

The Galdi Family from Caposele

The first traces in Caposele of the Galdi surname

The surname Galdi is attested in the Salerno area, and has left several traces in Caposele already in the past centuries. In particular I found the following families with members with the surname Galdi:

- Luca Farina, who lived in the 1700s, originating from Coperchia di Salerno, was the son of Francesco and Maddalena Galdi, presumably they too originally came from Coperchia. This family had no children registered in Caposele.
- Lorenzo Vitamore and Giovannina Galdi (who lived in the late 1700s - early 1800s): they had several children (six), who probably left the town as there are no descendants in Caposele. The Vitamores of Caposele were wealthy, and linked to the Santorelli and Ceres families (branch of Don Amato Ceres). I have not found information on the origin of Giovannina Galdi.

In these first two cases, the surname Galdi has therefore left no trace in Caposele, given that the surname is handed down through the male, and there are no descendants as well, as both the couple had no children, or, when they did, these in turn have not had any in our town.



Paintings on the ceiling of the mother church of Caposele: Alfonso Galdi worked on the two angels

Alfonso Galdi "lu pittor"

The stable entry of the surname Galdi in Caposele is due to the relatively recent arrival of Alfonso Galdi. Alfonso Assunto Saverio Gaetano, this is his full name, was a native of Salerno, as shown in the marriage certificate. He moved to the town around 1905, shortly before the start of the works for the Pavoncelli gallery. He was a church restorer, sculptor and painter, and initially worked in the mother church of Caposele, where he was assigned the task of restoring some works. His specialization included the ability to work on various religious and artistic works in churches: statues, paintings, stuccos, etc. Among his works in the mother church, we recall the restoration of the decorated ceiling, and of the two angels above the



Alfonso Galdi with his eldest son, Vincenzo

main altar. After completing his activity in the mother church, he worked in other churches, both in Caposele (eg in the church of Sanità) and in the neighboring villages. If necessary, to supplement his income he did not disdain to work as a house painter.



Painting made entirely by Alfonso Galdi, professional restorer (painter and sculptor)

In Caposele Alfonso Galdi met Giuseppina Freda, whom he married in 1910. By examining the birth certificates of the children, we know that the first house, probably rented, was in via Bovio (1911). Later it was in via Castello (1913), then in via Garibaldi (1915), then in via Fossi (1923). Finally, the family home was purchased at Pianello, adjacent to current Grazia Cibellis' physiotherapy studio.

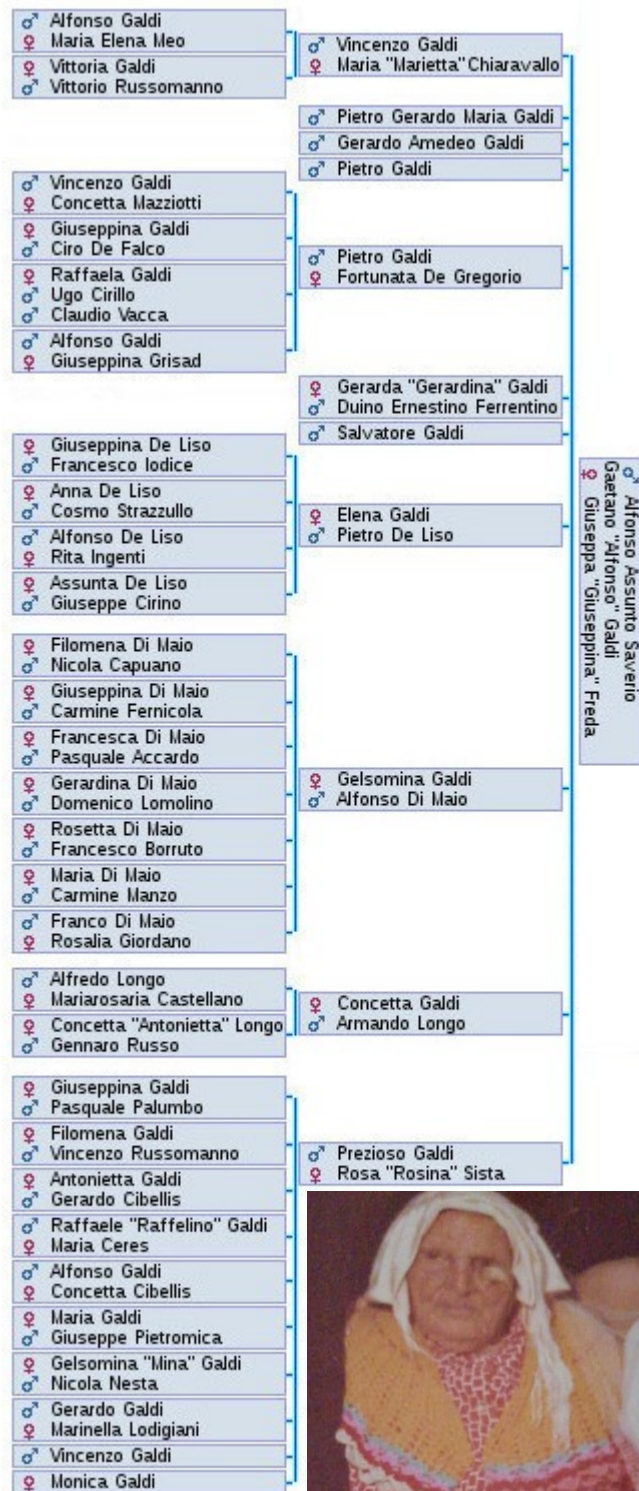
His working activity soon made him known to Caposele as Alfonso "lu pittor", and his wife Giuseppina "P'ppina la pititora". Also for the descendants "lu pittor" has become synonymous with the surname Galdi.

For his personal delight, Alfonso also devoted himself to non-commissioned works: the family remembers a painting of the Madonna with the Child Jesus and others of saints, a statue of the Child Jesus and a hand of Jesus (both sculptures were loaned, and were lost). When Alfonso passed away, in 1950, a fair number of works, paintings or sculptures had accumulated: in the village it was said that it was a fortune! On the evening of the earthquake only the roof collapsed, but luckily Giuseppina slept only in that house, and at the moment of the shock she was with her son Prezioso, in an apartment opposite, and she saved her life. The works had not been destroyed, but in the night they went to steal them as happened to so many others, and "P'ppina la pititora" was left with nothing.

The descendants of Alfonso Galdi

Alfonso Galdi and Giuseppina Freda had numerous descendants, but at the beginning their married life was marred by grief. At the time of the events, October 1917, the family was constituted, in addition to the parents, by the eldest son Vincenzo, 6 years old, Pietro Gerardo of 4, Gerardo of 2 and the newborn Pietro. Within 3 or 4 months, by January 1918 the three minor children perished, and only the eldest son Vincenzo was saved. The cause of their death is not known, perhaps it was Spanish flu, although officially this epidemic began in January 1918. It may be that the virus had already been circulating for a few months, as is also hypothesized for the current covid-19 pandemic? What is handed down in the family is that the pain of losing 3 of her 4 children was so strong that Giuseppina temporarily lost her hair.

Subsequently the family did not give up, and in January 1918 a boy was born who was given, once again, the name of Pietro. Although it was still in the midst of the Spanish pandemic (which ended in 1920), Pietro grew up and had numerous offspring. After him, fifth male child in a row, 4 daughters were born, interspersed with Salvatore (7th born), who was also unlucky and died only one year old in 1923. The daughters were, in order: Gerardina (born in 1921), Elena (b. Between 1922 and 1926), Gelsomina (b. ~ 1927), Concetta (b. 1929). The eleventh and last child, born in 1932, was Prezioso. In total, they had 11 children, of whom 4 died at an early age .



Giuseppina Freda, wife of Alfonso Galdi

Partial graph of the descendants of Alfonso Galdi (1883-1950) and Giuseppina Freda

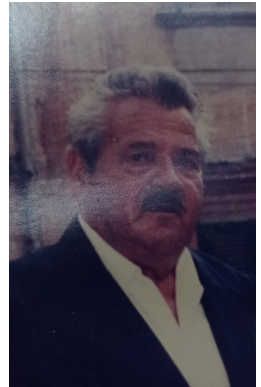
Shortly before the Second World War Alfonso and Giuseppina had been grandparents by their eldest son Vincenzo, who had two children: Alfonso (whose photo with him on the bike appears in Source # 102 on page 66), and Vittoria. Unfortunately Vincenzo was called to the front for the Second World War, and did not return. Of his end we know what Gerardo Monteverde indicated in his work "Terra di Caposele" (available online on the ISSUU-Seleteca platform, just search on Google), which lists the fifty Caposele soldiers who died in the war. Vincenzo died in a prison camp in Herbia village, Palestine in 1945, following gunshot wounds to the temple sustained in combat, and is buried in the "Ramleh British Military Cemetery", about fifty km from Jerusalem.



Pietro Galdi with his wife Fortunata De Gregorio

Even his brother Pietro, in his early twenties, had to leave for the war but was more fortunate: taken prisoner in Africa, he managed to escape from the prison camp and return to Italy. In Naples he met his wife, and there he made a family.

All the children of Alfonso and Giuseppina Freda have settled outside Caposele, with the exception of the youngest son Prezioso, who guaranteed the presence of the family (and surname) Galdi in our town. He was a painter and worker, and finally a janitor in the middle school. Prezioso had 10 children, and I managed to count 22 grandchildren (one of which is his namesake) and 17 great-grandchildren (including an Alfonso Galdi, as the progenitor). The other brothers and sisters of Prezioso settled mainly in Naples: most of the descendants are in this city, and the surname Galdi is still present. The only exceptions were the children of the unfortunate Vincenzo, who fell in the war: Alfonso settled in Rome, Vittoria in Germany. Furthermore, some descendants of Concetta Galdi have settled in the USA. Today none of the children of the progenitor Alfonso is alive anymore: the last one to pass away a few months ago was Concetta, because of covid-19.



Pietro Galdi



Gerardina Galdi



Elena Galdi



Gelsomina Galdi



Concetta Galdi, at the age of 69



Prezioso Galdi



Prezioso Galdi's wedding with Rosina Sista - 1955, Portella locality

As the Galdi family partially emigrated to other places, retrieving all the information on the other branches was not easy, and there is certainly a lack of people. For reasons of space, I had to limit the chart to the first 2 generations. The complete graphic can be found at the address indicated in the QR code (login with username: guest - password: caposele, to access the complete graphic).

Thanks for the help provided to me: Monica Galdi, Prezioso Galdi, Raffelino Galdi, Raffaella Galdi, Vittoria Galdi, Maria De Falco, Antonietta Longo, Rose Longo Cramer, Enzo Russomanno.

Anyone wishing to report any shortcomings or inaccuracies can contact me as indicated below:

- by contacting me by email at pasquale_c@hotmail.com
- on the Facebook group "Caposelese genealogy"
- registering on the site containing the navigable online tree (<http://ars.altervista.org/PhpGedView/index.php>), and contributing directly to data entry



Giuseppina Freda, with various children and grandchildren - 1950s