

# Perez

This French surname PEREZ was from the medieval given name PIERRE, a cognate of Peter meaning 'rock'. The name was extremely popular throughout Christian Europe in the Middle Ages, as it had been bestowed by Christ as a byname on the apostle Simon bar Jonah, the brother of Andrew. The name was chosen for its symbolic significance, and is a translation of the Aramaic 'kefa' meaning a rock. St. Peter is regarded as the founding father of the Christian church, and in Christian Germany in the 14th century was the most frequent given name. The name was also occasionally used as a topographic name for someone who lived on a patch of stony soil or by a large outcrop of rock, originally rendered in ancient documents in the Latin form PETRA. It may also be a metonymic occupational name for a quarryman or stone-carver. The name has travelled widely, and taken many forms. The earliest French hereditary surnames are found in the 12th century, at more or less the same time as they arose in England, but they are by no means common before the 13th century, and it was not until the 15th century that they stabilized to any great extent; before then a surname might be handed down for two or three generations, but then abandoned in favour of another. In the south, many French surnames have come in from Italy over the centuries, and in Northern France, Germanic influence can often be detected. Some of the numerous spellings of the name include LAPIERRE, DELAPIERRE, PIEYRE, PEIRE, LAPIERE, PEREL, PEREAU, PIERRON, PIERO, PERRONET and PEYTONET. A notable member of the name was Francesca Della Piero (1420-1402) the Italian painter born in the provincial town of Borgo San Sepolcro. By 1442 he was the town councillor at Borgo. Although he was overshadowed at the time by his contemporaries, during this century his work has become a favourite from this period. His major work is a series of frescoes illustrating 'The Legend of the True Cross' in the choir of San Francesco at Arezzo, painted in 1452-66. An unfinished 'Nativity' in the London National Gallery shows some Flemish influence. Most of the European surnames were formed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The process had started somewhat earlier and had continued in some places into the 19th century, but the norm is that in the tenth and eleventh centuries people did not have surnames, whereas by the fifteenth century most of the population had acquired a second name.

ARMS - Gules six escallops shells or

CREST - An escallop shell as in the arms

ORIGIN - FRANCE