

Before starting the new Guadagni Archives collection titled **“Deposition of Mr. Roberto de Ricci on the proofs of Knight of Malta Guglielmo Guadagni”**, I will add a few more details on our great-great-stepdad Giovanni Villani and on the painting of “The Last Judgement” by Giovanni da Modena in the Cathedral of Bologna, which are interesting. Giovanni Villani (1276-1348) married young widow Monna de’ Pazzi Guadagni in 1330, when he was fifty-four years old and she was twenty-six.



Saint Mary-Magdalene de’Pazzi (1566-1607)

She was a great-great-niece of our direct ancestor Monna de’Pazzi and so a cousin of all of us.

Monna had lost her husband Vieri Guadagni seven years before, in 1323, when he was only 20 and she was 19, and left her with an only child, Migliore, born in 1322, one year before his death. Vieri, son of Matteo, had only one sister, Piera, who became a Dominican nun, and three first cousins, all girls, daughters of his uncle Guadagno, Piera, Eletta and Fia. So Monna de’Pazzi Guadagni was left a widow when she was only nineteen, with a little baby, Migliore, who was the only heir of the Guadagni Family. Migliore had distant Guadagni cousins but their branches became extinct shortly afterwards. So we owe it to stepgrandad Giovanni Villani if Migliore Guadagni had a happy childhood with two parents and became a very important influential person in the Republic of Florence: Migliore became a Florentine Ambassador, one of the twelve “buonomini”, a Prior, a Ward Captain, Treasurer of the Monte, Vicar of Valdinievole, Captain of the People, six times Gonfalonier of Justice (President of the Republic of Florence), Podesta’ (“Mayor”) of Volterra, Podesta’ of the City of San Gimignano, again Prior and Captain of the People, one of the Ten of Freedom, Commissary of the Republic, Captain of the Guelph Party.



Volterra



San Gimignano

Eventually, as we see in Family Tree # 2, Migliore had one son, Vieri, named after his Dad, and five daughters, (Sister) Francesca (nun), Agnoletta, Nanna, Niccolosa and Iacopa. Vieri Junior had two sons, Bernardo and Vieri, the former married three times and had 6 sons, two Antonios (the 1st died as a child), Nicola, Piero, Giovanni and Filippo, and one daughter, Francesca, the latter had 4 sons, Francesco, Simone (from whom we all descend, Guadagni, Torrigiani Dufour Berte and offsprings), Migliore and Manno, and 5 daughters, Ginevra, Niccolosa, Margherita, Maddalena and Cassandra.

So from being close to extinction when Giovanni Villani married Monna de'Pazzi Guadagni, the Guadagni increased in numbers and prospered financially and politically, until a few generations later they became one of the four richest families of Florence, the richest family in France and eventually, of all of Europe.

Giovanni Villani was a banker, official diplomat and chronicler from Florence who later wrote the "New Chronicles" on the history of Florence. He was a leading statesman of Florence but later gained an unsavory reputation and served time in prison as a result of bankruptcy of a trading and

banking company he worked for. The Catholic Church, a young French Priest told me when I was telling him about our step-great-grandad Giovanni Villani in Hell in the fresco of the Cathedral of Bologna, does not have the right to send anybody to Hell as its mission is to save people from going to Hell, and they don't know who repents himself at the last moment or not. So the fact that Villani is in Hell is an oral tradition due to his being poured molten gold in his throat by a devil, a punishment for "barratry" of which he had been accused (the old man with a white beard in da Modena's fresco), and of his having many children (that is not a sin but a way to recognize him, I presume he was known to have had many children), with his first wife that he married when he was 31 (he was a widower when he married Monna), but as far as we know and hope he "repented at the last moment, or when he met and married Monna", and we will find him in Heaven when we die. I also read some of his "Chronicles", full of life, excitement, action, written in perfect Italian, I thought I was reading a contemporary 21st century writer. I am sure somebody who writes so well can only go to Heaven. Mohammed on the other hand, in the same fresco, has his name written underneath him, infuriating some Moslems who think it is offensive for Islam to have their founder in Hell, and so recently, twice, in 2003 and 2007, Moslems guerrillas (El Quaeda, the ones who blew up the Twin Towers, tried in 2003) tried to blow up the San Petronio Cathedral of Bologna, but were found and stopped in time by the Italian Police.



Fresco by Giovanni da Modena in the Chapel of the Magi in the Basilica of San Petronio (Saint Petronius), Bologna; step-great-great-grandfather Giovanni Villani is kneeling in the extreme far left lower corner while a devil is pouring molted gold in his mouth, and Mohammed is lying on the ochre color rock on the top right of Lucifer with his left naked foot almost touching the top of Lucifer's head.



Interior of the Basilica of San Petronio; the abovementioned famous chapel is on one side.



Façade of the Basilica of San Petronio, Bologna.

Carabinieri (Italian Police), in combat, in traffic, in grand uniform.





An interesting family relationship for all of us, which Monna de'Pazzi Guadagni reminded me of:



as we remember, on April 26, 1478, (see picture above) the Pazzi Family made an attempt to assassinate Lorenzo de'Medici and his brother Giuliano, to stop them from becoming too powerful and changing the Republic of Florence into a Medici ruled Monarchy. Lorenzo was wounded but survived, Giuliano was killed. The Pazzi were banished but later returned in peace. This plot is very important in the History of Florence, as its failure served to strengthen the position of the Medici, who later became Granddukes and rulers of Florence. As Guadagni, we are related to both.

Thanks to Francesca Tornabuoni, **wife of Vieri Guadagni (b. 1369)** and aunt of Lucrezia Tornabuoni, wife of Piero de'Medici the Gouty and mother of Lorenzo the Magnificent and Giuliano de'Medici, we are cousins of the Medici; thanks to our direct ancestor Monna de'Pazzi, **wife of Vieri Guadagni (+1323), great-grandfather of the Vieri above**, we are direct descendants of the Pazzi.



Pazzi Palace in Florence