

Craco Reflections: Learning More

This month’s newsletter provides views of Craco that are familiar yet distant, reflecting a time that has gone by—yet preserved. Thanks to the images of the town from the Simone Collection these still photographs provide wonderful insights into life in Craco Vecchio.

Although many of the images are approaching 100 years old, the digital copies of the photographic plates used by Cavaliere Simone provide amazing detail. Items like the clock time on San Nicola, small signs, and even the license plate on the car (PZ 6428) are visible by enlarging the digital version of the images.

“...Simone Collection...photographs provide wonderful insights into life in Craco Vecchio.”

The richness of these images fit the “Distant Memories” of Anna Trianni (see page 2).

As a supplement to these photographs, the video images of Craco captured in, “[Craco: Visits Through Time](#)” (available on the Society’s webpage and [YouTube Channel](#)) show life in the town starting in 1929.

For anyone planning to visit Craco or just dreaming about the old town, these images serve as a great starting point. ■

Enjoy!

A well known postcard image from the collection is the Piazza Largo Vittorio Emanuele II (shown right, with numbers inserted by the Society to identify locations).

The buildings in the piazza were:

- 1) Depot belonging to Lo Porchio family.
- 2) Deli shop owned by Carmelina Pucci.
- 3) Home of the Manghise family.
- 4) Craco’s Cinema.
- 5) Home of Anna Spera.
- 6) Bar belonging to Valerio Santalucia.
- 7) Home of Giuseppe Lospinoso.
- 8) Tabacchino shop belonging to Marcello Pantaleo.
- 9) Home of Angelo L’Episcopia.
- 10) Sacristy of the Chiesa Madre.
- 11) Vegetable shop of Graziella and Vincenzo Vignola.
- 12) Home belonging to Dr. DiRiso

See the digital image on page 3.



Craco Reflections

DISTANT MEMORIES

Years ago, my village was struck by a silent affliction, one that slowly devoured it day by day, leaving it smaller and more fragile.

Everyone believed its end had come, that it would vanish forever. But even now, though small and delicate, resembling a sandcastle on the verge of collapse, it still stands—strong and hopeful that its people will not forget it.

I see it from afar, perched on its hill, as though watching over me. So, I sit beneath the shade of a great tree and gaze at my village.

As if by magic, memories I thought lost forever resurface in my mind—memories of distant times. I never imagined that those sweet recollections of another era would be the ones to keep this tired body company.

I almost hear the voice of my village whispering to me, saying that as long as even a single house remains standing, it will carry the magic into the hearts of people—the magic of memories. ■

Anna Trianni



Craco — ["The abandoned Italian 'ghost town' carved into a rock..."](#) Getty image

Craco: From the Lens of the Simone Family

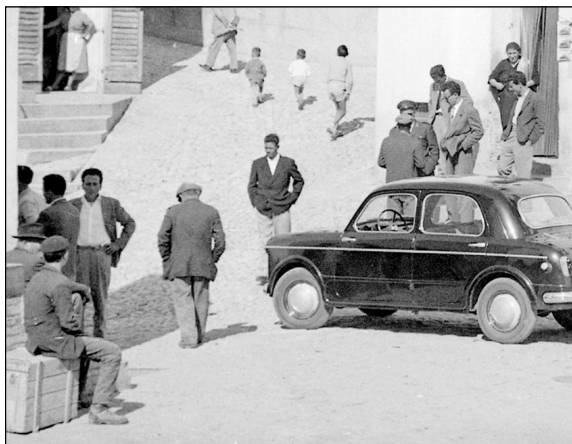


Above: An enlarged image of the deli shop doorway of Carmelina Pucci, with her perhaps standing in it. The sign over the door reads "ALIMENTARI VINI".



Center large photo (above CINE): The open doorway above the cinema entrance

shows a woman, perhaps Anna Spera, leaving the balcony and returning inside. Above her, the clock on San Nicola shows the time the photograph was taken at 1:55pm. To the left of that is a building which has a television antennae on it and below is a man coming out of a doorway onto a rooftop.



Above: The enlarged image of the activity in front of the "Bar Gelo." The round signs on both sides of the doorway are ads for "Birra Peroni." The car parked in front appears to be a Fiat 1100 from the 1950s.

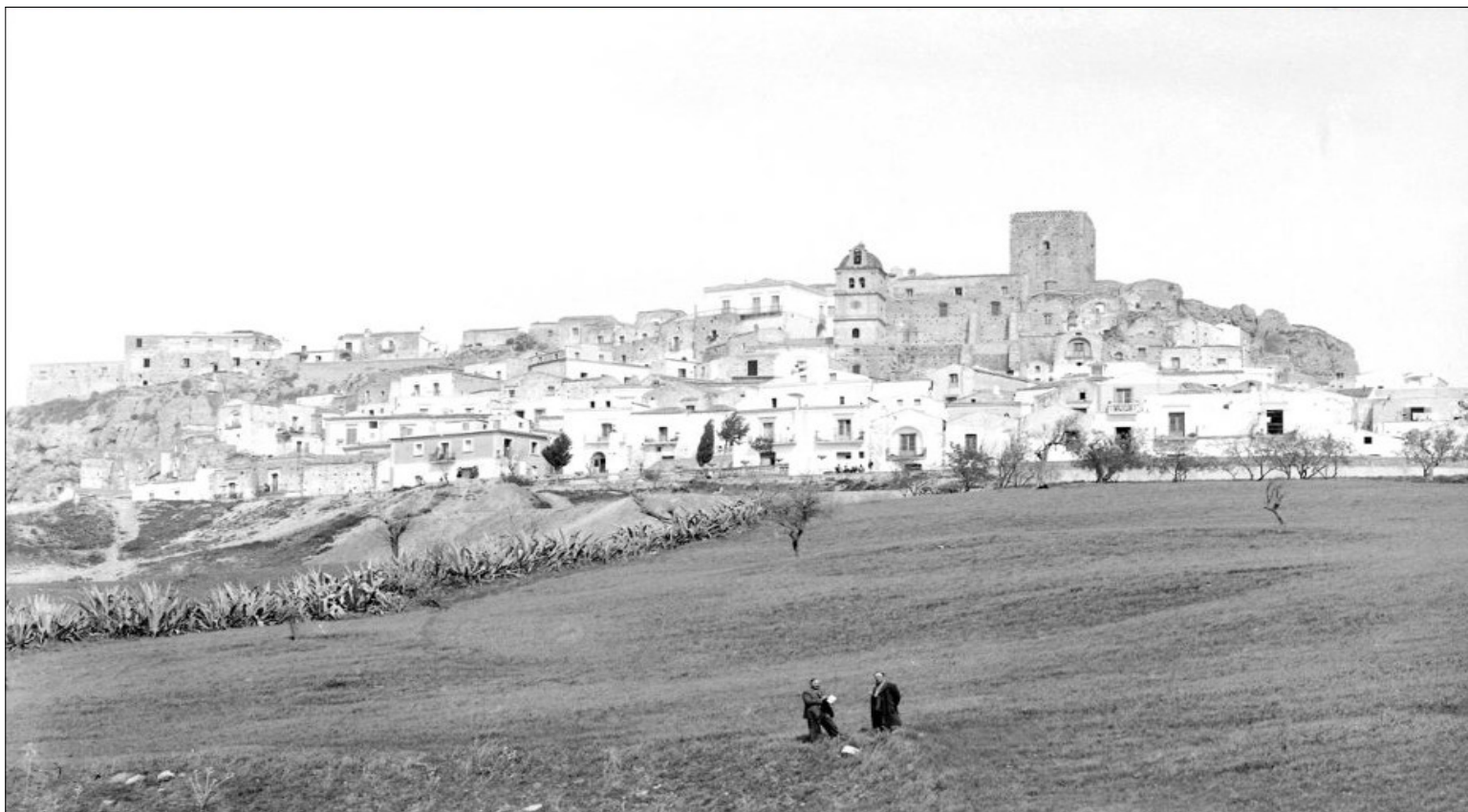
Above right: Two people are shown talking in the doorway of the tabacchino shop. The oval sign above the doorway reads, "Sali e Tabacchi Rivendita No. 1" and the crest on it is for the Republic of Italy. Also in the doorway are goods for sale. In the large photograph another sign for the store is visible on the building adjacent to it facing the road; it shows the letter "T".

Lower right: Individual walking behind the car apparently leaving the area.



Above: The doorway to the vegetable shop, with perhaps Graziella Vignola standing in the doorway with a small child. In the large photo a sign is visible above the door that reads "ALIMENTARI" (Grocery). To the right of the doorway are some boxes, a broom and there is a rag on the steps, which perhaps were being used for cleaning them.

Craco Panorama: From the Simone Collection



Craco Panorama was featured in several Simone postcards taken at different times. What are believed to be the two earliest are shown here, taken two hours apart. The quality of the images is so good that enlarging them allows us to read the clock on San Nicola. The noontime photograph (below) was taken further away from the town than the 2pm shot (above). In both images, Simone has placed two men in the forefront of the scene. In the background, people are visible along the wall observing the activity. Just below the wall, at the left center, cows are visible grazing. These were both published individually as black and white postcards and later included in postcard montages with images of the war monument and the Madonna della Stella. The montage images were created by the postcard printer and in later editions they used these scenes with a colored insert of the war monument and added the greeting of, "Saluti da Craco." The original scenes were photographed in the 1930s and remained in use through several decades. ■



How to contact us - Come contattarci

The Craco Society
14 Earl Road
East Sandwich, MA 02537 USA

EMAIL: memberservices@thecracosociety.org



VISIT: www.thecracosociety.org

