

Esterházy von Galántha



Description of Arms :

Ecartelé : au 1 et 4, d'azur au griffon d'or, posé sur une couronne de même, couronné d'or et tenant de la patte dextre une épée d'argent, le griffon du premier contourné ; au 2 et 3, de gueules au griffon d'or, couronné de même et tenant de la patte dextre trois roses, tigées et feuillées d'argent, chargée de trois roses de gueules ; le griffon du troisième contourné ; sur le tout un écu d'azur, chargé d'un L d'or et timbré d'une couronne royale.

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Principal Title : H.S.H. Prince Esterházy von Galántha.

Creation : Imperial, 1687.

Subsidiary Titles : Princely Count of Edelstetten (1804), Count of Forchtenstein (1626).

Family Name : Esterházy von Galántha.

Family History : This is possibly the most famous of all the families that originated in Hungary. It traces its descent to Benedict Esterhas, who was known to be living in 1550 but probably died soon afterwards. He married Helen Bessesyey de Galántha, an important heiress, and the family had started its ascent.

Their grandson, now known as Nikolaus Esterházy de Galántha was first created an Hungarian baron and then count. By 1687, the head of the family was raised to the level of Prince of the Empire. Originally, this was *ad personam*. By 1712, the honour was extended to sons on a primogeniture basis and then, finally, to all main line descendants in 1783.

The Esterházys gradually acquired great wealth and possessions. They are also known for their patronage of Joseph Haydn, the composer. He was master of music at the family palace, where he received a pension and encouragement. At that time, it was essential for a struggling artist to attract the support of someone of wealth and position. And such was the predominance of Austria, as the cultural centre of Europe, that many such patrons were to be found near the seat of the Empire. An appointment such as Haydn's enabled the recipient to concentrate on his art and not run the risk of starvation or an early death from disease, a fate that awaited less fortunate confrères. Another such was Mozart, whose father Leopold maintained close relations with the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg. It must be said, at the same time, that many of these patrons were very cultured people, themselves. Some have been criticised for over-influencing those in their sphere but much music, and other artistic products, would never have seen the light of day without them.

The Esterhazys are amongst the mediatised princes and are addressed as Serene Highness.

Esterházy

Benedict Esterhas (?-1552)
= (1526) Helene Besseney de Galantha

Nikolaus Esterhazy de Galantha (1583-1645),
Baron Pozsony (1613), Count of Forchtenstein (1626)

Paul (1635-1713), Baron Esterházy de Galántha, Count of Forchtenstein,
1st Prince Esterhazy de Galantha (1687)

Nicolas Koseph (1762-1790)
Prince Esterházy de Galaántha

Paul- Antony (1786-1866), Prince Esterházy de Gaáantha
= Sarah Child-Villiers

