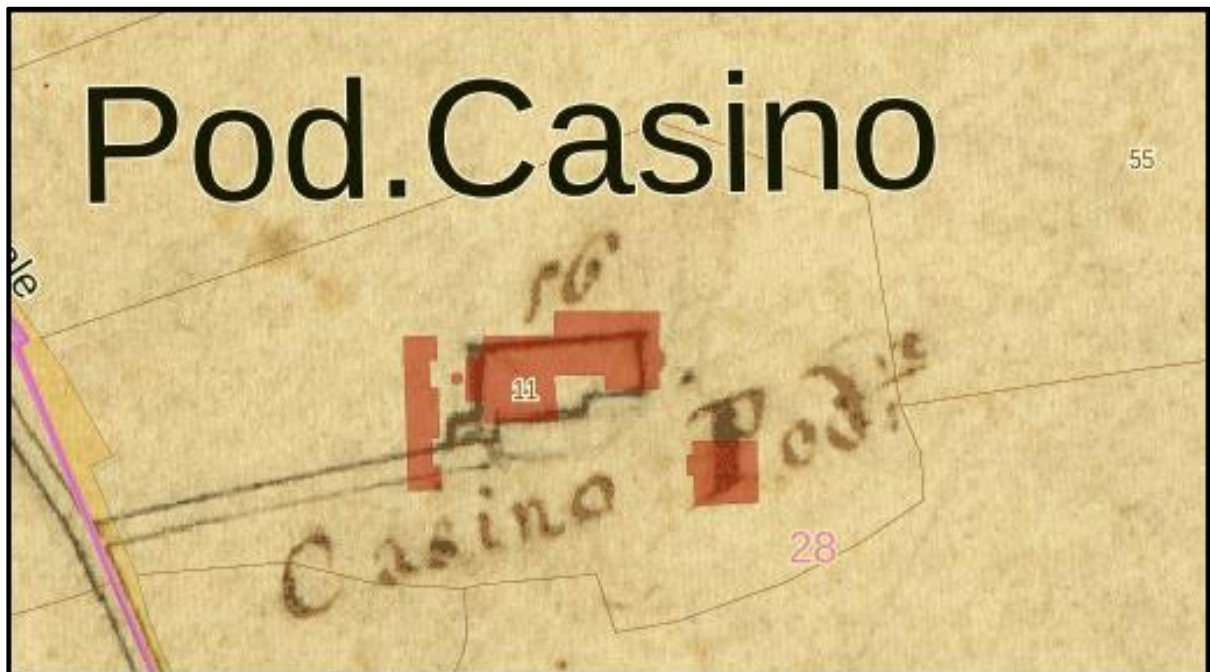
Among the papers of the Land Registry we finally discover that, at the time of the topographic measurements, the **Estate Casino** was classified as "Farmhouse", he had an area of 600 "braccia quadre" and was identified with "Article 250 of Estimate".

"Braccia quadra" (arms square) was the unit of measurement of the surface used at the time and corresponded to:

1 Braccia Quadra = 0.34 Square Meters

So our estate had an area of about 204 square meters.

From another magnification, overlaying the original structure with that of today, we discover the changes that occurred from 1826 to the present:



(Cadastral old elements in black and current elements in red)

From first glance it would seem that the porch and the well are only a recent addition.

But the wells, at the time of the land registry, were not drawn in the maps, while the porch was only reduced in the last two centuries from the original size.

We had left the **Casino** in 1784, when it was a property of the Hospital of Siena and was administered by the Grange of Cuna, but now let's see who owns it.

In **1826** the estate was owned by the noble family Mocenni and in particular **Alessandro Mocenni di Gustiniano**.

But who were the Mocenni?

Mocenni family was very influential in that period. Justinian was repeatedly Chancellor and his son was an ingenious entrepreneur. In Val d'Arbia he also experimented, for example, new techniques for the cultivation of silk cocoons. Alessandro was, in the mid 1800s, the owner of the **Casino**, but also of other lands and buildings in **Curiano**, **Lucignano**, **Monteroni**, **Ponte d'Arbia** and **Chianti (Quietòle)**. Very fond of horses, he was also a prominent figure in the organization of the Palio di Siena. He was the "mossiere" (the man in charge of judging the good start of the race) of the "Carriera" (race) of 16 August 1842 and in those of July 2 and August 16, 1843 and 1844. His coat of arms, (arm with hand pointing a moon and three stars in the blue field), it is widespread in the village of Monteroni d'Arbia, where there are at least eight copies walled up on the walls of many estates.



Mocenni's coat of arms at Casino



Mocenni's coat of arms in Monteroni

The son of Alessandro, **Stanislao Mocenni**, (Siena 1837 – Siena 21/03/1907), was Deputy of the Kingdom from 1874 to 1900 and under the government of Crispi was also **Minister of War** (1893 al 1896).



From the Val d'Arbia he treated with Baldissera for the battle of Adwa, making him come to Siena in secret. The letter, which summoned him to the Hotel Continental in Siena, was sent and stamped at the post office of Monteroni. In the year 1896 Baldissera had to replace Oreste Baratieri driving of Italian troops in Ethiopia, but while he was still traveling in the Suez Canal, Barattieri attacked on his own initiative suffering that heavy defeat that will go down in history as the "**Defeat of Adua**".

1860 (ASS Catasto Leopoldino)

In 1860 **Alessandro Mocenni di Giustiniano** was still the owner of the **Casino**.

1893 (ASS Catasto Leopoldino)

The ownership of the **Casino** passed from **Alessandro Mocenni** to **Mrs. Angela di Clemente Muzzi** in Siena on 30 January.

1931 (ASS Catasto Leopoldino rif. 3748)

The ownership of the **Casino** passed from **Muzzi** to the **Palmini** sisters with deed of sale of July 31 of that year.

In particular, the new owners were the daughters of **Adolfo Palmini**.

Livia, married **Fanetti** had residence in Siena, while **Isilde** married **Giglioli**, in Rome.

Augusto Codogno

Legend:

ASS	Archivio di Stato di Siena (State Archives of Siena)
ASS OSP	Archivio di Stato di Siena Fondo Ospedale S. Maria della Scala (State Archives of Siena, Fund Hospital S. Maria della Scala)
SMS	Fondo Ospedale S. Maria della Scala (Fund Hospital S. Maria della Scala)
ASS CG	Archivio di Stato di Siena Consiglio Generale (State Archives of Siena General Council)