

# 1. SCHOOL AND HOME IN SARDINIA

*To Francesco Gramsci*

[SANTULUSSURGIU, JUNE 1908]<sup>1</sup>

Dearest father,

If you can do so in time, do not send the money order by telegraph but send the money by post, and send it on Tuesday; if not, it doesn't matter. However the Director at Oristano has written again to say that we have to pay 120 lire, not just 100. Professor Stara has told us to pay now, so as not to get into an argument before the examination, out of some huffiness, and then try to claim the money back if possible;<sup>2</sup> send me 120, then, or get the receipt at Ghilarza. The birth cert[ificate] I have here is on plain paper, and for the exam it has to be on revenue-stamped paper. Given that, you ought to have sent the money order to the municipal authority in Ales, and not through the mayor; a lot of trouble for nothing, so hurry up, then, and make completely sure it's on revenue-stamped paper. If you have sent the money order, send a telegram to let me know. In the meantime, I'm sending the other documents, asking the Director to put my name on the official exam list anyway. You can write to uncle at Oristano, since it may be that I will go off on the 21st or 22nd and go directly to Oristano, if not I'm going to make a fool of myself at Ghilarza; certainly, I'm absolutely not going to pass the exam at the first attempt because in six months we've only just dipped into the coursework, without doing anything of any consequence. Everything is up to chance; I can pass in everything or they can fail me in everything just like that; so no certainty whatever; and I don't want you then to come out with useless reproaches; I'm warning you beforehand; I want them to pass me at the 2nd exam session. Pay attention, then; 120 lire, birth cert[ificate] on revenue-stamped paper, otherwise no exam: there's no getting away from it, and pay attention that for exam purposes,

the birth cert[ificate] is needed on official revenue-stamped paper. Only for other things on plain paper, but now with the revenue stamp. Hurry up, then, if you don't, it's good-bye to everything. If you don't pay at Ghilarza, send me the money order or the insured registered letter tomorrow so that I can send it to Oristano. Kisses to everyone and good luck.

Your most aff[ection]ate,

Nino

Source: *Archivio Antonio Gramsci (AAG)*

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### *To Francesco Gramsci*

[CAGLIARI, NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1908]

Dearest father,

With the money order you sent me you promised to write, but I don't know why you thought I had moved and it was just a matter of luck that the order arrived together with a postcard at the right address, so it did arrive but I don't know what's happened to the letter. If you have in fact sent it, let me know at once because I'm going to try and track it down.

You did well to send me on another five lire because I've had to pay 1 lira 20 for the official school result sheet, and 60 centesimi to make the official request to be exempted from gymnastics, and you can imagine the rest!

I'd appreciate it if you would let the agent know that he should send me the money that is owed me<sup>3</sup> because, if I don't get it within a week, I'll write to him myself, because I really need it since I have to buy some instalments of the Petrocchi dictionary, given that you obviously don't want to bother about it, and all this so that I don't lose what I've spent up to now.

See to the middle school leaving certificate as soon as possible because if I can't hand it in within a week, I'll be suspended from lessons, as the head teacher has already made absolutely clear.

Send this month's *Secolo XX* ['*Twentieth Century*'] to me too, because I need it, together with the other things that have arrived for me, as well as the *Tribuna Illustrata*, as my mother had promised.

Send on the Greek books that I wrote to you about, because they're of very great use to me for the revision for this term's work.<sup>4</sup>

I hope you'll remember me at Christmas. I'll send you some music magazines for Grazietta and Emma, and for Teresina too.<sup>5</sup>

A big kiss for mother, Grazietta, Emma, Teresina, Mario, Carlo and you.

Lots of kisses from your very aff[ection]ate

Nino

*Source: AAG*

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### *To Francesco Gramsci*

CAGLIARI, 14 JANUARY 1909

Dearest father,

Unfortunately yet again I'm having to write to you to ask you for money. That's plain to see! You sent a message with Chicchino saying you'd be sending the rest shortly, but there's still no sign of it. Well, I'm waiting! It seems clear now that I don't write except when I have to ask for something; I'm always afraid you're not going to send the money on time and that I'll have to beg the landlady to wait for the rent. In the meantime, you've sent me 30 lire, I have to pay the rent, we're already at the fifteenth of the month, I've nothing left and I don't know how I'm going to manage. Well, all right. In the meantime, no one is sending me the money for books, and I can truly say this year has gone splendidly. I've never had a coin in my pocket, because with 45 lire there's nothing to spare at all; indeed if I weren't with Nannaro there just wouldn't be enough to live on.<sup>6</sup> During the holidays I've had to make sacrifices, whereas with my constitution it would have done me good to relax and enjoy myself, and now I'm having to stay sacrificed just the same. But it's clear that patience is the one thing that isn't lacking. By now I'm tired of repeating myself over and over again, you turn a deaf ear, and I can't do anything about it. At least when I'm grown up I'm going to remember that I've never had a happy moment in my life. Always with the nightmare of tomorrow hanging over me. At least you could have told me first: spend your money because I can't see to everything. Then I'd have

been able to manage some way and wouldn't have found myself so much off keel. Just think well on all this and you'll see that I'm right. A kiss to everyone, from Nannaro as well. Lots of kisses.

Nino

*Source: AAG*



*To Francesco Gramsci (AAG)*

[CAGLIARI, JANUARY 1909]

Dearest father,

I've finally been told my average marks for the term. Certainly they ought to have been different, but that's not my fault, because as Nannaro has perhaps written to tell you, I was off school suspended for three days for not having brought my middle school leaving certificate, right during the days of the end-of-term exams. This meant I didn't get a mark for Natural History, while in History I only got 5. The teacher even gave me a good telling off, but it wasn't my fault at all, because I was always writing to you for it: send me the diploma, but you turned a deaf ear. Despite all that I got through reasonably well, because for Natural History the two marks in the 2nd and 3rd terms are sufficient, and in History it would indeed be strange if I didn't come back up to scratch. These are the marks:

Italian	written	6	oral	8
Latin	idem	6/7	idem	7
Greek		6		7
Philosophy				6
Mathematics				6
Chemistry				8

As you see, my results are reasonably good, and you have to remember that this is the first term, and I didn't come from Santulussurgiu with the best preparation, especially in Latin, Greek and mathematics.

Please do send me my monthly allowance straight away, which I hope will be 50 lire because I'm finding myself up against it, since the forwarding agent didn't send the money on and here am I with a

subscription to a newspaper, so I had to borrow money from Piredda and I've now got to pay him back. I hope you'll speak to the forwarding agent, because this is called really making a fool of people;<sup>7</sup> if you don't then I'll write and let him have a piece of my mind and then we'll see what's what. As regards the Dictionary, let me know by letter, otherwise I'm going to sell everything and that'll be that. Tell Teresina to write to me, tell her I'll always send the magazine on to her and that I'll send her the stamps, too, so she can send me on the *Tribuna Illustrata*. Write back immediately because I'm waiting. Lots of kisses to mother, and to all three of you. Yours aff[ectionately]

Nino

And all best wishes from Gigina Badalotti and the Piellucci family

Source: AAG



### *To Francesco Gramsci and to Giuseppina Marcias*

[CAGLIARI, 18 MARCH 1909]

Dearest father,

I wouldn't have disturbed you for all the gold in the world because I understand all the sacrifices you're making, and with what I'm able to do I'm trying to play my part, but absolute and extreme necessity have given me the courage of a lion. I can already imagine your face after reading these introduction: it's money, that's predictable enough. And on that you're right. It seems to me that up to now I've had enough to keep me happy, and moreover I'm not expecting you to fork out, just to give me an advance to take care of what his Lordship the forwarding agent should have already sent me five months ago. Believe you me that if it hadn't been because of you, because of your position as regards the agency, I would have really made my voice heard and gone right to the manager.

How can I tell you about all my odysseys in Cagliari where, totally inexperienced, I found myself unexpectedly without any money. Then, to cap matters, a school friend went off back to his village taking with him my last 5 lire. I don't believe your father's heart won't be moved, even more because you will then get the money back from the agent: but I beg and pray of you to send the money on without delay today, because

Piredda hasn't any and neither has Putzolu, the landlady won't lend any and I'm at my wit's end, in a foul mood and you know my easily excitable temperament. And then there are the end-of-term exams, just to put me in a good mood! and I have to stay at home with this injured foot of mine, with the sun shining outside, and with the constant thought in my head that we're still only at the 18th of the month: there's enough to make stronger heads than mine go into a spin. For all these reasons, I beg of you, if I'm still a presence in your thoughts, let yourself be moved, do a good deed, something that will cost you nothing and which I certainly will know how to repay. I'll see, if not it's certainly going to be an unhappy Easter for me this year. Once again, kisses

to everyone and a special prayer to you

yours, Nino

Dearest mother

Although I have no great propensity for the saints in general, still, following the usual practices I'm sending you greetings for your saint's day tomorrow, greetings that are no less ardent for not being accompanied by high-sounding phrases. Certainly I would much have liked to see you together with the others (I've never been away from home for so long before), but a series of events do not allow me to come back, with what anguish you can imagine. Assure Grazietta that for Easter I'll send on to her 'La Montanina' with Putzolu as well as some other publications, but if it is not to their liking, don't put the blame on me, since I don't understand these things, and my school friends play the piano rather than the rustic mandolin.<sup>8</sup> Enjoy yourself during the festivities, singing and dancing; I'll amuse myself looking at the bare walls of my room because, just like last year, all the skin has rubbed off my foot, I can put my shoes on only to go to school, and even then only by ignoring the pain. Kiss everyone and to you, again with my greetings,

lots of kisses from your most aff[ection]ate

Nino

*Source: AAG*



*To Francesco Gramsci*CAGLIARI, 5 NOVEMBER [1909]<sup>9</sup>

Dearest father,

Yesterday was the first day at school; not all the staff is there as yet, but lessons have started all the same and we've been told at least part of the books that we have to buy.

Chicchino hasn't found lodgings yet and I've taken a room on a daily basis where I have my meals with Nannaro, but we'll now have to rent a room for at least a month.

You'll have to tell Putzolu that the head teacher hasn't yet got here, and that the teacher who is here doesn't want to hand anything over to us until the head arrives.

There's also a message from Mario for Raffaele Corrias to say that I've been to Ghera who told me I have to pay 50 centesimi for secretarial fees, and another 1 lira 20 centesimi for having a copy made of the leaving certificate from the Middle High School; he should write to me saying what should be done on this.

Nannaro has said that you should use what was left from the money for the partridges to have a shirt made for him, which you can send with Coghe.<sup>10</sup> Please also send with him lots of chestnuts, mushrooms and eggs; if not with him, you could send them by special delivery, letting me know beforehand.

You should let me have the following books straight away:

The two volumes of mathematics

Monti's translation of the *Iliad*

The *Bellezze* of the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*.<sup>11</sup>

Please send these to me as soon as possible and, in addition, my monthly allowance, because I have to pay the rent for the lodgings and have nothing left to pay it with.

Here is the book list:

Corbino – <i>Physics</i>	2 lire 50 for 1 lira 45
Rinaudo's <i>History</i> – Vol. II	2 lire 50
Marchesini – <i>Logic</i>	2 lire for 1 lira 20
Ghisleri – <i>High School Atlas</i>	3 lire
Tacitus – <i>Germany</i>	60 centesimi

Cicero – <i>Brutus</i>	80 centesimi
Mercalli – <i>Mineralogy</i>	1 lira 40
Poli and Tanfani – <i>Plant Structure and Function</i>	2 lire 50
Socrates – <i>Panegyric</i>	60 centesimi
Catullus – <i>Selected Poems</i> (Pestalozza)	<u>1 lira 50</u> 15 lire 55 <sup>12</sup>

For now the books are these listed, but there should not be many more. Meanwhile send me the money as soon as you can because I have to buy all the books new. Send letters to me care of the Marzullo ice plant so that Nannaro can give me them, and the same as regards the newspapers.

Give my best wishes to Zizzu Coghe, Filomena and the young heir, together with those of Nannaro, who can't wait to congratulate Filomena.

Greetings and kisses to everyone

Nino

Written by the two of us<sup>13</sup>

*Source: partial copy in AAG; rest as in Gramsci (2009) and in previous publications)*



*To Francesco Gramsci*

[CAGLIARI, JANUARY 1910]<sup>14</sup>

Dearest father,

At last I can write to you. Up to the first few days of January I felt rather poorly and wasn't able to write; on top of that I was having at the same time to think about the end-of-term exams, which left me drained of energy. I've waited in vain for you to make a move and send me the money – I still haven't seen any of it. Indeed last month you sent me just 40 lire; just think whether it's humanly possible to live on 40 lire in Cagliari, but it's obvious that you don't give the matter a thought. Give my thanks to Grazietta who sent 5 lire to me; I'd decided to buy a hat because the one I have is a disgrace, with its entire brim falling to pieces, but I had to hand over the 5 lire to the landlord. So I'm now waiting for you to send 5 lire to me (the 5 that

you didn't send me last month) so I can buy the hat. Besides this, please do send without delay the money order for this month because I've had to get credit from the landlord, and that has been exceptionally hard on me, having then to put up with all his insinuations. Write straight away with news about how everyone is. I went to the Port Authority about Mario; there's a new call-up in February, but one mustn't have turned 18 by April. I don't know if Mario satisfies these conditions; in case he does let me know. Once again, I beg you, hurry up and send me the money, including the 5 lire, and specify that the money is for the hat. Otherwise, if Nannaro sees that there's nothing written, I'll have to hand it over to the landlord and I'll have to keep on with this dreadful hat. As regards the end-of-term exams, I still don't know anything. As soon as I know the marks I'll let you know. A big kiss to everyone and write to me with their news.

Nannaro will send his photo on to you.

Kisses

Nino

I'm waiting

*Source: AAG*



*To Francesco Gramsci*

31 JANUARY [1910]<sup>15</sup>

Dearest father,

Yesterday the headmaster gave us the marks for the term. Here they are as follows:

Italian:	no mark	because there was no teacher	
Latin:	7-8	Greek culture	8
Greek	8-8 <sup>16</sup>	History	8
Physics	6	Natural history	6
Philosophy	6		

As you can see I've obtained good marks, and this term hope to improve them, because the marks of 6 were due to mishaps.

I beg of you to send me the money immediately, because I need it urgently. Tomorrow, 1 February, send it on as soon as you receive this letter. Further, I have to buy two new books

Foscolo: <i>Poetry</i>	1.50
G. Setti: <i>Greek Literature</i>	2.50

The first is for the Italian that we've now started, and the second will be starting in a few days' time.

Further, remember that still ... But it's useless to take up the old refrain once again; by now you understand and you won't fall down on this. Just remember that I have to study if I have to prepare for the leaving certificate, so I mustn't have too many worries.

The headmaster has raised a number of difficulties for giving me the leaving certificate. First of all, I have to present a certificate to say I am able to do military service. I most certainly cannot produce this, and neither can the others, since being 19 years old and not having had the medical examination, I cannot present any document. So maybe this demand is going to disappear; it's possible that I may not be able to do the exam, and on this you just have to be patient.

Yet again I beg of you, don't make me wait. I'll send the elastic to Carlo very shortly when I have the money, so tell him that his 2.90 lire were like manna from above. I'll send it to him with Toriggia's mother, who is setting off soon. Kisses to everyone and for you

lots of kisses from Nannaro too

Nino

*Source: AAG*



*To Francesco Gramsci*

CAGLIARI, 10 FEBRUARY 1910

Dearest father,

I have received the money order, but not your letter, so I've waited a couple of days to reply.

You should know that I still haven't received the money from the Agency; at the Office they just had me write a letter of complaint and

that was it. Who knows how long I'll have to wait. Meanwhile, I haven't had the suit made up, and this time it really is your fault, because when I told you I'd have it made up and charged it to you, you didn't want to know. And so now it's me who has to shoulder the burden. On 26 February the second and third year students of the lycée are going on a trip to Gúspini to study the mines at Montevecchio since we're studying mineralogy, so I'll have to go too, but I'm nowhere near decent enough to go anywhere, with this two-year-old jacket that is threadbare and shiny, so send me a letter for some tailor's so they can make me up a suit at your expense, and on top of that think about getting the Agency to pay back the money, because they don't pay any attention to what I say. And please don't put it off because this month I'm really at my wit's end. Today I didn't go to school because I had to have my shoes soled, and 3 lire went on that, then I had to buy the Foscolo book, and 2 lire went on that. Now I don't know where to turn next; this Carnival time I've been sulking in the house all the time, crouched up in a corner, and not been out for an instant, so much so that Nannaro thought I was ill. Remember that you still have to send me 10 lire for the first list of books, for which up to now you've sent me just 5 lire. And remember that I'm counting on 10 lire for the trip.

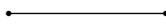
This month make sure that you do things in the way I've said and that you see to sending me what I ask for, because I don't know how I'm going to manage. And I'm expecting this as soon as possible.

Lots of kisses to everyone, from Nannaro as well, and lots of kisses to you too

Nino

I'll send the thing on to Carlo as soon as possible.

*Source: AAG*



*To Francesco Gramsci*

[CAGLIARI, 24 MAY 1910]

Dearest father,

It's already the 24th and we still haven't seen anything from you. Not only that but you don't even reply to all the letters that Nannaro and I have sent, or if you do it's a couple of lines to promise that without fail

you're going to send the money within a couple of days, meanwhile we never see a thing. Up to a certain time I excused you, but now, knowing what you're like, I'm beginning to have the suspicion that it's more just neglect that's behind things. That a father shouldn't think about his son when the son is in the city and has no means other than what comes from the family, to my way of thinking is a bit too much. I'm not in a village where you know enough people so that you can go on for a bit without having to pay straight away; here you're forced to pay on the nail, if not you don't survive even for a day. Great heavens, there are some things that have to be thought about! Nannaro has sacrificed himself enough, he's had money paid him in advance, but now he doesn't know how he can go on. I can see that he's getting more and more serious with each day that passes, to the extent that today he was ready to send me back to Ghilarza because he didn't know what to do any more, and it was costing him quite enough to think just about himself. It was only my beseeching that convinced him that, if I wrote tonight, we'd be able to straighten things out. So I now find myself in this bed of roses. I don't know what to think of you, because you, in some way or other, would get by, while, if you don't send the money immediately – that is as soon as you get this letter – I will have to come to Ghilarza, and that'll be the end for me because the end-of-term exams start within days and I'll have to miss them, which means I'll lose the whole year. I'm between the frying pan and the fire, lots of them. The head teacher has warned me that I have to pay the second instalment of the school fees, which should have been paid by April 1st, and he's even wanted to suspend me from school until I pay. It's just as well that we've got 5 days' holiday for the King's visit, so I didn't need to go to school anyway. But this holiday is going to come to an end, then what? I'm dreading the moment when they send me away in the sight of my classmates because I haven't paid the fees. But in the meantime, think about everything that has to be done and send the monthly allowance by return courier without fail. It seems that one way or another my student career is about to come to an end, because as far as I can see you don't give two hoots. It's just 'let whoever wants see to it'. You've put the whole weight on Nannaro's shoulders so that it's crushing him. Yet Nannaro had already done enough because certainly without his support I wouldn't have been able to exist on a miserable 45 lire a month. But you just don't think about these things. Well, I'll see about that. We're now

talking about my future and certainly I'm not saying that Nannaro is wrong in his decision. I'll see what you do; we'll see what all your promises are really worth. Kisses to everyone

Nino

*Source: AAG*

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*To Giuseppina Marcias*

[CAGLIARI, LATE JANUARY 1911]

Dearest mother,

I'm replying by return post to stop this mad idea of father's of coming here. Have you really got scared because the police are seeking information on one of us? There's no reason at all to get so worked up. What on earth is running through your mind at this moment – that Nannaro is under lock and key or has got 4 carabinieri on him? Rest assured that nothing of this kind is going to happen.

Nannaro has taken on some responsibilities for the Trades Council, so his name, which up to then was quite unknown, has now come to the eyes of the police, who have wanted to know who this revolutionary is, this new scourge of the constabulary who's coming to the fore, so they've asked for some information.

Put your mind at rest. As you can see, there's nothing untoward, and the whole thing is over and done with. Since there has been a strike, and since Nannaro is treasurer of the Trades Council, the police wanted to know his address, so as to impound the funds and bring the strike to an end. But the strike in any case stopped on its own account and the funds stay where they are. But since the name Gennaro Gramsci came up unexpectedly, the police wanted to know who he was; now their curiosity is satisfied and that's the end of the matter.

I was about to write over the last few days; I didn't send a letter with Adele because I only got to know the evening before that she was leaving the next morning at seven. The same as regards Nessi. I received the present you sent on for St Anthony's day and thank you for it.<sup>17</sup> Another time when you get know of these things, stay calm, just laugh in the face of the lieutenant and the whole flock of carabi-

nieri, as has been my habit for some time. Poor fellows, basically you've got to sympathise with them, having to deal with socialists and anarchists leaves them no time to think about thieves and ne'er-do-wells, and then they're afraid someone's going to come along and steal their lanterns.

The other night they took note of me up in the gods, because I made some comment out loud on the fine moustache of a policeman, telling him he should shave it off if he didn't want comments. And so what? Because of my splendid mane, which even the slightest breeze ruffles, they took me for a girl, and were then amazed that a woman should make such a commotion in the theatre. This was because they could only see my head with my fingers to my mouth blowing a raspberry. I didn't take it badly, I even thanked them for the attention they were paying me. Nothing wrong with that. As long as they don't bring out the handcuffs they can ask as much as they like. A kiss to everyone there at home for me, dry the tears from everyone's face, and don't worry. Kisses from Nannaro too, who's developed a big appetite after all this.

Nino

I've got to know the following marks:

Latin – written 7 oral 8  
 physics 6 – Greek culture 8

no others as yet, but at least as good if not better.

*Source: AAG*



*To the Carlo Alberto Royal College, Turin*

CARLO ALBERTO R[OYAL] COLLEGE  
 TURIN

The undersigned Antonio Gramsci, son of Francesco Gramsci, having obtained the lycée diploma from the R[oyal] Lycée of Cagliari, hereby requests to be included in the list of those competing for the study grants offered by the above Institution for the degree course in Letters, and requests permission to take the written examinations in

Cagliari.<sup>18</sup> He declares that he has no other study grant, and that he resides with his family in Ghilarza, in the province of Cagliari.

Ghilarza, 28 June 1911

Antonio Gramsci

*Source: University of Turin Archives, XI F 7, p1, students requesting admission to the entrance examination; as printed in Gramsci (2009)*

## NOTES

1. Santucci, in Gramsci (1992), gives the place as Cagliari and date as 6 February 1909, but that date was added in another hand; reassessing the internal evidence gives the place and date indicated here.
2. Teachers from middle school onwards are called 'Professor'; the 'director', with an office at Oristano, thirty kilometres from Santulussurgiu, was the administrator in charge of Gramsci's group of schools. Any direct influence on Gramsci by Massimo Stara, then a leading Sardinian socialist, is still a matter of speculation.
3. Gramsci was owed money for work done during the summer vacation at the Land Registry in Ghilarza: cf his letter of 3 October 1932 to Tanja Schucht (Gramsci 1994a, Vol 2, p215).
4. The manuscript here reads 'inoltre' ('send on') not 'inoltre' ('furthermore') as mistakenly understood in both Gramsci (1992) and Gramsci (2009).
5. In a letter of December 1908, not included here, Gramsci complains he has not received the *Secolo XX* magazine, so in retaliation, if his sister is not spending 10 centesimi on the post, he is not sending her the music magazines. Further, despite having written four or five times about the result sheet, he had not received it, and could not therefore register officially at the high school, so that a term's work risked not being recognised.
6. These words have been rendered 'if I weren't with Nannaro', but the person of the verb used seems to indicate that Gramsci had in mind 'if it were not for Nannaro', the resulting phrase in Italian being an amalgam of the two.
7. See the letter here dated November-December 1908.
8. 'La Montanina' was a composition by Ermenegildo Carosio for guitar and mandolin, instruments played by Gramsci's sisters.
9. The list of books in the letter corresponds to what was studied in the school year 1909-10, so the letter (dated simply 5 November) must have been written in 1909, not 1908 as said in Gramsci (1992).
10. Gennaro added a note on the reverse side of the last page saying that he needed the shirt and to send it with Coghe.

11. The *Bellezze* was a frequently reprinted anthology that included translations of some of the best-known passages from the three epic poems.
12. Gramsci's handwriting sometimes leaves doubt as to whether a figure is '5' or '9'. The best interpretation is that the Poli and Tanfani volume cost 2.50, not 2.90, and the Catullus 1.50, not 1.90, both prices here corrected as compared with Gramsci (1992); the total then comes to 15 lire 55, as in Gramsci (2009).
13. The phrase 'Greetings and kisses to everyone' is in rather shaky handwriting, indicating it was both Antonio and Nannaro together who were holding the pen.
14. Originally dated 1909.
15. Gramsci wrote '1909' but since in the letter he says he is 19, this means that the year was in fact 1910.
16. A double mark means that one was for the written and one for the oral part of the exam.
17. This is St Anthony Abbot whose feast day, 17 January, falls very near Gramsci's birthday (22 January), and so is Gramsci's name day. The 'Adele' mentioned by Gramsci is probably Adele Villassanta, the wife of Francesco ('Chicchino') Oppo.
18. A prerequisite for the grant was that there should be no mark of less than 8 out of 10 in the final school examination (6 being the pass mark). Gramsci's average exonerated him from the lycée finals since, in the final year course work, he obtained an exceptional 9 (written) and 8 (oral) for Italian, and the high mark of 8 for all the others.