

QUINTO SANTOLI

**HOW ROSE IN PISTOIA CURRENT
STATE ARCHIVE**

INAUGURAL SPEECH TO CELEBRATE

NEW PISTOIA STATE ARCHIVE SITE

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English version edited by

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HOW ROSE IN PISTOIA CURRENT STATE ARCHIVE

I want to thank our Archive's Director, Doctor Antonelli, for his compliments about my work at Pistoia State Archive.

As long as Archives often get away from public's attention and are ignored, it won't be inappropriate if I shortly refer which events lead to set up in our town that today is Pistoia State Archive.

In October 1923 I was sent by Public Education Ministry in Pistoia as Lyceum-Gymnasium Headmaster.

But Lyceum-Gymnasium existed on paper only. Infact there were two separated schools having their own history.

Lyceum was the continuation of the old Sapienza (wisdom) School having seat in the beautiful 16th century palace that is Sapienza Palace, now entirely occupied by Forteguerriana Library.

It was "imperial and regal" under grand-ducal Government until 1860.

It became "Royal Lyceum" under Reign of Italy in 1861.

Gymnasium was born "as the same rank of the royal one" in 1860 under Bettino Ricasoli's provisional Government, seat in San Mercuriale Palace and afterwards in other rooms.

From 1860 to 1904 it was settled by Pistoia Commune.

In 1904 it became royal and should have been joined to the royal Lyceum, but actually it remained separated under the direction of the eminent fellow-citizen that is the learned and well-known Professor Alfredo Chiti.

The first problem I had to solve when I came in Pistoia as Headmaster, was the reunion of Lyceum with Gymnasium.

I solved it by leaving Sapienza Palace to Forteguerriana Library and transferring Lyceum in San Giovanni Battista conservatoire.

That let me finally join together Lyceum with Gymnasium , and ten years later thanks to the meritorious Pistoia citizen Arturo Ganucci-Cancellieri (that always did selfless and intelligent work for our town), the Institute moved in Vittorio Emanuele II street in a building that was been sister's convent.

Count Ganucci-Cancellieri built another floor on that mansion, adorned it with a marble staircase and modified doors in order to take away claustal look and change it in a splendid scholastic site.

It is still the same building where are located both classical and scientific Lyceums.

Lyceum dismissal allowed me to give suitable location to Forteguerriana Library, which until then was Lyceum Library.

Library Director and Secretary always received low payments once fixed by Pia Casa di Sapienza, but in 1921 Public Education Ministry refused to continue paying and Library was closed.

It was a library formed by old Sapienza and Niccolò Pucini Fund (illustrious philanthropist and patriot who left all his books to this library) and by the miserable purchases progressively done by pro tempore royal Lyceum Headmasters.

In total no more than 3500 pieces.

With my bibliophile and hardworking passion, I suggested transforming Forteguerriana in civic library, and I succeeded.

I managed in doing it not so much for help I got from Municipality, as much as those I got from Pistoia Saving Bank thank to the influential intervention of my unforgettable friend Arturo Ganucci-Cancellieri.

It opened to public in 1926, and three years later permanently supported by a Consortium among Commune, Province and Saving Bank.

Its present supply, thank to the remarkable accessions after year 1926, and overall for the purchase by Saving Bank of Ferdinando Martini's Library (illustrious bibliophile, writer and politicians) as well as for Alberto Chiappelli's gift (remarkable bibliophile and studios). Moreover many other minor donations and not less than 11.000 pieces, among which a large number of valuable manuscripts and incunabulums.

As I was in charge of Forteguerriana Library Director I proposed concentrating in it all town and country Archives of historical importance. This concentration was also suggested by decay and indifference in which were all our Archives. Except municipal Archive and clerical Property, all others were without inventory.

If a scholar had had to do some researches in those Archives he would have found many difficulties and got discouraged about it. Without considering that archival material was badly kept, and so exposed to stealing and loss risk.

The wished concentration was anticipated by Pistoia chief town province in January 1927.

It already existed in Sant'Andrea street, in Fabroni Palace (then under-Prefecture), a rich Archive, dating from XVIth century. Here were preserved precious registers and documents about Florentine and French domination and about Risorgimento.

Pistoia State Archive was going to be totally scattered and confined in building's loft, when my prompt and powerful intervention, by the permission of Home Affairs, I managed to store it at Forteguerriana.

But I didn't want neither under-Prefecture Archive nor many other materials added later, were confused with Library.

Since that time I dreamt of a State Archive. So I assigned to Archive ex Leopoldine Schools building, annexed to Forteguerriana Library which was and is still placed in Sapienza Palace.

Due to bureaucratic delays arrived in 1930 in bad conditions San Marcello ex Prefecture Archive, whose most interesting part was that one coming from ancient Montagna Superiore Capitanato seated in Cutigliano.

In the same year Forteguerriana got clerical Property Archive, already reorganized and inventoried by myself in 1902.

Between 1931 and 1933 arrived to Forteguerriana Library the following Archives: ancient Landregister, Pistoia Commune (most important part of current Pistoia State Archive), Serravalle Municipality, charity Congregation and in 1936 even Sambuca Municipality State Archive.

Air raids during war period fully stroke the largest of the three rooms dedicated to Archive use. So Gherardi's family Archive was destroyed, as well as all archival material recently arrived from local Prefecture, and damaged and disorganized other archival Funds.

Fortunately the most precious material wasn't there, because I arranged to stock it in a safe place. But globally major damages were caused to the building. Engineer Corp provided in building reconstruction and that is what we inaugurate today. But metallic shelving in the third and greatest room has not been rebuilt, and so archival material today is assembled in that room waiting for an accommodation.

Current Pistoia State Archive, officially established in 1941, is now neither more nor less than that one I reorganized between 1927 and 1936, as a result of the concentration I spoke earlier.

It finally shows to the public in a totally renovated building and fully suitable for its function, but regarding its arrangement, unfortunately in worse conditions than before.

This is not due to the lack of good will of Director Doctor Giovanni Antonelli and his collaborators, but for the unsuccessful rebuilding of metal shelving in the third and greatest room.

So I take this occasion, in the presence of Senator Bisori, influential Government representative, to hope that the rebuilding of that shelving will soon be made.

By that time our Archive will be able not only to get registers masses still lying today, but all our province material for a long time.

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