



VILLA CAMPERIO

Villa Camperio is probably the most ancient building present in Villasanta, after the demolition of an old church of the town occurred at the end of XVIII century. Every publication concerning Villa Camperio reports 1696 as date of construction: but nowadays the only element considered as officially dating the structure is a stone on the wall beside the arch entrance with 1673 engraved on it.

The reports about its origins are very few: the building was part of the properties owned by Secchi family which, at the end of XVII century, became related by marriage to Casnedi, a family of marquis. What is sure, is the importance the building had at the time for the town. In fact, in the yard of Villa Camperio were celebrated religious ceremonies because of the lack of other proper spaces in town (the people were too much for the few churches). Moreover, Villa Camperio had a little private church (built in 1620) dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to the Saints Francis of Assisi and Charles Borromeo. It was used also for religious public celebrations until its demolition which occurred in 1740 by order of marquis Ottavio Casnedi because of the restoration of the structure.

After being property of Casnedi, Villa Camperio became part of Confalonieri properties: in fact, Federico Confalonieri's mother was marchioness Antonia Casnedi herself. Moreover, he was exiled here in 1815 by Austrian government because of his political credo. In 1818 Villa Camperio was bought by Carlo Camperio, father of Manfredo. The whole building (including its gardens) was property of Camperio family until 1975 when it was sold to the municipality: nowadays, here stands the Public Library and the "ASL" (the Italian public utility for health).

The building is structured as a courtyard: three wings arranged in the shape of a horseshoe making a rectangular yard at the centre of which there's a fountain. In front of it, the main arch entrance, probably built later. The central building has a colonnade. After the restoration of 1975, almost every original decor was lost so there is almost nothing left to evidence the past times, except for some huge fireplaces present in the rooms at first floor of the central building and a ceiling in wood paneled with decorations. The rich collection of objects, travel relics and artistic items,

collected during years by Camperio family, was completely sold or lost, save their private library in addition to a good number of pictures and documents which is what today is commonly known as “Fondo Camperio” (a sort of archive group).

The gardens, too, once full of fountains, paths and many statues, are today smaller and very different considering that they are used as public gardens.