

# Cooper

The surname of COOPER was an occupational name 'a maker and seller of wooden caskets or tubs' a common and early trade name leaving many descendants. Occupational surnames originally denoted the actual occupation followed by the individual. At what period they became hereditary is a difficult problem. Many of the occupation names were descriptive and could be varied. In the Middle Ages, at least among the Christian population, people did not usually pursue specialized occupations exclusively to the extent that we do today, and they would, in fact, turn their hand to any form of work that needed to be done, particularly in a large house or mansion, or on farms and smallholdings. In early documents, surnames often refer to the actual holder of an office, whether the church or state. Early records of the name mention Cupere (without surname) 1176 County Surrey. Henry le Cupper was documented in the County of Nottingham, 1273. Willielmus Couper of Yorkshire was listed in the Yorkshire Poll Tax of 1379. Robert Cupper was the bailiff of Yarmouth in the year of 1425. The bulk of European surnames in countries such as England and France were formed in the 13th and 14th centuries. The process started earlier and continued in some places into the 19th century, but the norm is that in the 11th century people did not have surnames, whereas by the 15th century they did. An eminent member of the name was Thomas Cooper (1517-1594) the English prelate and lexicographer, born in Oxford, a tailor's son. He was Master of Magdalen College School, Oxford from 1549 until 1568. Bishop of Lincoln in 1570, and the Bishop of Winchester in 1584. He published a 'Thesaurus Linguae Romanae et Britannicae' which became known as 'Cooper's Dictionary'. William Cooper married Winifred Cope at St. Michaels, Cornhill, London in 1607. James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851), a writer of stories dealing especially with the Red Indians. This English occupational name has been prominent among the Anglo-Irish gentry since the mid-seventeenth century in four counties, particularly in County Sligo. Ireland was one of the earliest countries to evolve a system of hereditary surnames. They came into being fairly generally in the 11th century, and indeed a few were formed before the year 1000. The associated arms are recorded in Sir Bernard Burkes General Armory. Ulster King of Arms in 1884.

ARMS - Argent three martlets gules on a chief engrailed  
of the second as many annulet or

CREST - A lions gamb erect and erased or holding a branch  
vert fructed gules

MOTTO - VIRTUTE  
Virtue