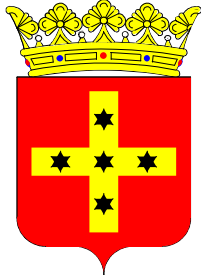


Auerstaedt



Description of Arms :

De gueules à la croix d'or, chargée de cinq molettes de sable.

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Principal Title : Duke of Auerstaedt.

Creation : First French Empire, 1808 ; re-established 1864, by imperial decree, in favour of a nephew of the *Maréchal*, who had died without direct male heirs in 1853.

Subsidiary Titles : The first Duke was also Prince d'Eckmühl but it is probable that this title is now extinct.

Family Name : Davout (but see also d'Avout).

Family History : This family claims existence since 1380, though documentary evidence is of a more recent date. That is not to say that the claims are incorrect, word of mouth and personal knowledge were often as important as pieces of paper. It is also interesting that, even today, members of the family appear to have not entirely decided on whether or not to use the "particule" in front of their name. It might be helpful to point out that the particule (de, du, de la, etc ...) is not a guarantee of nobility.

Louis Nicolas Davout came from a family that had claimed nobility since 1637 or even earlier; indeed it is claimed that traces go back as far 1380. But it is fair to say that they had not made much of a mark until the arrival of Louis. He joined the army and came to the attention of one Napoleon Bonaparte. Louis Davout was nineteen when the French Revolution broke out and so was just the right age to profit from the upward climb of the Corsican. Napoleon was looking for able and "lucky" generals, not for ones of established lineage.

Davout proved to be one of the most able military commanders of his age and was rewarded with the titles of Duke d'Auerstaedt and Prince d'Eckmühl, both commemorating campaign successes. Davout died in 1823 and was succeeded by son ; but there the line ran out. The son died in 1853.

However, the affection and regard of the Bonapartes for this family seems to have persisted, because a nephew of the old *maréchal* was reaccorded the dukedom, in 1864, by the Emperor Napoleon III. This line continues to this day.

Another branch of the family was raised to the rank of Baron of the Empire. The ducal and baronial lines call themselves Davout, the rest prefer d'Avout.

Auerstaedt

Branch of Baron
of Empire (1808)

Branch d'Annoux : Duke of Auerstaedt (1808),
and Prince of Eckmühl (1809)

