

[illegible]

As I happened to have the opportunity to write some historical commendations on my ancestors, I had the strong desire to look for past things, and I found several memoirs of your Very Noble Family, assembled by Mr. Carlo Strozzi, son of Tommaso, very important historian of his home country, Florence (see note below), to whom, apart from the value of his endeavors, for having taken out of darkness several beautiful noble antiquities, as I have knowledge of similar scholarly works, even if very foreigners to me, I think that all the noble families have the uncommon obligation to judge themselves worthy of being studied, I examined them until our times, and thinking to do something that pleases you, whom I take as witness of our long friendship, and of the affection with which I honor the numerous and important qualities which you have, and in so important matters, as it is to write History, I want to tell simply and very honestly the naked truth, the memoirs of the French members of your family, and of others who had ancient and very important charges like the Noble Giovambattista Guadagni and others similar to him, with brief and small annotations rather than like those who want to enlarge and increase and even correct and adjust and list their honorable deeds as if they were due to bad luck or some mistake of theirs.

[Senator Carlo Strozzi (1587-1671), cousin of the Guadagni, formed an important library and collected a valuable miscellany known as the “Carte Strozziiane” (“Strozzi Papers”) of which the most important part is now in the state archives of Florence (like the Guadagni archives are). He was the author of “*A little history of the city of Florence from 1219 to 1292* (unpublished) and a History of the Barberini Family (Rome, 1640)]







The City of Florence was governed for a long time by Consuls, more or less until the year 1210.

The suit of the Consuls was a jacket with large sleeves, under a green coat with a white fleur-de-lis on it, which was the emblem of the City of Florence in those days.

After that we have the government of the “sestine” (“neighborhood or division of the town in Florence”) made of six Priors, one for each “sestine”, started in the year 1212, and this type of Government lasted until the year 1293 when a Gonfaloniere of Justice was added to them, who represented the Principality and was the Head of the Republic.

The first who had the supreme Principality and dignity of Gonfalonier of Justice was Baldo Ruffoli in the year 1293 and the second was Migliore son of Guadagno son of Guitto Guadagni and after that other Gonfaloniers followed with political changes from time to time until the year 1530, when a member of the Medici Family, named Alessandro, was made Duke of Florence.



Alessandro de' Medici Duke of Florence; Palazzo Vecchio, Duomo and Giotto Bell Tower in the background.

In the year 1343 the City of Florence changed its organization from Sestini (sixth of the town) to Quartini (fourth of the town) and they elected two more priors, so they were no more six but eight; the Priors of the City of Florence were called the Minor and they enjoyed the fourth part of the Magistrature but it is true that as time went by several of the Priors of the Minor acquired wealth and qualities and were admired by the ones of the Major and as in those times there were continuous wars in Italy, and the City of Florence, located in the center of Italy, always had to keep itself with a good army available of Gentlemen and Citizens and most of all

of a chosen “militia”, made of the most noble, rich and brave men, which were called “feditori”, chosen only when needed, and they represented the “strength” of the Republic with the largest authority.





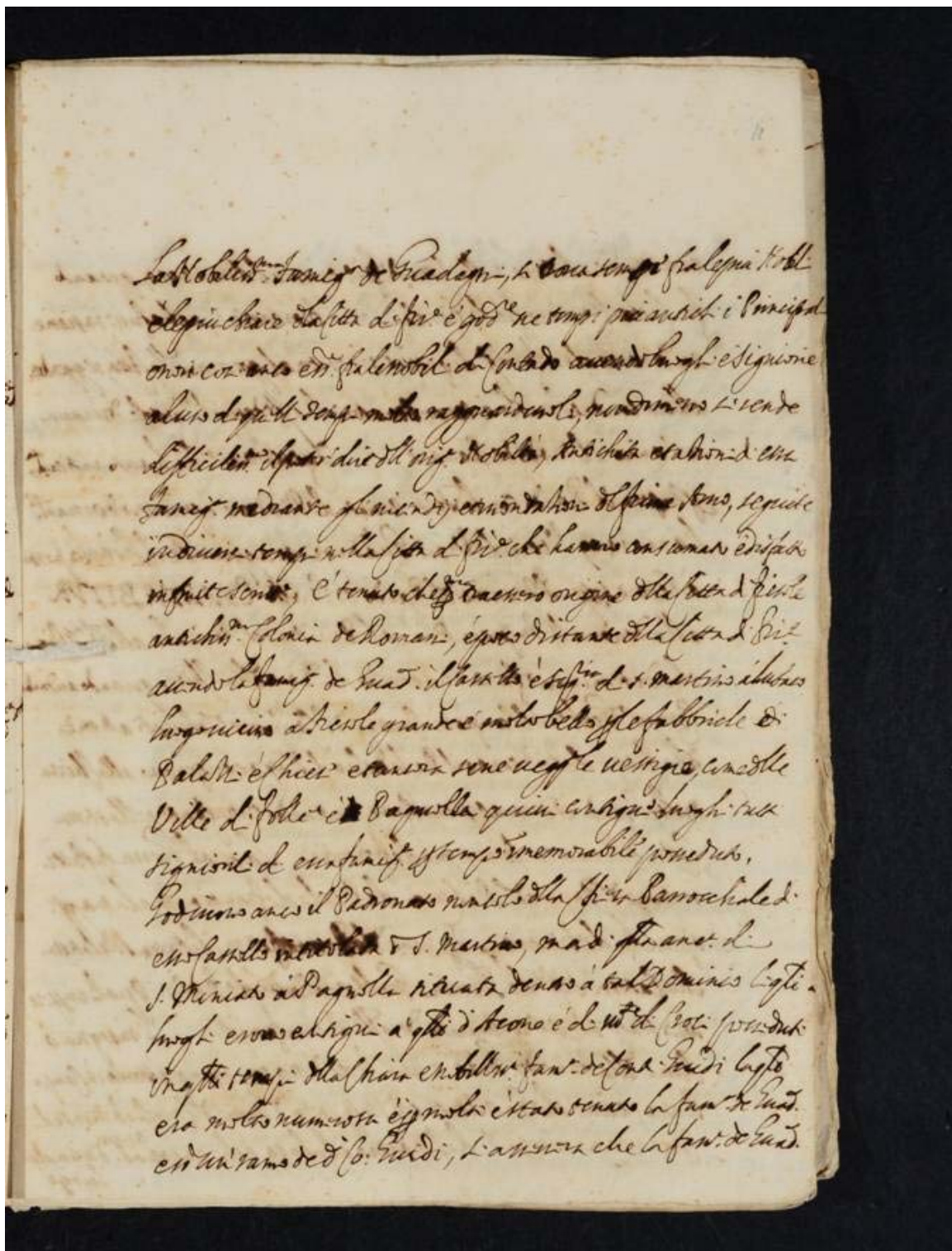




The “Feditori” were very important because the Head of the State of Florence could not afford to keep a well trained army, ready and available at all times, so, in times of need, he had to be able to turn to the “militia”, of whom he knew the courage and the military capacities, and could use them for the Good of the Republic.

The members of the First Magistrature were Ten and they all had the same Authority in the decisions and the management of the wars, and it was very important that they continued in such a way (Rondinelli underlines it in his hand written text) to manage and to terminate the wars in Italy and to invest in the growth and enlargement of the Republic of Florence, making it one the the major powers of Italy.





The very noble Guadagni Family has always been among the most noble and famous families of the City of Florence and enjoyed the Principality (leadership) of Florence from the most ancient times and is among the most noble of the County having properties and lordships from remote times; however it is very difficult to establish the exact origins and time of its

nobility, antiquity and actions through the finding of its very First Years, followed by a period of time in the City of Florence, which have caused infinite writings on it. It is believed that the Guadagni originated from the City of Fiesole, very ancient colony of the Romans, not far from the City of Florence, also because the Guadagni Family has had the Lordship of San Martino in Lubaco, near Fiesole, including a large and beautiful town full of palaces and churches, of which we can still see the remains, like in the villas of Folle and Pagnolle, and all the surrounding localities all very aristocratic and whose origins and ownership by the Guadagni are from immemorial times.



Fiesole: Roman theatre, built 2,000 years ago.

They also had the patronage of the Parish Church of the Castle named San Martino, and of the more ancient San Miniato a Pagnolle situated in the same dominion. The children and the wives were adjacent to the ones of Acone [*Church of Sant'Eustachio, at Acone, also referred to as Sant'Eustachio in Jerusalem, used to be the mother church of the vast Acone parish*) and of Monte di Croci (Mountain of the Crosses) both owned in ancient times by the famous and very noble Family of the Counts Guidi, who were very numerous and several historians believe that the Guadagni Family is a branch of the Counts Guidi. Historians say that the Guidi family came to live in the City of Florence around the year 1010, when the union between "Fiesolani" (inhabitants of Fiesole) and "Fiorentini" was made, and that it was together with other families that the Guadagni were invited to govern the City, with two consuls and one hundred senators, and that the authority of the Consuls lasted one year like in the times of the Romans.

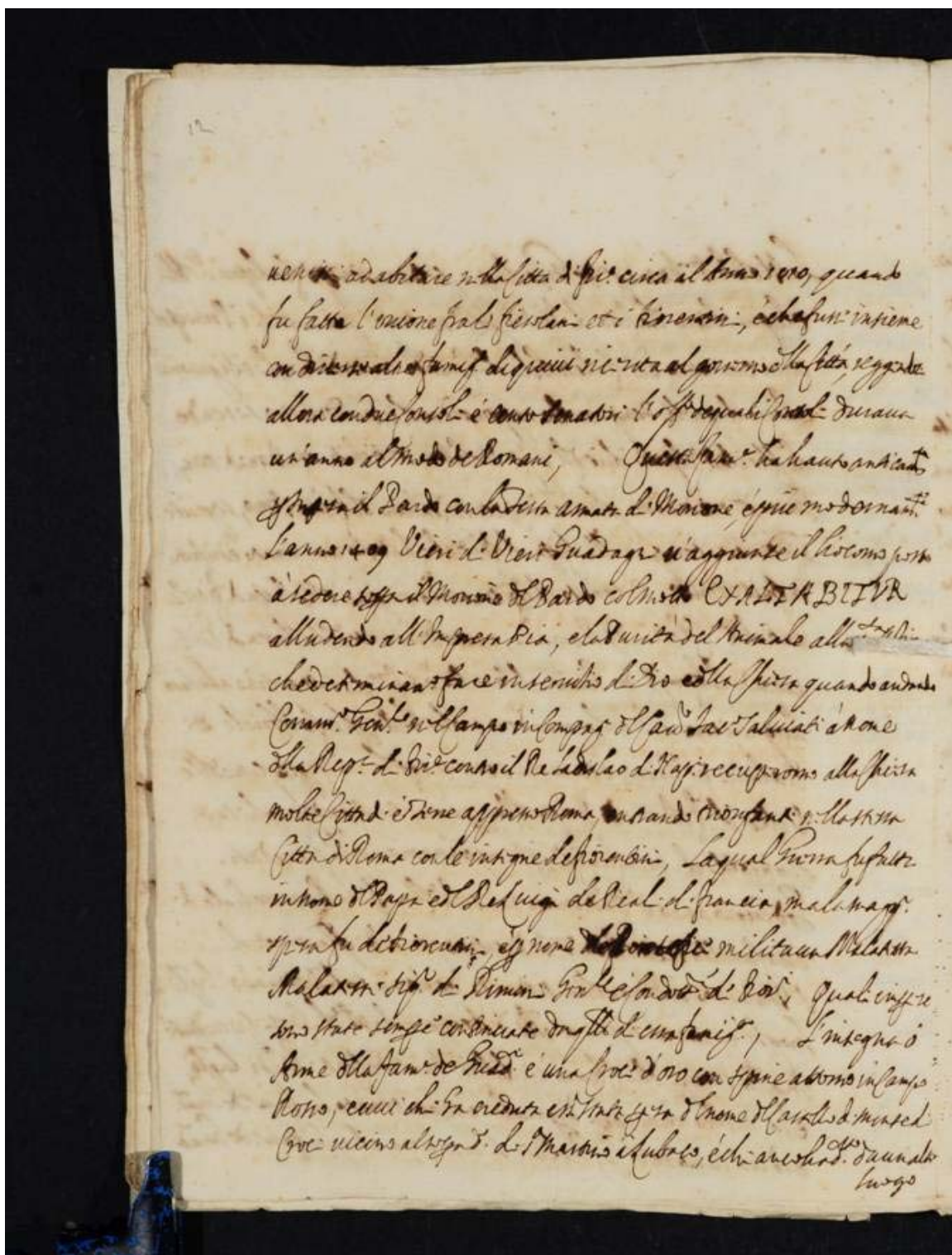




Castles of the Counts Guidi, outside and inside.







Page 6

This Family has had from ancient times the Crest of the "Leopard with the shield with the Cross in its right paw" and later, in the year 1409, Vieri, son of Vieri Guadagni, added the Unicorn sitting on the helmet of the Leopard with the motto "EXALTABITUR" (Latin for "God will be exalted") (Rondinelli writes it in capital letters), hinting to the pious endeavours and the purity of

the leopard to do the knightly work at the service of God and of the Church when as the General Commander of the Army together with Knight Salviati in the name of the Republic of Florence they went against King Ladislaus of Naples and recuperated several cities and lands near Rome, which used to belong to the Pope, entering triumphantly in the morning in the City of Rome with the Florentine emblem of the Red Fleurdelys. The above war was made in the name of the Pope and of King Louis of France, but the biggest expense was incurred by the Florentines, in the name of the Papal leader Malatesta Malatesti, Lord of Rimini, and “War Lord” (in 1409 he was fighting for the Pope).



Malatesta Malatesti

These sorts of endeavors have always been continued by the members of the Guadagni Family. The Crest of the Guadagni Family is a golden Cross with thorns, on a red background, which is believed by some people to be taken from the name of the Castle of Monte di Croci (“Mountain of the Crosses”) near the Castle of San Martino a Lubaco and from others to originate from another locality named “Le Croci” (“The Crosses”) next to the Castle of Montereppi, also close to San Martino, and because of the similarity of names of the families of the inhabitants of these localities which had more contacts with the Guadagni and the inhabitants of Montereppi, it seems that it could be originating from Montereppi.

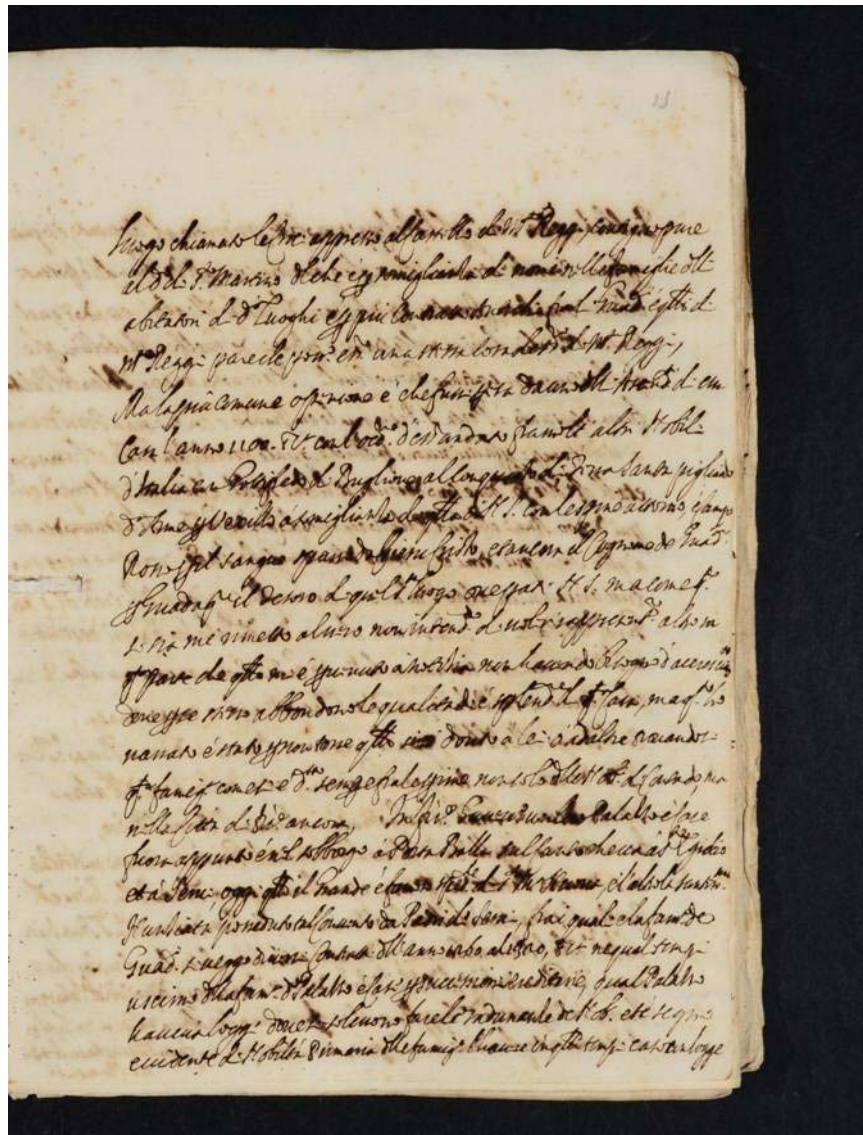




## Farmhouse in Montereggi, Fiesole walls near Montereggi



Etruscan (more ancient than Roman)





However the most common opinion is that it was done by one of their ancestors in the year 1100. This ancestor went with several other Nobles of Italy with Godfrey of Bouillon to conquer the Holy Land from the Moslems, and as a family crest they chose one similar



1<sup>st</sup> Crusade

to the Crusaders', a cross with thorns on a blood red field, color of the blood poured by Christ, and their surname of Guadagni came from "guadagnare" "regain" the treasure represented by the locality where Our Lord suffered but as we know I follow the usage and don't look for approvals also because several people esteem the Guadagni don't need to invent stories to increase the splendid renown of their Family's magnificent past and they don't need other grandiose invented facts as their Family has always been among the first not only of the County but also of the City of Florence and still is nowadays. [Rondinelli seems to say that he does not have to "prove" that the Guadagni Crest comes from the Crusades, because if the Guadagni say so, it's true, as they don't "need to invent stories"] Finally, their Palace in Florence is in the neighborhood of Balla Door next to Sant'Egidio; today (in the year 1640) it has become incorporated in the great and famous Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova (which is the most ancient still active Hospital in Florence in the year 2015).



Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, Florence. An ancient Guadagni Palace was incorporated in it. Another Guadagni Palace was incorporated in the Basilica of Santissima Annunziata, owned by the Servite Fathers, with whom the Guadagni signed several contracts from the year 1260 to the year 1320, during which years, the Palace and other hereditary possessions left the Guadagni Family. The fact that the Guadagni palace had “loggias” (“porticates”), where the “nobles” of Florence used to organize meetings and assemble, is an evident proof of the important nobility of the Guadagni Family.



Loggia of the Basilica of the Santissima Annunziata in Florence (the picture above and two more pictures below), which used to be part of a Guadagni Palace of the Middle Ages and was incorporated by the Servite Fathers (who “inherited” or purchased it) in the facade of their Basilica.

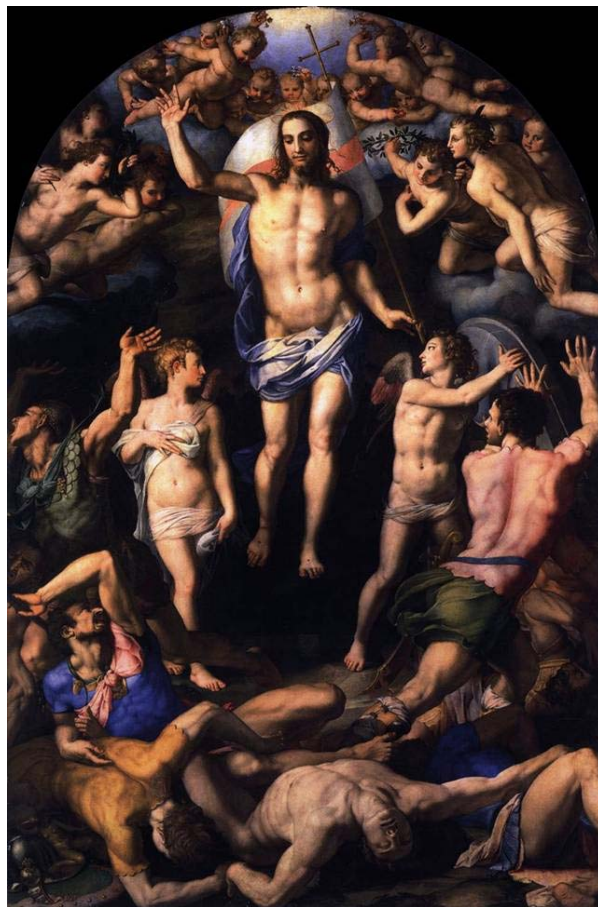


Loggia of the ancient Guadagni Palace where the Florentine “nobles” would meet in the Middle Ages. Now it is part of the Basilica of the Santissima Annunziata (“Very Holy Annunciation”) of the Servite Fathers. The Guadagni Family had a Family Chapel in the above Basilica in the Middle-Ages and a different Family Chapel next to the main altar in the Renaissance, which I think still belongs to the Family, with the large painting above the altar by artist Bronzino, where Uncle Adriano Guadagni made his First Holy Communion.





Famous Florentine Renaissance Artist Agnolo Bronzino's (1503-1572) self-portrait



Resurrection by artist Bronzino, 1552, oil on canvas, Guadagni Chapel, Basilica of Santissima Annunziata

The Guadagni “Resurrection” is Bronzino’s most elaborate free-standing composition. He first drew a large preparatory drawing in gray and brown washes with white highlights. Bronzino was appointed court-painter by Grand- Duke Cosimo de’Medici and was showered with commissions. These ranged from portraying the Medici children to completing the frescoes in the Choir of San Lorenzo. Two other famous paintings by Bronzino:

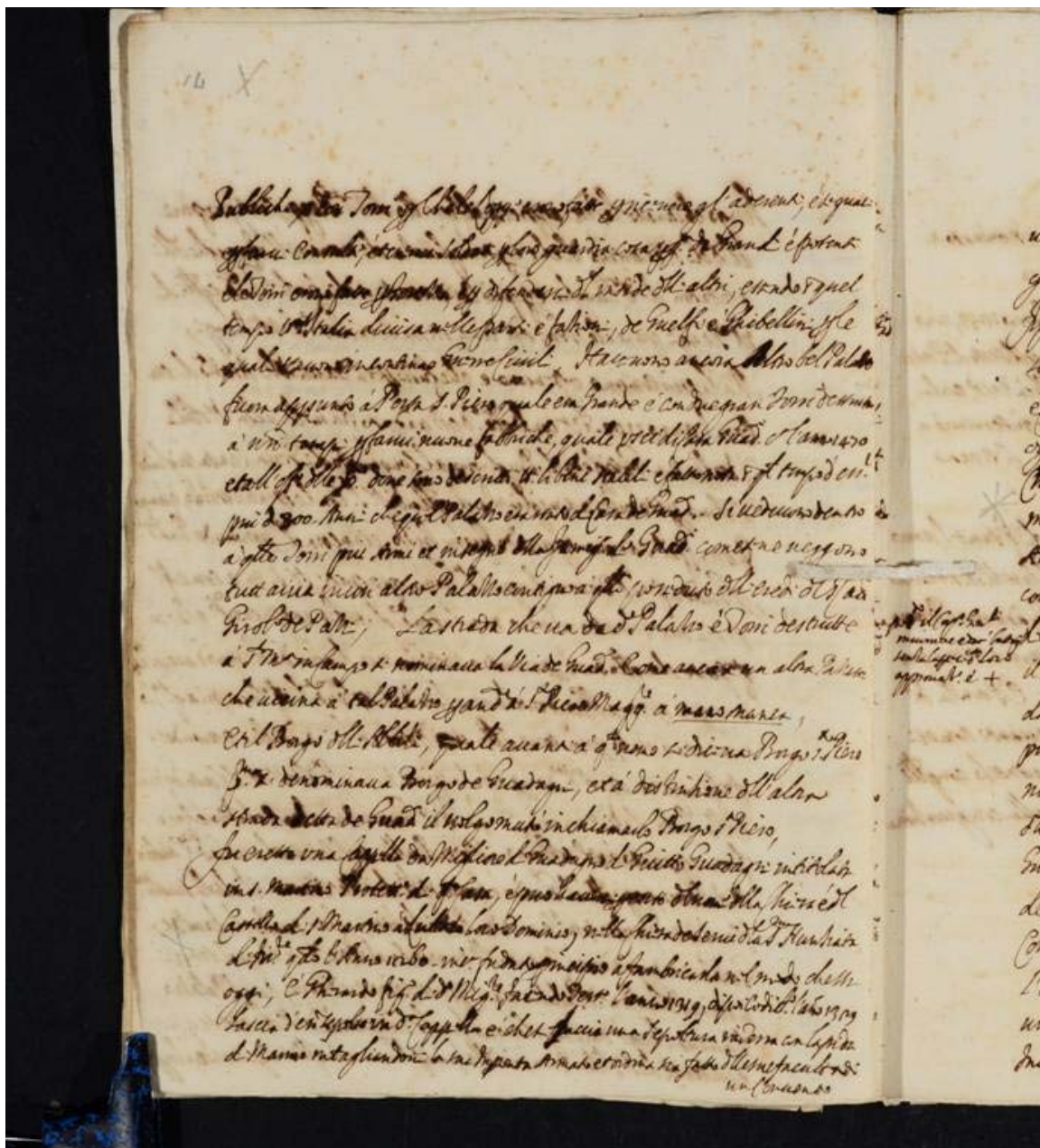


Grand-Duke Cosimo de’Medici  
with their second son, Giovanni



Cosimo’s wife, Grand-Duchess Eleanor of Toledo,

When the Guadagni commissioned Bronzino for the gigantic painting over the altar of their Santissima Annunziata Chapel, they were one of the 4 wealthiest families of Florence and the richest in France.



Page 8

In those times the Loggias and the towers were points of meeting of the participants, who kept their soldiers and their guards on high and powerful towers to protect them from their enemies' snares, as in those days Italy was divided in factions and parties, like Guelphs and Ghibellines, who waged wars against each other.

The Guadagni were still living in their beautiful palace of Porta San Piero (see picture below), which was large and had two great towers,





#### Palazzo Guadagni of Porta San Piero

which were eventually destroyed to build new buildings from the Guadagni House and in the year 1470, in the construction books of that period, we see that the above mentioned Guadagni Palace had been owned by the Guadagni Family for more than 300 years. You used to see more crests and coat-of-arms and banners of the Guadagni Family in the Guadagni towers than you could see in any other neighboring palace, except for the one of Girolamo de'Pazzi's heirs. The road of the Guadagni Palace with the destroyed towers, which goes to the Church of Santa Maria in Campo was called Guadagni Street [Interesting detail: even though this little 12<sup>th</sup> century church of Santa Maria del Campo ("Saint Mary of the Field"), one of the oldest in Florence, is 2 short blocks from the Cathedral of Florence (the "Duomo"), it has always belonged and still belongs to the Diocese of Fiesole]. Also another street that goes from the Palace on the left of the Church of San Pier Maggiore to Borgo degli Albizzi, which used to be called Borgo San Piero, used to be named Borgo de'Guadagni. And to distinguish it from the other street named Borgo de'Guadagni, the Florentines started calling the above Borgo San Piero.

Migliore son of Guadagno son of Guitto Guadagni built a chapel dedicated to Saint Martin, protector of the Guadagni Family, in the Church (now Basilica) of Santissima Annunziata in the year 1260. In the year 1319, Gherardo, son of Migliore Guadagni, built a tomb in the Church of Santa Reparata (now Duomo, built over that old church) in the chapel dedicated to Saint Martin with a marble memorial stone with his footprint carved

Page 9

They also have a Family tomb in the Church of Santa Reparata, where the Duomo, the superb temple of Santa Maria del Fiore, was built later on. Another Guadagni tomb is in the Church of San Pier Maggiore, in the cloisters now inhabited by the nuns.



Church of San Pier Maggiore in Florence. Guadagni Street is on the left of the church.

The Guadagni also have another tomb in the cloisters of the Church of Santa Croce, built in the year 1294; when the Republic of Florence



Cloisters of Santa Croce, Florence.

started to build a wall around the church, they left a shield of White Marble in an arch, made by the Guadagni when they built their tomb, with the Cross with Thorns on it. While some people



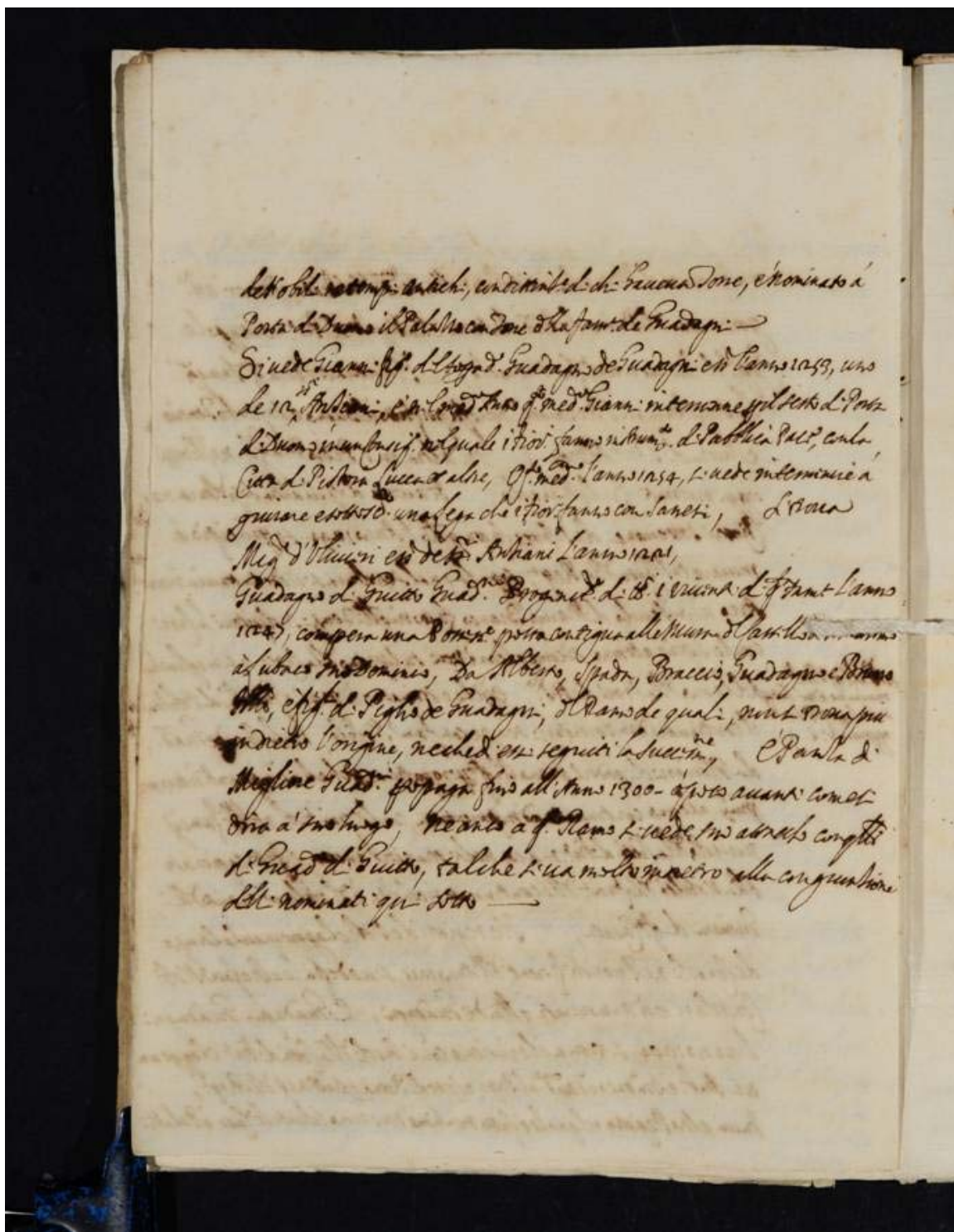
built other crosses, made of wood, like in the cemeteries, without any chapel given to them, because they wanted people to think they came from noble families and they desired to intermarry with noble families, the Guadagni Family could be proud of having full rights of intermarrying with the most noble and important families of the City of Florence, and also with foreign noble families, due to the nobility of the Guadagni Family, to its continuous wealth, and to the courage and merits of the men of its Dynasty.

In the Registers going back to the times of the Consuls and Priors in Florence of the year 1215, we can see that among the Families of Consuls, are the Guadagni, and Guadagno Guadagni in the year 1204, together with the Consuls of Florence, elected an Ambassador and Mayor to go to the Pope, at his Court in Rome, as representative of the Republic. In another Register, Houses and Palaces of the Nobles of ancient times are mentioned, having towers, and the Guadagni Family Palace with Tower is mentioned as being located in Porta del Duomo.



Medieval Papal Court in Rome:

St. Catherine of Siena brings Pope Gregory XI back to Rome in 1311, by famous Renaissance artist Giorgio Vasari



We see Gianni, son of the above mentioned Guadagno Guadagni, in the year 1253, as one of the 12 Elderlies, and in that year the same Gianni intervened for the Sixth (neighborhood) of Porta del Duomo in a Council in which the

Florentines were instruments of public peace with the cities of Pistoia, Lucca and others. In the same year, 1254, we see Gianni intervene in swearing adherence in a League that the Florentines make with the Senese, and we find Migliore, son of Ulivieri Guadagni as an Elderly in the year 1221, and Guadagno son of Guitto Guadagni, in the year 1247, buys a property adjacent to the walls of the Castle of San Martino a Lubaco from Alberto, Spada, Braccio, Guadagno and Bruno, all sons of Piglio Guadagni, of the branch of which we don't know the origin any more, nor do we know anything about their successors. And Panza son of Migliore Guadagni is known until the year 1300 – or not much longer, as we will say later on, and neither of this branch can we find a link with the branch of Guadagno son of Guitto, except way backward from the connection of the Guadagni listed below \_\_\_\_\_

THE END

[The translation of an interesting detailed Guadagni Family Tree by Rondinelli will follow]