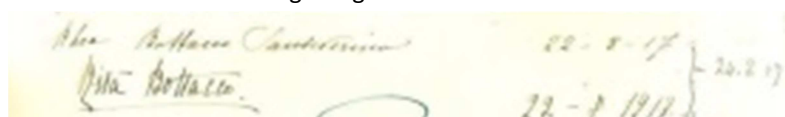


The family Bottacco and Clarence Bicknell – how did they know each other?

Rhea Bottacca Sanseverino, her husband Leopoldo Bottacco and their daughter Rita Bottacco

Edoardo Fumio of Florence contacted us on 6th April 2021 to ask for the original pictures from the "Clarence Bicknell's *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book*" which showed the entries in the handwriting of Rita Bottacco and her mother Rhea Bottacco in August 1917. Rita was Edoardo's great grandmother.



We responded affirmatively and sent the images requested. We are pleased that our publishing these works by Clarence Bicknell on the internet has enabled him to locate his ancestors' names and get in touch with us. The two pages from the Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book are the page with the signatures of Rita and Rhea, and the corresponding watercolour. The two ladies appear to have stayed two nights with Clarence Bicknell, from 22nd to 24th Aug 1917. This would have given Rhea time to walk up into the Val Fontanalba for the day of 23rd August.

We also informed Edoardo Fumio that we found both ladies in Clarence's *Book of Guests in Esperanto* in which he only entered people he liked and whose initials he painted on the walls of the Casa Fontanalba. The words about each lady are written in Esperanto and I have on file the English translation ...

"1917 - Srino Rhea Bottacca Sanseverino kiu logas en Bordighera, gentile venis de S. Dalmazzo viziti min, kaj supreniris la valon 'Fontanalba' por vidi la rokgravuraĵojn"

"1917 - Mrs Rhea Bottacca Sanseverino, who lives in Bordighera, kindly came from S. Dalmazzo to visit me, and went up to the 'Val Fontanalba' to see the rock carvings"

1917 - Fraŭlino Rita Bottacco, filino de Srino Bottazzo. Dum longa tempo, ŝi estis tre sindonema flegistino en hospitalo por vunditaj soldatoj en Cremona.

"1917 - Miss Rita Bottacco, daughter of Mrs Bottacco. For a long time she was a very devoted nurse in a hospital for wounded soldiers in Cremona."



We are hoping that Edoardo Fumio will show the images to his grandmother to see what memories are triggered. We have permitted him to publish them on social media or the internet, giving some credit like "Images are courtesy of the Bicknell family, www.clarencebicknell.com".

We asked Edoardo

“What else do you know about Rita and Rhea? How did they know Clarence? What was Rhea's occupation, and what did Rita do apart from nursing soldiers in Cremona? If you could write a piece about the two ladies I would be pleased to publish it in Italian and French on our web site and to tell people in St Dalmas. Please also tell me about yourself, where you live and your occupation (Arch... are you an architect of houses or commercial buildings?). All this is very interesting to us and to those that love Clarence's work.”

Edoardo replied

“I attached a portrait of Rita that my grandmother has in her house of Florence. My grandmother unfortunately has few memories about her mother Rita, because she died in Crema in 1935 and my grandmother was only 2 years old. But everything she knows about her was told by her father, Rita's husband Antonio Vimercati Bonzi. Antonio is my great grandfather.

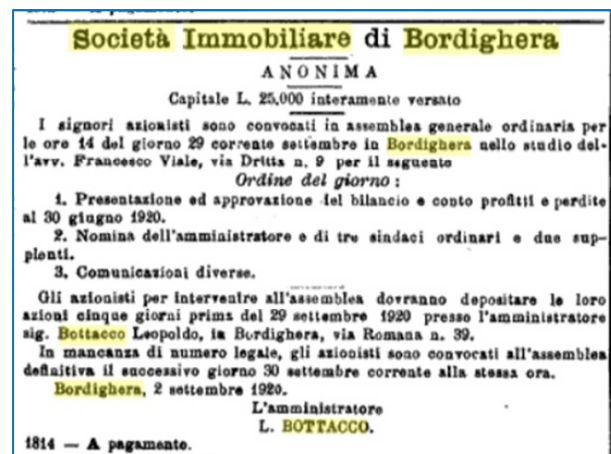


“I did not know how they knew Mr. Clarence Bicknell, but I found that Leopoldo Bottacco, Rhea's husband was an A.D. of SOCIETÀ ANONIMA IMMOBILIARE DI BORDIGHERA. In the pictures that I attach is written that Leopoldo Bottacco stayed in Bordighera, via Romana n. 39, where there is the Museo Clarence Bicknell. Maybe you could help me to understand the connection about Mr Clarence and Leopold.”

“From 1970 my family is moved to Florence, I'm Born in Florence in 1991 and I'm an architect of interior design for home and commercial. I'm very interested about the past of my family and of my heritage. I think that we are a part of our past.”

I also found two references to Mr Bottacco and the company involved with the Kursaal in Bordighera (see web links next page).

The questions remain... how did Clarence know the Bottacco family? What made the two ladies close enough to Clarence that he put them in the Esperanto book for special friends? What was the reason for the domiciliation of Bottacco's real estate company at the same address as the Museo Bicknell?



Marcus Bicknell
7th April 2021

Search notes from Marcus 7 April 2021...

Leopoldo Bottacco stamp collector

https://www.rpsl.org.uk/gplstatic/BL_CrawfordDocs/016676789/016676789_EwensWSN_1903.pdf

Leopoldo Bottacco military colonel

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Ge8tjMlwtJsC&pg=PA2819&lpg=PA2819&dq=Leopoldo+Bottacco&source=bl&ots=NeO8CcupIS&sig=ACfU3U3_6AypHCOP65OkfnvKms2m5IWwUw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwievjsjAv-zvAhXEhf0HHbyMA60Q6AEwB3oECAoQAw#v=onepage&q=Leopoldo%20Bottacco&f=false

Reference to a Bottacco (Bottacco?) and the Kursaal of Bordighera

<http://www.bordighera.net/bordighera-le-ricerche-di-ampeglio-verrando-e-anna-maria-ceriolo-sulla-punta-di-s-ampelio-n35139>

Reference to Bottacco in the Belgian court papers on the financial affairs of the Kursaal of Bordighera

<https://bib.kuleuven.be/rbib/collectie/archieven/rps/1927/1927-2-065.pdf>

Reference to Bottacco Carlo <http://www.bordighera.net/bordighera-novella-gloria-dal-taggiasco-prima-parte-n22978>