

Maltese titles of nobility with a Gozitan connection

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Fiefs

A fief (Latin: *feudum*) was the central element of feudalism. It consisted of heritable property granted by the Sovereign to a vassal who held it in fealty in return for allegiance and (often) military service. Fiefs were revenue-producing lands held in tenure at the pleasure of the Sovereign. The holder of a fief usually also held a title of nobility based on that fief. Under the rule of the Order, most of the noble fiefs were only nominally held by individuals. The revenues from the lands in question were paid into the treasury.

Fiefs situated in the island of Gozo are shown in **Fig. 1**.



Gozitan fiefs

Fig. 1 Gozitan fiefs

The premier title of the Maltese islands

Special mention must be made of the title of *Baron of Djar il-Bniet*. The *Miles Cicco Gatto*, crushed an uprising in Gozo against the House of Aragon and was granted the

fief of Djar-il-Bniet near

Dingli in Malta by King Ludovico on 4th January 1350. It is one of the two surviving titles created by the Kings of Sicily and Malta and is the premier extant Maltese title. His Arms together with an artist's impression of his foray into Gozo which earned him the title are shown in Figs. 2 & 3. In Fig. 3 note the Cittadella in the background! The picture is taken from Book 4 in the bibliography below.

Titles based in Gozo or granted to Gozitans

Baron of San Marciano (*San Marċjan*):

Granted to Diego Antonio Galea Feriol by Grandmaster Manoel de Vilhena on 14th June 1726. Don Pietro Galie, a soldier from the Kingdom of Aragon,

settled in Malta c. 1370 and married Imperia di Peralta. Their descendant Giacomo Galea, who married Marietta Viani in 1617, settled in Gozo establishing the line. The *Milite* Matteo Feriol of Spain married Donna Caterina Falca, in 1482. One of their descendant lines eventually settled in Gozo. Diego Feriol was a Jurat in Gozo, 1626. Michele Feriol was a Jurat in Gozo, 1664-66, and 1669. The Arms of the 1st Baron are shown in **Fig. 4**.

Marquis of St. George (*San Ġorġ*): Granted to Dr Carlo Antonio Barbaro JUD, by Grandmaster de Rohan on 6th September 1778. There were no Gozitan connections of the Barbaro family that I can work out, but his son married Aloisea Crispo (Crespi) to form the Crispo-Barbaro family. Her grandfather, Gio. Andrea

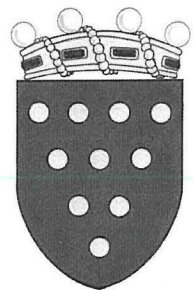


Fig. 2 Gatto
 Baron of Djar-il-Bniet

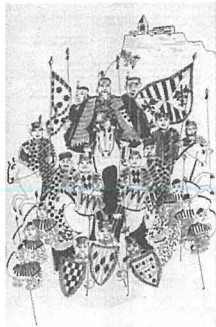


Fig. 3 Cicco Gatto
 in Gozo

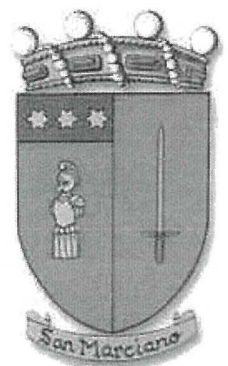


Fig. 4 Galea Feriol,
 Barons of San Marciano

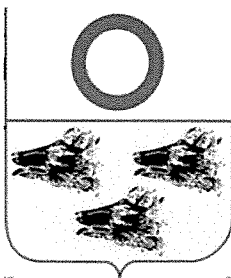


Fig. 5 Barbaro

Crispo (Crespi) was a Jurat of Gozo in 1635. Aloisea's ancestor, Gio. Crisostomo Crispo was the natural son of Lorenza daughter of Michele Crispo who claimed descent from the Sovereign Dukes of Naxos. The escutcheon of the Barbaro family is shown in Fig. 5.

Baron Gauci: Granted to: Francesco Gauci, a native Gozitan and Jurat in Gozo. It was granted by Grandmaster de Rohan on 23rd December 1781. Baron Gauci was later *Capitano della Verga* of Malta (1799-1800) - appointed by Sir Alexander Ball during the anti-French uprising. The Gauci family was very prominent in Gozo, and members of that family occupied the post of Jurat several times. The Gaucis intermarried with the Apaps, another prominent family in Gozo. The Arms of Baron Gauci are shown in Fig. 6. This title is now extinct.

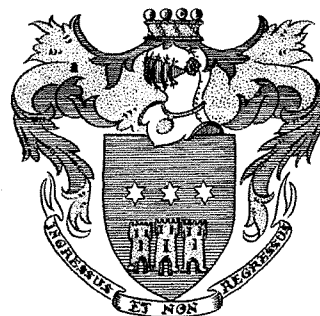


Fig. 6 Baron Gauci

Marquis of Taflija (Taflija)-1st Creation: Granted to Giovanni Battista Mompalao a Jurat in Malta by Grandmaster de Rohan on 25th October 1783. Mompalao is an old Gozitan family. Calcerano Mompalao was a Jurat in Gozo, 1538, *Capitano della verga* and *Tesoriere* of Gozo, 1542. A relative, Alessandro Mompalao Cuzkeri, was created Baron of Frigenuini in Malta, 1737. Cuzkeri was another old Gozitan family. This title is now extinct.

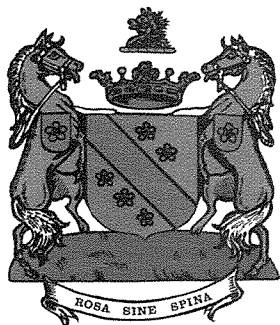


Fig. 7 Alessi, Marquises of Taflija

Marquis of Taflija (Taflija)-2nd Creation: Granted to Saverio Alessi, Jurat for Valletta and Notabile and later *Secreto* to Grandmaster von Hompesch (1797-98), member of the Maltese Chamber of Commerce and Lieutenant of Militia. The title was granted by Grandmaster de Rohan on 13th November 1790. The Alessi family had no Gozitan connections. The Arms of Alessi, Marquises of Taflija are shown in Fig. 7.

Count of Ghajn Tuffieħa: Granted to Ferdinando Teuma Castelletti, Jurat of Notabile by Grandmaster de Rohan on 7th January 1792. Ferdinando was a Gozitan by descent. Both the Teuma and Castelletti families were long-established in Gozo. In 1576, Franco Teuma, married Marietta Meilak at the *Matrice* in Gozo and from him descended Dr. Pietro Paolo Teuma JUD, married in 1640 to Giustina Castelletti. Ferdinando was their grandson. The Arms of Teuma Castelletti, Counts of Ghajn Tuffieħa are shown in Fig. 8.



Fig. 8 Teuma Castelletti, Counts of Ghajn Tuffieħa

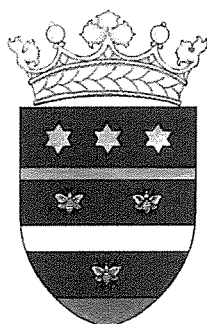


Fig. 9 Marquis Apap

Marquis of Ġnien-is-Sultan: Granted to Filippo Apap-a native Gozitan, Jurat and later a Deputy in Malta by Grandmaster de Rohan on 1st December 1792. Apap was an old landed Gozitan family. The Arms of the 1st Marquis Apap are shown in Fig. 9.

Baron of San Cosimo (San Guzman): Granted to; Dr Ugolino Calleja JUD, Jurat of Notabile and Valletta by Grandmaster de Rohan on 27th November 1792. I could find no definite Gozitan connections for Baron Calleja. This title is now extinct.



Fig. 10 Carbott

Count of Meimun: Granted to Saverio Marchesi, a great philanthropist and benefactor of the arts by Grandmaster de Rohan on 8th March 1794. Saverio's father, Giuseppe Marchesi was a Jurat in Gozo, 1745-1748. His wife, Serafina Marmieri of Rome was a very wealthy heiress. Giuseppe's grandfather, also called Giuseppe was married, in Gozo (1667), to Cleria Metallo who was related to the Attard family, another very prominent Gozitan family. This title is now extinct.

Baron of Grua (*Gruwa*): Granted to Saverio Carbott Testaferrata Ghaxaq, Jurat in Malta, by Grandmaster de Rohan on 30th December 1794. Maestro Giovanni Carbott Migrated to Malta from the Kingdom of Naples and married in 1559 Grazia Psinga, a descendant of the Bocchio family. Ghaxaq (*Asciaq, Axac*) was another

prominent Gozitan family. Salvatore and Tommaso Carabott were Jurats in Gozo during the XVIII century. The Arms of the Carbott family are shown in Fig. 10.



Fig. 11 Montagnes

Lord (*Signore*) of La Recona: Granted to Aloisio Montagnes, *Capitano d'Armi* of Gozo 1527-1531 by Grandmaster Philippe Villiers de l'isle Adam, on 31st March 1531, shortly after the Order took possession of the Maltese islands. The Arms of the Montagnes family are shown in Fig. 11. This title is now extinct.

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