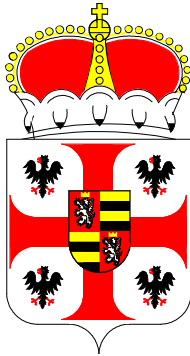


Gonzaga



Description of Arms :

D'argent à une croix pattée de gueules, cantonnée de quatre aiglettes de sable, membrées et becquées de gueules ; la croix chargée d'un écusson de gueules au lion d'or, écartelé d'or à trois fascés de sable.

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Principal Title : Prince and Marquis Gonzaga.

Creation : Holy Roman Empire, 1432.

Subsidiary Titles : See text.

Family Name : Gonzaga.

Family History : This is one of the most historic families in all Europe; and one that is often spoken about as though it no longer exists.

We can trace it back to Fillipo Gonzaga, who flourished around 1150. By the early XIV Century, they had become Lords of Mantua and patricians of Venice. Gianfranco Gonzaga, who died in 1444, was made Captain General and obtained confirmation of the title claimed to have been given to his father Francesco (1366-1407). This title was prince of the Holy Roman Empire, under the more precise form of "Prince Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua", the latter really being the more important.

In 1530, the Emperor Charles Quint raised the head of the family, Frederico II to Duke of Mantua, a very powerful position indeed.

Francesco (1444-1483), despite his youth was a celebrated cardinal, to whom Poliziano dedicated his work *Orfeo*. Barbara (1456-1503) was the wife of the first Duke of Wurttemberg and founded the University of Tübingen. Chiara (-1503), sister of Frederico II, married Gilbert de Bourbon and became the mother of the Constable. Others were cardinals and men of state.

Charles, Duke de Nevers, issue of a branch line of the ruling family, found himself the heir. He married his elder son to Maria, daughter of Duke Francesco IV and they had two daughters. The first, Anne, became the Princess Palatine; the second Maria, was Queen of Poland.

The ruling branch died out in 1746 but other lines still carried on. They had, meanwhile, collected the titles of Duke di Guastalla, Princes of Bozzoio, of Sabbioneta and Castiglione, Princes of the Holy Roman Empire and of Austria. These applied to various branches, not all still in existence.

Gonzaga

Prince and Marquis don MAURIZIO FERRANTE GONZAGA