

THE BAILIFF

The bailiff was the person who traditionally attended to all the farm's needs and lived there with his family.

He took care of the cultivations, having a knowledge of every technical aspect, from ploughing to pruning to harvesting.

He would run all the work on the farm: routine and special maintenance of the roofs and estate buildings, the storage and sale of foodstuffs. He would tidy up the estate paths, repair the dry stone walls himself and build, when necessary, walls, partitions and floors. He would supervise the grape harvests, being skilled in the art of wine-making, look after the old chestnut casks and the wine right up to the moment it was sold. It was his job to recruit and manage staff, negotiate, and keep an initial note of debit and credit.

In short, he possessed many skills.

The bailiff on this farm, until he recently passed away at the age of 84, was "**Don Antonino**" Di Mauro. Thanks to him it was possible to rebuild the big entrance gate, which had previously been knocked down (in about 1935) to facilitate transit for the lorries that loaded up the wine for the port of [Riposto](#), where they would leave for northern Europe.

On summer evenings "Don Antonino" used to sit under the [Fico](#) (fig tree) and tell the old stories passed down from his grandfathers, which had happened around the farm. He remembered how frightened they had felt during the war when they could hear the thunder of the mortars, and how the whole family ran towards [the wood](#) to hide in a cave, now a foxes' lair, and the time when a small howitzer hit a wall nearby.

"**Don Antonino**" was born in the 'high house' at a time when two bailiff families lived on the farm. He grew up here and took over his father and grandfather's duties. When the premises adjoining the main farm building became free, he moved in with his wife Alfia and brought up their four children Alfia, Saro, Giuseppina and Alfio there, whilst carrying out his duties competently and lovingly. His eleven grandchildren also grew up on the farm - a happy atmosphere was always present.



La
Casetta
Alta

