

Brissac



Description of Arms :

De sable à trois fascés d'or dencchées sur le bord inferieur.

[Index](#)

Principal Title : Duke of Brissac.

Creation : France, 1611.

Subsidiary Titles : Count (1560), Baron (1808) and Count of the French Empire (1812). A branch was raised by the King of Spain to the rank of Prince of Robech, with style of Grandee, in 1713, but died out a century later. It is now in the Lévis-Mirepoix family.

Family Name : Cossé.

Family History : In 1180, Roland de Cossé set sail with Saint Louis for the Holy Land. Unlike his king, he seems to have arrived in Palestine and is known to have died there. René de Cossé bought the domaine of Brissac, in 1492, and by the XVI Century, they had been made counts, a rather more important title then than now.

By 1611, the head of the family had been promoted to the rank of Duke de Brissac. Late in the XVIII Century, the title of Duke of Cossé was also accorded, but on a non-hereditary basis.

Louis-Hercule de Cossé, Duke de Brissac, was Governor of Paris but died - during the Terror in 1792 - without leaving an heir. The title then passed to his cousin, Timoléon, 1775-1848. This gentleman then gained various Empire titles, up to and including that of hereditary duke-peer. It is interesting to note that this was then reduced to the rank of count-peer, when the *majorat* was correspondingly reduced. The old duchy, of course, remains.

This, then is a very old and distinguished family. More, it has produced no fewer than seven *maréchaux de France*, five governors of Paris a grand-master of artillery and others. They have made several important alliances includingly, more practicably, the marriage of the 12th duke into the Creusot family - known for its industrial influence and wealth.

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