

SCHIAPPAPIETRA FAMILY DICTIONARY

**PETRA - PIETRA - SPEZAPETRA - SHIDEPETRA - SCIAPAPRIA -
SCHIAPPAPRIA - SCHIAPPAPIETRA - SCHIAPPA PIETRA - CHAPA**

Conventions for the use of first and last names

Latin or Roman names from the Republican period (until c.a. 40 BC)

In the Roman naming convention used in ancient Rome, typical male names contained three proper names (*tria nomina*) that were referred to as the **praenomen** (which was the first name as we understand it today), the **nomen** (equivalent to our surname, it identified the Gens and was also known as the "gentile name"), and the **cognomen**, which indicated the nuclear family within the Gens. A second *cognomen*, called *agnomen*, was sometimes added. The name of an adopted man would also reflect his adopter's name (see Augustus as an example).

Female names had few differences. Only three elements were mandatory for citizenship purposes: the *praenomen*, the *nomen*, and the *cognomen*. Additional elements such as the *agnomen* and the adopter's name were optional. This *tria nomina* system, influenced by the Etruscan naming system, was the traditional Latin way of naming people.

Example of a full name analysis

Let us analyze the full name **Gneus Petreius Lucius f. tribu Teretina, Cimbricus, Atinati (domo Atina)**.

- *praenomen*: Gneus
- *nomen*: Petreius (belonging to the *Gens Petreia*, or Petrei in the plural form)
- *patronimicus*: son of Lucius
- *tribe*: Teretina (a tribe in the region of xx)
- *cognomen*: Ax (Ax family)
- *agnomen*: Cimbricus (probably for the grass crown won in the battle against the Cimbri. This would rarely have been passed on to descendants)
- *domo*: city of Atina (or in the genitive Atinati)

In everyday use, people would use a combination of *nomen* and *praenomen*, or, more frequently, just the *cognomen*. For example, "Marcus Livius Drusus" could simply be "Drusus" or "Marcus Livius". "Iulia Marciana" could simply be "Iulia".

Praenomen

The first element was the personal name, the one given to children at birth, and which we assume was used by the family. In writing, it was generally reduced to the initial since only few Roman *praenomina* existed, and they were bound by tradition: *Gneus, Marcus, Gaius, Titus, Publius, Lucius*. This first name was quite unimportant except for family and confidential relationships, and was rarely used on its own.

Relatively few *praenomina* used in Republican and Imperial Rome are generally linked to tradition. Only a few of these, such as "Marcus," "Tiberius," "Lucius," and "Flavius" (including the female versions "Lucia" and "Flavia") are still in use. "Gaia," feminine of "Gaius" or "Caius," which is actually the incorrect version of "Gaius", has recently been rediscovered. The corruption of Gaius into Caius derives from the Latin tradition of abbreviating the *praenomen* Gaius to C. and the *praenomen* Gnaeus to Cn. These traditional abbreviations, in turn, derive from the fact that the Etruscans – who had a strong influence on early Rome – did not

distinguish between "G" and "C".

Many of the male *praenomina* used were abbreviated to one or two characters in lapidary inscriptions, with no possibility of ambiguity precisely because there were not many of them. The most common abbreviations were: Appius (Ap), Flavius (Fl), Gaius (C), Gnaeus (Cn), Lucius (L), Manius (M'), Marcus (M), Publius (P), Servius (Ser), Sextus (Sex), Spurius (Sp), Titus (T), Tiberius (Ti). Translated into Italian, the *praenomina* Primus, Secundus, Tertius, Quintus, Sextus, Septimus, Octavius, and Decimus have the clear meaning of ordinal numbers (first, second, third, etc.), and were probably originally assigned in order of birth. This practice was revived during Fascism as a result of cultural and demographic policies, and has since fallen out of use.

Nomen or *Gens* – People, Clan, Extended Family

The second name was that of the *Gens* (pl. *Gentes*), that is, the clan or "extended family" to which the person belonged. Early Roman *Gentes* were relatively few in number, and even fewer of them were endowed with enough renown to consign the fame of some of their members to posterity. Among them were certainly the *Gens* Iulia, the *Gens* Cornelia, the *Gens* Claudia, the *Gens* Tullia, the *Gens* Sempronia, the *Gens* Domitia, and the *Gens* Valeria.

As time went on, however, things became quite complicated, with entire families and individuals coming from different traditions (think freed slaves, Gaulish allies, etc. who might not have a *Gens* of their own) acquiring Roman citizenship. Freed slaves often acquired the *nomen* of their former owner, while naturalized foreigners sometimes Latinized their nicknames or just made up new ones.

Patronymicus

Initially *praenomen* and *nomen* formed a Roman's full name and were followed by the patronymic (or indication of paternity). The patronymic consisted of the Latin word *filius* (son), abbreviated to "f.", preceded by the abbreviation of the paternal *praenomen* in the genitive case. For instance, a Roman could have been known as M. Antonius M. f. (*Marcus Antonius Marci filius*) i.e., "Mark Anthony son of Mark." In addition, the grandfather could also have been denoted by the word *nepos* (grandson) in the abbreviated form "n."

Tribus

The tribe was not an indication of common ancestry. Tribes were distributed geographically and people belonged to the tribe based on the location of their main home. The tribe was an essential component of citizenship, and voting was often organized by tribe. In 242 BC, the number of tribes was fixed to 35: *Aemilia* - [Aniensis](#) - [Arniensis](#) - [Camilia](#) - *Claudia* - [Clustumina](#) - *Cristina* - *Cornelia* - [Esquilina](#) - [Fabia](#) - *Falerna* - *Galeria* - [Horatia](#) - [Lemonia](#) - [Maecia](#) - [Oufentina](#) - [Palatina](#) - [Papiria](#) - [Poblilia](#) - [Pollia](#) - [Pomptina](#) - [Quirina](#) - [Romilia](#) - [Sabatia](#) - [Scaptia](#) - [Sergia](#) - [Stellatina](#) - [Succusana](#) o [Suburana](#) - [Teretina](#) - [Tromentina](#) - *Velina* - [Voltinia](#) - [Voturia](#)

As the Empire expanded, the number of tribes increased.

Around the middle of the Republican period, an abbreviation of the tribe to which the person was registered was added to the patronymic. It is not known when this indication became an official part of the name.

Cognomen – Surname

The last element was originally an acquired nickname that the person did not have from birth. It was related to an individual's personal characteristics or to events that had befallen them. The *cognomen* initially appeared as a nickname or personal name that distinguished an individual within the *Gens*, and did not appear in official documents until about 100 BC. Often, the *cognomen* was the only real personal element of the name, and today it is the part of the name we use to identify ancient Romans.

During the Republic and Empire, the *cognomen* was passed down from father to son, effectively distinguishing nuclear families within the Gens. Because of its origin, the *cognomen* often reflected some physical or personality trait.

Agnomen

When the need arose to distinguish narrower nuclei within families, a second *cognomen*, called *agnomen*, was added. Sometimes it was passed from father to son, like the *cognomen*, to distinguish a subfamily within a family (for example, the descendants of a specific person). However, most often it was used as a simple nickname. Sometimes it was used as an honorific title to commemorate an important feat.

Examples of *agnomina* are: *Africanus* - [Allobrogicus](#) - [Asiaticus](#) - [Atticus](#) - [Augustus](#) (*per gli Imperatori*) - [Balearicus](#) - [Briganticus](#) - [Britannicus](#) - [Calisela](#) - [Creticus](#) - [Dalmaticus](#) - [Gaetulicus](#) - [Gallicus](#) - [Germanicus](#) - [Helveticus](#) - [Isauricus](#) - [Italicus](#) - [Macedonicus](#) - [Nasica](#) - [Nero](#) - [Numidicus](#) - [Parthicus](#) - [Paulus](#).

A good example is Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus (which in Latin would have been written as *P. CORNELIVS SCIPIO AFRICANVS*).

Foreign names

Many foreign names were introduced as Rome continued to conquer territories outside of the Italian peninsula. Former auxiliary soldiers and other categories with the right to Roman citizenship could – and often chose to – retain at least part of their original name. A good number of these names were of Greek origin, while others came from the regions that came into the Roman sphere of influence. Auxiliary soldiers who were not Roman citizens but had earned the right to citizenship often adopted the *nomen* of their Emperor, adding their original name as the *cognomen*.

Medieval names

Surnames recorded in manuscripts and rolls of arms usually appear in the feminine form, as they referred to the feminine noun “famiglia” (family).

In ancient times, surnames were masculine if referring to a man, feminine if referring to a woman, and plural if referring to several individuals.

The prepositions De, Da, Del, Dal, Delle or Dalla, (possessives that referred to the family, father, or locality) have been lost over time and are no longer part of the current Italian form.

Names, customs and conventions of the Republic of Genoa

It was not uncommon in medieval and Renaissance Genoa to unite several families under the surname of the most important one for business, dynastic and mutual aid reasons. This form of consortium was called *Albergo* (pl. *Alberghi*).

Many patrician Genoese families joined the *Alberghi*.

The *Albergo Cattaneo* was established in 1309 by the Della Volta family along with other families of the Genoese patriciate. After a few years, the *Petra* and *Pietra* families, residents of the town of Genoa, also joined the *Albergo Cattaneo*.

Members of the *Albergo Cattaneo* always identified themselves by specifying the original surname of the family of origin, such as *Cattaneus olim De Volta* or *Cattaneus olim De Petra*. The system was definitively codified in 1528 during the great legislative reform of Genoa, and membership to an *Albergo*, which had been optional until that point, became mandatory.

Full name analysis: **Opizzone Cattaneo della Pietra**

- *name*: Opizzone

- *albergo*: Cattaneo (belonging to the Cattaneo *Albergo*)
- *surname*: Pietra

At the end of the 16th century, the law mandated the use of only one surname, that of the *Albergo*.

Transcription of names and surnames in the Registry Offices of Unified Italy

In contemporary forms, variations in the singular or plural form of the same surname (by changing the final letters “o” or “e” to a letter “i”) do not rule out common family origin. They depend solely on how the surname was recorded in registry offices in the late 19th century.

Convention used in this dictionary

Characters are mentioned by first name in alphabetical and chronological order:

1. first name;
2. the official Italian surname **Schiappapietra** has been assigned to all members by way of convention;
3. The code (SCH - XX), placed after the first name and before the surname, transcribed from sources, indicates the official Italian surname **Schiappapietra** transmitted through the male line, and the abbreviation of the nation where the branch of the family developed;
4. The code (sch - XX), placed after the first name and before the surname, indicates the official Italian surname transmitted through the female line, and the abbreviation of the country where the branch of the family developed;
5. Transformed or modified versions of the surname as a result of transcription errors or customs and traditions that different in place and time from those of the family’s origin;
6. date of birth in the correct order or, if unavailable, a date that can be inferred from other archival or bibliographic sources;
7. by Italian tradition and jurisdiction, only the male line is entitled to use the original surname, even if its transcription is in a contracted or incorrect form.

MAIN ABBREVIATIONS USED

- * nnnn date of birth.
- * nnnn approximate date of birth estimated through document analysis.
- + nnnn date of death.
- (nnnn) date obtained from historical sources and related to a cited fact.
- (xxxxx) nickname or middle name used in place of the first name or incorrect transcription in the country of immigration.