

Griffin

The surname of GRIFFIN was a baptismal name 'the son of Griffin or Griffith' the name of many Welsh princes. Fixed hereditary surnames began to be taken in Wales after the administrative union with England in the 16th century. At first, however, this development was confined to the classes who had dealings with the English bureaucracy, and the adoption of surnames did not become general until the 18th century and after. Early records of the name mention Tuder filius Griffini, during the time of Edward I (1272-1307). John Gryffyn was listed in the Yorkshire Poll Tax of 1379. Gryfin or Gryfeth Leyson registered at Oxford University in the year 1524. Baptised. John, son of Griffyn Hall, at St. James's, Clerkenwell, London in 1564. In many parts of central and western Europe, hereditary surnames began to become fixed at around the 12th century, and have developed and changed slowly over the years. As society became more complex, and such matters as the management of tenure, and in particular the collection of taxes were delegated to special functionaries, it became imperative to distinguish a more complex system of nomenclature to differentiate one individual from another. An eminent member of the name was Bernard Griffin (1899-1956) the English prelate, born in Birmingham. He was educated at the English and Beda Colleges, Rome, and became archbishop of Westminster in 1943, and cardinal in 1946. He toured postwar Europe and America, and in 1950 was papal legate for the centenary celebrations of the reconstitution of the English hierarchy. 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. The associated coat of arms is recorded in Sir Bernard Burkes General Armory. Ulster King of Arms in 1884. At first the coat of arms was a practical matter which served a function on the battlefield and in tournaments. With his helmet covering his face, and armour encasing the knight from head to foot, the only means of identification for his followers, was the insignia painted on his shield, and embroidered on his surcoat, the draped and flowing garment worn over the armour.

ARMS - Sable a griffin argent

CREST - A dog's head sable

MOTTO - NE VILLE VELLIS

Wish nothing base