



TOMB OF ALESSANDRO VOLTA

You can find this point of interest in Como 6 – Stage 2.

INFORMATION

Location: the tomb of Alessandro Volta is in the centre of the old cemetery of Camnago Volta-Como, in via Clerici

Paving: via Clerici is paved; the widening facing the entrance to the cemetery is paved with porphyry cubes. The steps leading to the cemetery are made of stone; The landing at the top of the steps and the driveway leading to the temple are paved with stone tiles. The circular steps leading to the widening, on which the temple was built, are made of stone and so is the widening; the floor of the temple is paved as a mosaic

Architectural barriers: to access the cemetery you have to climb six steps; there are three more steps to access the circular widening where the temple is located

Access: the old cemetery of Camnago can be accessed from Via Clerici, passing through an electric wrought iron gate

Services: parking outside the new cemetery of Camnago, about eighty meters further coming from the centre; urban bus stop; ATM and shop in via della Pila

Leisure and Catering: in the various hamlets of Camnago there are two restaurants

Other information: Opening hours: typically from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily.

DESCRIPTION

(by Silvia Fasana)

When Alessandro Volta died, on March 5, 1827, on his express wish, he was buried in a grave dug into the bare earth of the first cemetery of Camnago (then an autonomous municipality), located downstream of the road that connects the square in front of the church to Campora. The tomb, according to what Maurizio Monti writes in *La Storia di Como* (1832) «*was distinguished by a wooden cross that bore the inscription: 'Here lie the remains of Count Cavaliere Alessandro Volta, taken from the living on March 5, 1827, at the age of 82'* »

This wish was dictated by the close bond that united the scientist to the small town where his favourite country house stood and where he used to spend the summer periods. His wife and children, however, wanted to give a more dignified burial to his remains, commissioning the temple that we can still see, inaugurated on March 5, 1831, around which the Municipality created a new cemetery. Some of the scientist's family members are also buried in the temple. Designed by Melchiorre Nosetti in pure neoclassical style, the temple stands on a circular widening, accessed by three curved steps at the front. On the sides of the access, two stone plaque stands are resting on the steps that support two bronze plaques; the left one donated by "The Electrical students of England" in 1903 and the right one by the Catholic students in 1899. Other commemorative plaques are placed inside the cemetery. The structure, made of stone blocks, has a circular plan and is surmounted by a metal dome with a skylight. In the upper part it has a marble frieze with reliefs representing *triumphal crowns* and *Volta's inventions*. On the sides of the entrance,

surmounted by an architrave with the inscription in bronze letters "To Alessandro Volta / his widow and children", two sandstone statues by Luigi Argenti have been placed: the one on the left depicts *Faith* praying, while the other represents *Science* crying. Inside, on the back wall, a niche houses the marble sarcophagus, the work of Giuseppe Bayer, surmounted by a *bust* of the scientist by Giovan Battista Comolli. Flanking the bust are two winged geniuses, one of whom is in the act of crowning Volta. In the panel above a relief stands out, depicting *The presentation of the battery to Napoleon Bonaparte* in Paris in 1801. The tomb of Alessandro Volta is a National Monument, based on a Decree of Vittorio Emanuele III of February 27, 1925. In 1999, the bicentenary of the discovery of the battery, restorations were carried out and at the entrance to the cemetery there were two artistic vintage street lamps running on methane, in honour of the scientist who was one of the first to discover the gas's origin, which during the hours of darkness create a particular and suggestive lighting.