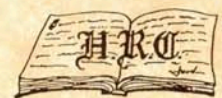


The Historical Research Center™
Family Name History



Calvani

The Corsican surname Calvani most probably is a regional misspelling for Galvani. The scholar De Cesari Rocca, an authority on Corsican surnames, in his book "Armorial Corse" writes that amongst the nobility of the island, the Galvani family is one of the eldest and most important. While it is true that the Romans retained a gens name which could be traced to the progenitor of the lineage, the use of fixed hereditary family names in Italy and in France, and consequently in Corsica, is said to date from the tenth and eleventh centuries. However, it was not until the mid-nineteenth century that this process of adopting a fixed family name, was completed. The family name Galvani, of Italian origin, is classified as being of personal name derivation. According to scholars, the "oldest and most pervasive type of surname is that derived from a given name". Such family names may be derived from a parental first name or from the font name of the grandfather of the original bearer of the surname. With regard to the family name Galvani, this is a name of ancient English derivation, originated from "Gawayne", a Middle English popular name, introduced from a French version of the Arthurian Romances, where the name was borne by one of the knights of the Round Table who was the brother of Galahad and Mordred and a nephew of Arthur.

Notable bearers of the surname Galvani include the famous Luigi Galvani, professor of anatomy and practical medicine, who discovered animal electricity. He died in 1798.

BLAZON OF ARMS: Per pale; first azure, a cross patriarchal pattee argent, surmounted by an eagle volant recursant descendant in pale, wings overture, holding in its beak a crescent or, with the points toward the chief; second azure, a tower or surmounted by three mullets argent, one and two.

CREST: Three ostrich plumes proper.
ORIGIN: ITALY

