

Baker

The surname of BAKER was derived from the Old English word BAECERE - an occupational name, a maker and seller of bread. It was a familiar entry in medieval documents. 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 William le Bakere, 1177, County Norfolk. Robert Bakere was documented in County Lancashire in the year 1246. Walter le Baker of the County of Devon was recorded in the year 1273. John le Baker of Yorkshire was listed in the Yorkshire Poll Tax of 1379. Jane Baker was baptised at St. Peters Church, Cornhill, London in 1555. Sir Richard Baker (1568-1645) was the English historian born in Kent. He was the high sheriff of Oxfordshire in 1620. In 1635, he was thrown into the Fleet Prison for debt. There he wrote his 'Chronicle of the King's of England' in 1643, which dealt with the Roman period until his own day. 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 flowing and draped garment worn over the armour.

