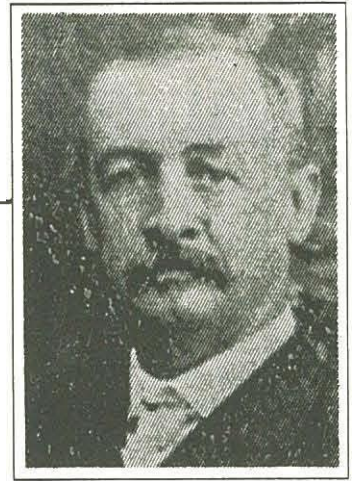


# The Founding Members

## Henry Caracciolo

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Henry Caracciolo was the founder and first President of The Trinidad Field Naturalists' Club. The idea of a club was spawned by him at a meeting of naturalists on 6 August 1890 but it took another year to come to realization – 10 July 1891. It was said at the time that the birth of the club was due to his personality, enthusiasm and persistence and as a result he was elected its first president by the founding members.

Nature and agriculture were his life. He was a successful cocoa planter but he was also interested in citrus and introduced to Trinidad in 1882 the navel orange and the grapefruit.

The following list gives some idea of the scope of his interests and activities:-

1. Fellow of the Linnean Society.
2. Fellow of the Entomological Society of London.
3. Member of the Societe Entomologique de France.
4. Corresponding member of the Zoological Society of London.
5. Trinidad delegate to the 1898 International Congress of Zoology, Cambridge.
6. Honorary member of the Guadeloupe Chambre d'Agriculture.
7. Lecturer on Trinidad at the Imperial Institute, 14 Nov. 1898.
8. Vice-President of the Trinidad branch of the Societe Literaire de Paris.
9. Agricultural Society gold medalist for natural history exhibits 1891.

The club flourished until 1907 "when through the dispersion of most of its active members to other parts of the island and elsewhere, it lapsed into a state of inactivity, became languid, and eventually lay

dormant". Caracciolo revived it in 1924 being re-elected President at the meeting of 7 March 1924.

Caracciolo was a descendent of an old noble family of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilys (Southern Sicily and Sicily) where at the end of the 18th century, of his immediate ancestors, one had been Viceroy and Prime Minister of the Kingdom, the other Admiral of the Fleet. Caracciolo was married and had a son named Harry but little else is known about his family life.

As far as I know, the only living person who remembers him is my mother, his niece and goddaughter. She says that all she remembers is that he was a jolly fellow who always knew everything about nature. However, his name will live on as long as science does, commemorated in the name of the bat *Vampyroides caracciolo caracciolo* which he was the first to collect.