

RTP 522p

Bartolomeo  
Colleoni

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A short historical notice  
of his life and of his  
monument

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Tiffany & Co. New-York  
MCMVIII

Georges Pelissier.

RTP 532p

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Tiffany & Co., New-York  
MCMVIII

A Monsieur S. Reinach  
hommage très respectueux

plissier





Bartolomeo Colleoni

was born in Bergamo  
in the year 1400. —

Son of a Guelfo, which  
the Visconti's had turned out  
of Bergamo, Bartolomeo  
had seen his father killed  
by traitors, who were men-

- bers of his own family.

Both he and his mother were held prisoners by the murderers, but he succeeded in escaping from the Castle della Rocca, only to fall into the hands of the tyrant of Cremona who put him back in prison on account of the debts of his family.

As soon as he was out of prison, Bartolomeo



entered the service of the Venitian Republic, under the orders of Carnagnola.

He fought against the Duke of Milan, Ph. Visconti, vanquished the grand General Sforza and the terrible Piccinus.

He then passed in the enemy's Camp, under the Duke of Milan. —

In 1448 he left him to serve again under the

flag of the Republic of Venice, which was not an unusual conduct for Condottieres and Mercenaries of that time.

At 52 years of age, Colleoni made a contract for life with the Republic of Venice, and was appointed Chief General of the troops of the Republic.

His pride, at times

got the better of his judgment; he translated his name as "Caput Leonis" (Lion's head)

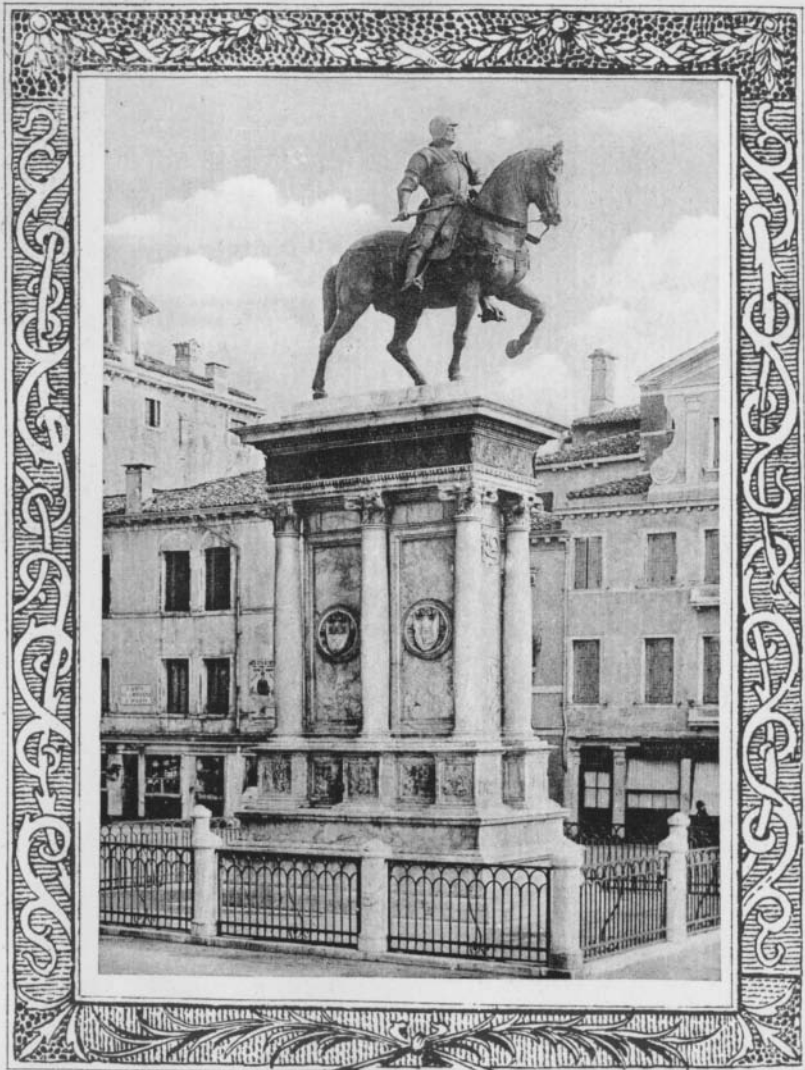
He bestowed on himself the honor of an equestrian statue.

Having left by his will large amounts to the Senate of Venice<sup>(1)</sup>, he accompanied his gift by a petition requesting that his Equestrian Statue be

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(1) *Pingue heredita*

erected on the Place S<sup>t</sup> Marc  
in Venice. — The Senate,  
not being able to erect  
the statue on this Place  
in consequence of an an-  
cient law forbidding ob-  
-ventions of any kind, and  
on the other hand, de-  
-siring of not losing the  
benefit of the gift, issued  
a decree, directing that it  
should be erected on the  
Place of the "Confrérie de S<sup>t</sup> Marc"



*The Colleoni monument in Venice*

"Scuola di San Marco"  
so that the words "Piazza"  
and "San Marco" mentio-  
-ned on the will, should  
also appear on the decree.

Andrea del Verro-  
-chio, master of the cele-  
-brated Leonardo di  
Vinci, was appointed for  
the modelling and execu-  
-tion of the monument.

Vasari states that  
Verocchio, whilst finishing

finishing the modelling of  
the Horse, learned that  
another artist, Vellano of  
Padua, was on the point  
of securing, through under-  
hand proceedings and the  
protection of certain patri-  
-cians, the order for the  
figure of the rider. Verrocchio  
in a rage, broke the legs  
and the head of the horse  
and fled to Florence.  
The Senate offended, infor-

-med him that if he  
dared to return to Venice  
again, they would cut his  
head off. The sculptor  
answered that he would  
take great care not to  
return as the "Serenissimes"  
"Lords would be at a  
"much greater loss to  
"replace his head on  
"his shoulders, if they  
"ever wished to do so,  
"than he, to replace that

" of the Lion " This answer, showing that he was ready to finish the work, was accepted and he was authorized to return to Venice. - He resumed his work with such fervour that he caught cold and died.

Verrocchio, dying, left the work unfinished. In his will, dated 1488, he begs the Republic of Venice to allow the " work of the

by certain historians to  
Leopardi; but it is diffi-  
cult to admit that Verro-  
chio did conceive an equi-  
-estrian figure otherwise  
than in it's total; that  
he would have modelled  
a horse and not the rider.  
The passion of Verocchio  
when he learnt that ano-  
-ther sculptor was to get  
the order for the rider,  
proves that he had already



Horse" to be finished by his pupil Lorenzo di. Credi, but the Senate preferred the Venitian Leopardi, who was entrusted with the casting of the statue, and the designing and execution of the pedestal<sup>(1)</sup> to the Florentine artist Lorenzo.

This is the reason why the figure of the rider Colleoni, was attributed

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(1) perficere equum et statuam.



conceived the whole model  
and if in his will he  
mentions the "work of the  
Horse" "Opus Equi" <sup>(1)</sup>  
it is absolutely doubtless  
that he means the whole  
monument. -

The name of Verrocchio  
does not appear, it is  
true in the inscription  
on the girths of the Horse  
reading:

ALEXANDER. LEOPARDVS.  
V.F. OPVS.

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(1) opus equi per me principiato

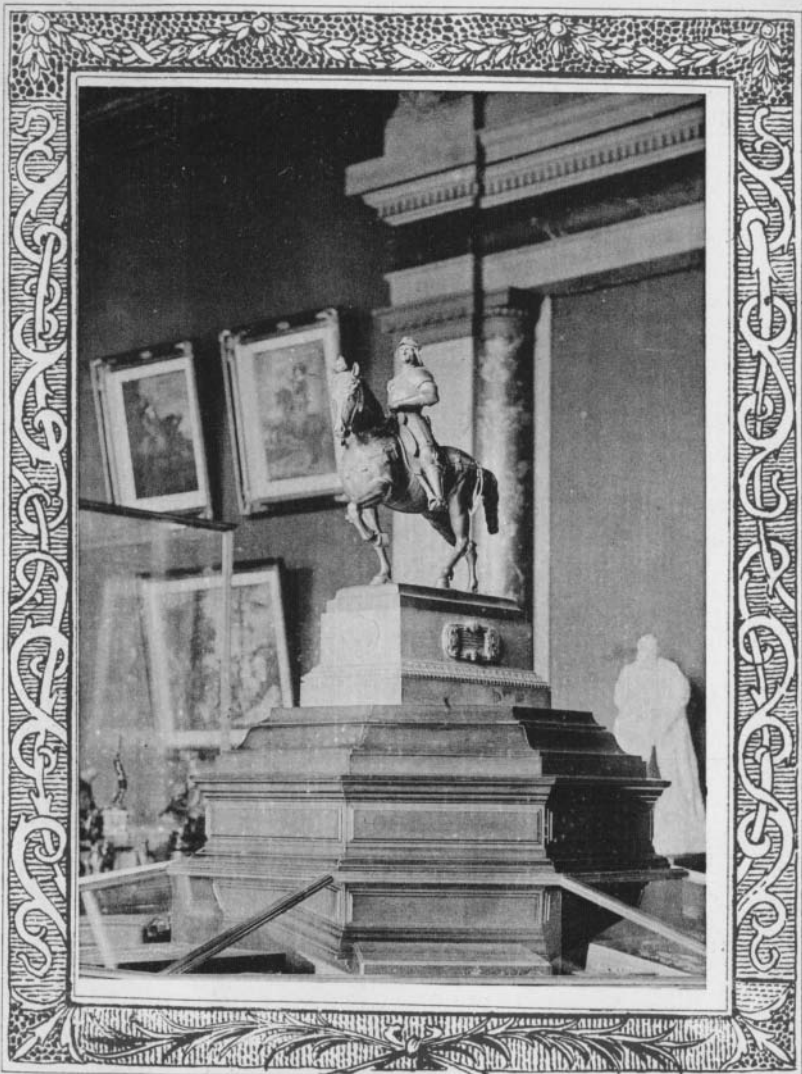
but V.F., can be translated  
by "venetus Fundit"  
as well as "venetus Fecit"  
He has signed as founder  
and not as author.

Besides this, he takes the  
precaution, in order not  
to rob the glory of the  
real author of this superb  
monument, by hiding  
his own name under the  
house's stomach. But  
the best, and we can say

the absolute proof of this  
is his epitaph, which  
he composed himself, and  
which is in the convent  
"della Madonna del Orto"  
where one can read that  
he has made the pedestal  
of the Colleoni Statue  
"la base del cavallo  
di B. Colleoni". It is  
doubtless that if he had  
made the rider, he would  
have also mentioned it.

This monument of  
a rare beauty, is recogni-  
-zed to be the best of  
all the equestrian statues  
of the epoch, even the  
famous Gattamelata by  
Donatello.

In 1855, Chiers,  
President of the French  
Republic in 1871, a  
great connoisseur and  
collectionneur, asked the  
Austrian Government



*The Colleoni statue in the Louvre*

who possessed Venice at that time, the authorisation to have a reduction made of this monument. This was executed by Ramus and was the first reduction ever made, at least in France. The first and unique cast, is now in the Louvre. When it was cast M<sup>r</sup> Chiers had the model and mould

destroyed, but after  
his death this piece  
having been presented  
to the Louvre, with all  
his collections, according  
to his will, became  
National property, and  
was remoulded. - The  
statue herewith is a repli-  
-ca of the one in the  
Louvre.



*[Signature]*  
1908