

## **Sir GIUSEPPE BORG OLIVIER**

When Sir Thomas Maitland was appointed Governor of the Maltese islands in 1813, he carried out reforms in the judicial system and reorganized the Superior Courts of Justice. He created seven judges, one of whom was to be the President of the High Court of Appeal. It was his intention to appoint to the post a member of the English, Scottish or Irish Bar, but no suitable candidate could be found at the time. Consequently, in 1814, Dr Giuseppe Borg Olivier was appointed President as a temporary measure “until a further arrangement is made”.

Giuseppe Borg Olivier was born in Valletta on November 2, 1755. He obtained the degree of J.U.D. (*Juris Utriusque Doctor*) and was authorized to practise as an advocate on 28 June, 1777. He held various legal and judicial posts under the Order of St John, during the French interlude, and in the early days of British rule. He became President of the High Court of Appeal on May 27, 1814. While, however, the other six judges held office during good behaviour – *quamdiu se bene gesserint* – the President’s appointment was effective during His Majesty’s pleasure. In 1815 he was appointed one of the members of the Supreme Council of Justice, presided over by the Governor.

By Letters Patent dated the 27<sup>th</sup> April 1818, he was invested with the Insignia of Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George. When a suitable successor appeared on the scene, Sir Giuseppe resigned his office with effect from the 31 December 1818. He died on 21 February 1831 in his 76<sup>th</sup> year of age.

(Biographical note compiled by Dr Albert Ganado B.A., LL.D., M.O.M.)