

# The Titled Families of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

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This paper is presented for interest in Polish history and genealogy. Please be aware of the fact that the nominal roll as it appears currently does not show the 'coat of arms' name. That means that even if your own family surname appears in this roll it does not make you a Duke or Prince. Many Polish families do share the exact same surname, but not all of those surnames were nobility (szlachta), nor were the families necessarily related. Please be aware of this; as many Polish nobility surname were eroded, altered or destroyed during the 19th century, especially in such places as Ellis Island in the United States. The only way to establish a link to any of the titled families shown here is to first confirm the noble status of your own forebears; and this is done by name, region and direct descent in a legitimate family line.

The Polish system of nobility was based on the principles of equality amongst an exclusive caste of peers, who had forged their bonds of brotherhood upon the battlefields of Eastern Europe. Bravery and valour were the measure of the Polish knight (szlachta), and this was immediately recognised by his noble surname and also his right to bear a coat of arms. The Polish warrior knights held strenuously to the belief that all knights were equal, and the ancient Polish code of chivalry forbade the bearing of titles and rejected with disdain the formulation of chivalric orders which served only to create division and give special recognition to certain individuals within the greater body of the nobility.

The nobility of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth came to number approximately forty thousand families, using about seven thousand coats of arms; and variations. The reason that there are so few actual coats of arms is that at various periods in the nations history when a Pole was enobled for valour, if he did not possess a link with any noble family then the King himself gave him the exclusive right to his (the Kings) personal family arms, virtually admitting the knight into his own family.

The nobility of Poland emerged in one of three ways:

1. Raising to the nobility (enoblement in the pure form).
2. Acceptance to arms by already extant families (adoption).
3. Addition to the roll of Polish nobility of foreign noble families (naturalization). Naturalized families were in the main persucuted Scots and Irish catholics whose arms were western in origin.

As previously stated the nobility of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth shunned the establishment of chivalric orders and also the conferral of titles which created an organisation of precedence among a group of equals. The Old nobility of Poland

zealously guarded the principle of equality with very few exceptions. The majority of titles obtained by Polish families are foreign in origin and as there are so few, these families can be listed and dated quite accurately.

In ancient Poland, the only title that existed was that of 'Prince' from the various dynastic lines of the Piast and Jagiellon families. As well as these dynastic titles, three families were created Princes by the Polish Diet (parliament), one family (Zajaczkowki) was created Prince by Czar Alexander I in his capacity as King of Poland, one Lithuanian family (Borkowski) received the title of Prince through the Polish fiefdom of Samogitia, and a further five families received the title of Prince from the Holy Roman Empire.

They are as follows:

#### PRINCE (Polish Families)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Year</b>
Czartoryski	Dynastic	1569
Czetwertynski	Dynastic	1843
Gedroic	Dynastic	1865
Jablonowski	Holy Roman Empire	1775
Lubecki	Dynastic	1488
Lubomirski	Holy Roman Empire	1647
Massalski	Dynastic	1862
Oginski	Dynastic	1486
Ossolinski	Holy Roman Empire	1633
Poniatowski	Poland	1764
Poninski	Poland	1733
Puzyna	Poland	1823
Radzwill	Holy Roman Empire	1547
Sanguszko	Dynastic	1569
Sapieha	Dynastic	1824
Sulkowski	Holy Roman Empire	1752
Woroniecki	Dynastic	1824
Zajaczek	Russia	1818

#### PRINCE (Lithuanian Families)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Year</b>
Borkowski	Samogitia	1499
Glinski	Dynastic	1505
Kurcewicz	Dynastic	1528
Lukomski	Dynastic	1564
Podhorski	Dynastic	1563

Polubinski	Dynastic	1399
Szujski	Dynastic	1534
Swirski	Dynastic	1508

There is one Polish family that was confirmed by right of primogeniture with the title of Margrave:

#### MARGRAVE

Gonzaga-Myszkowski- Wielopolski*	Russia	1879
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Only one Polish family was ever conferred with the title of Count by the Polish Diet:

#### COUNT

Chodkiewicz	Poland	1568
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At the time of the final partition of Poland in 1795, there were only eight families who held a foreign title of Count, from various fonts of honour. They are as follows:

Butler (1651), Krasicki (1631), Latański (1538), Moszynski (1730), Przerembski (1637), Sokolnicki (1683), Tarnowski (1547), Wielopolski (1656).

After the partitions the following Polish families received titles from a variety of fonts of honour of the various foreign monarchies and states that existed at the time, they are:

#### COUNT (Papal Title)

Brzozowski\* (1897), Czonowski\* (1897), Koczorowski\* (1871), Kurnatowski\* (1902), Lasocki\* (1869).

**Note:** All Papal titles are passed on by primogeniture.

#### COUNT (Holy Roman Empire and Austria)

Badeni (1846), Baworowski (1779), Bielski (1895), Bobrowski (1800), Borch (1783), Dunin-Borkowski (1819), Choloniewski (1798), Debicki (1789), Drohojowski (1783), Dzieduszycki (1776), Goluchowski (1783), Dzieduszycki (1776), Goluchowski (1783), Jablonowski-Grzymala (1779), Jezierski (1801), Kalinowski (1818), Komorowski-Korczak (1793), Konarski (1783), Korytowski (1893), Koziembrodzki (1781), Krasicki (1631), Ledochowski (1800), Lubieniecki (1783), Los (1783), Michalowski (1885), Morsztyn (1915), Osiecimski-Czapski (1907), Ostorog (1783), Pininski (1780), Potocki (1777), Rey (1806), Romer (1818), Rozwadowski (1783), Russocki (1800), Ryzyszczewski (1845), Siemienski-Lewicki (1779), Sierakowski (1775), Skarbek (1778), Stadnicki (1783), Starzenski (1780), Szeptycki (1871), Tarnowski (1547), Wielhorski (1787), Wielopolski (1656), Wisniewski (1876), Wodzicki (1799), Wolanski (1886), Zabielski (1808), Zabiello (1888), Zaleski (1913), Zaluski (1776), Zamoyski (1778), Zborowski (1792).

## COUNT (Prussia)

Bninski (1798), Czapski (1804), Czarnecki\* (1854), Drambski (1825), Grabowski-Topor (1816), Gurowski (1787), Krasinski (1798), Kwilecki (1816), Lubienski (1798), Miaczynski (1853), Mielzynski (1786), Mycielski (1822), Ostrowski (1798), Poninski (1782), Potulicki (1780), Raczynski (1824), Skorzewski\* (1840), Sokolnicki (1817), Szembek (1816), Taczanowski/Dassanowsky\* (1857), Zoltowski\* (1840).

**Note:** \* Those families with an asterisk following the surname received titles that are passed on by primogeniture.

## COUNT (Russia)

Czacki (1897), Grocholski (1881), Kaszowski-Ilinski (1902), Kossakowski (1843), Mostowski (1843), Moszczenski (1856), Ostorog-Wolski (1903), Ozarowski (1838), Plater (1774), Ronikier (1850), Tyszkiewicz (1861).

## COUNT (Saxony)

Breza (1889), Suminski (1870).

## COUNT (Italy)

Orlowski\* (1879).

**Note:** This title is passed on by primogeniture.

The title of Baron appears amongst Polish families only after the year of Our Lord 1780. Those families that hold the title of Baron are as follows:

## BARON (Austria)

Blazowski (1780), Borowski-Jastrebiec (1808), Chledowski (1884), Dulksi (1782), Gostowski (1782), Heydel (1826), Horoch (1791), Lewartowski (1783).

## BARON (France)

Chlapowski\* (1811), Skarzynsi\* (1814).

**Note:** These French titles are passed on by primogeniture.

## BARON (Prussia)

Grotthus (1844)

## BARON (Russia)

Puszet (1826), Kosinski (1836)

This then is the complete list of titled families of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and as can reasonably be expected a number of these families are now extinct. This list is complete only to the year of Our Lord 1918, and it does not include those 'adopted'

titles that are used by a similar number of Polish noble families. At the present time the Russian College is embarking on a major publication known as "THE GOLDEN BOOK OF THE WORLDS NOBILITY" which hopes to include those titles received by Polish and Lithuanian noblemen in the 20th century.

Those families shown with an asterisk following the surname received titles that are passed on only to the eldest child and this includes all Papal titles. Most of the other titles shown are inherited by all children; daughters lose their right to a title upon marriage but acquire any titles held by their husband.

In conclusion, the titled families of the Commonwealth of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania number twenty-six Princes, one Margrave, ninety-nine Counts and thirteen Barons. (This information was taken from the Konarski booklet, *Heraldyce i Heraldycznym Snobizmie*, pgs28 - 35, under the heading Tytuly and was very kindly translated by Chevalier Leonard J. Suligowski).

The **Polish Nobility Association** (Founded 1918) - Celebrating over 75 years as a continuing Nobility/Heraldry organization in the lands which make up the Polish/Lithuanian Commonwealth.

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