

HISTORY OF DERMATOLOGY

## THE ANCIENT ARCHIVE OF THE FIRST DERMATOLOGICAL HOSPITAL IN EUROPE

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**Background:** The Santa Maria and San Gallicano Hospital has its origins in the past, its history dates back almost three hundred years, and it was the first with a dermatological mission in Europe. It was founded by Pope Benedict XIII, on suggestion of Cardinal Corradini who had known don Emilio Lami's apostolic work. This priest was dedicated to the shelter and care of the poor population affected by skin diseases, at that time rejected by the nosocomia of Rome. The construction of the building was entrusted to the architect Raguzzini, who brought there several innovative health engineering interventions. As can be seen from a memorial epigraph of the hospital dated to the year of the jubilee 1725, still present, it was dedicated to the care of all the neglected persons affected by skin diseases.

**Observation:** Recently, we rediscovered archival registers of the Institute dated in the 19th and 20th centuries. Of particular interest are those of the historical period between 1815 – the year of the famous Vienna Congress – to 1870 – the year of the annexation of Rome to the Kingdom of Italy. Equally significant are the registers of the historical interval between the First and the Second World Wars. In these documents it's possible to find in-patients' name, surname, profession and dermatological disease.

**Key message:** From the end of the Nineteenth century, under the direction of Dr. Pietro Schilling, the treatment of venereal diseases was introduced inside the hospital – previously excluded – especially syphilis and gonorrhea, as was found in the archival testimonies, which also included medical prescriptions, different from antibiotics and penicillin, not yet discovered.