

# THE MORONI FAMILY



**P**alazzo Moroni was built by Francesco Moroni. He was born in Bergamo in 1606 and died in 1674. The Moroni family had moved to Bergamo fifty years previously from Albino, a town in the Seriana Valley about eight miles from the city. Francesco was a landowner and silk merchant, and had made the most of the ascending social status and economic prosperity of the family, which had begun in the time of his great-grandfather Battistino Moroni (1503-1556). **The palazzo was built in a strategic location within the city**, on one of the main access roads that led ultimately to Venice via the St Augustine Gate. **It constituted a showcase for the Moroni family to stake their claim as they found themselves competing with the other well-established noble families.** Count Antonio Moroni (1919-2009) bequeathed the palazzo to the Palazzo Moroni Museum Foundation (2009) for the benefit of all. In 2019 the Foundation entrusted this gift to FAI - Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano (the National Trust for Italy) so that it could be enjoyed more widely.



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## DID YOU KNOW...?

The source of the Moroni family's fortune was the cultivation of mulberry trees, which became the emblem of their surname. In the local dialect the word for mulberry tree, "murù", sounds very similar to the family name, and so from the start they were known as the "Murù".

After 1783 the Imperial Eagle was added to their coat of arms to represent the title of Count and Knight bestowed upon Antonio Moroni by the Duke of Saxony-Weimar. It was at this point that the dynasty acquired noble status.



Albino in a historic photo



Palazzo Moroni in Stezzano in a 20<sup>th</sup>-century postcard

The Moroni family is one of the oldest in the Bergamo area, tracing their origins back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century and specifically to the the Moroni branch that hailed from Albino in the Seriana Valley, which descended from Marco, originally embedded in the peripheral area of Bondo and concerned for the most part with farming.

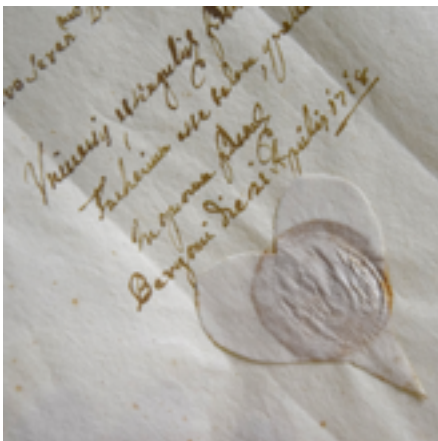
One noteworthy member of the Moroni family was **Battistino di Ambrogio di Moretto** (1503-1556). A prominent figure in Albino, he was a wealthy cloth merchant whose fortune derived partly from his management of the town's excise duty. In the 1540s Battistino owned a

business and warehouse in Bergamo itself, on Via Gombito. His son, **Francesco** (1540-1623), who was also a cloth merchant, lived in the building on Via Gombito while retaining his property and contacts in Albino. He became the founder of the Bergamo branch of the Moroni family.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the family business continued with **Alessandro, Giovan Antonio, Giovan Battista** and **Alberto**. **Alberto Moroni** (1573-1606) died shortly after the birth of his son, also called **Francesco** (1606- 1674), who was then placed in the care of his paternal grandfather, **Francesco di Battis-**

**tino** (1540-1623). The expansion of the silk industry in the 17<sup>th</sup> century led the family to invest large sums in mulberry cultivation. The family thus moved to Bergamo to have greater control over their affairs, becoming key players in the local textile industry.

Francesco Moroni (1606-1674) married Lucrezia Roncalli, from one of the most important families in Bergamo, in 1631. Having received a dowry of 10,000 scudi in addition to the inheritance, he commissioned the building of the palazzo for his wife and their children.



Document from the Archive with a wax seal overlaid with a cut-out of a heart (1718)



Vaccination certificate for Pietro Moroni (1887), Palazzo Moroni Archive



Via Porta Dipinta covered in snow, pictured in the winter of 1976