

Lee

SURNAMES as we know them today were first assumed in Europe from the 11th to the 15th Century. They were not in use in England or in Scotland before the Norman Conquest, and were first found in the Domesday Book. The employment in the use of a second name was a custom that was first introduced from the Normans. They themselves had not long before adopted them. It became, in course of time, a mark of gentler blood, and it was deemed a disgrace for gentlemen to have but one single name, as the meaner sort had. It was not until the reign of Edward II (1307-1327) it became general practice amongst all people. This name was derived from the Old English word LEAH 'the dweller at the meadow or pasture'. Local names usually denoted where a man held his land, and indicated where he actually lived. Early records of the name mention Henry de la Lee, County Cambridge, 1273. Johannes del Lee of Yorkshire, was listed in the Yorkshire Poll Tax of 1379. Ann, daughter of Walter Lee was baptised at St. Jame's, Clerkenwell, London in 1565. Henry, son of William Lea, was baptised at the same church in the year 1682. John Lea and Elizabeth Baker were married at St. George's, Hanover Square, London in the year 1799. 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. Since the dawn of civilisation the need to communicate has been a prime drive of all higher mankind. The more organised the social structure became, the more urgent the need to name places, objects and situations essential to the survival and existence of the social unit. From this common stem arose the requirements to identify families, tribes and individual members evolving into a pattern in evidence today. In the formation of this history, common usage of customs, trades, locations, patronymic and generic terms were often adopted as surnames. The demands of bureaucracy formally introduced by feudal lords in the 11th century, to define the boundaries and families within their fiefdoms, crystallized the need for personal identification and accountability, and surnames became in general use from this time onwards.

ARMS - Argent on a pale between two leopards
faces sable three crescent or

CREST - On a ducal coronet or a leopards face sable

MOTTO - EXEGI
I have accomplished it