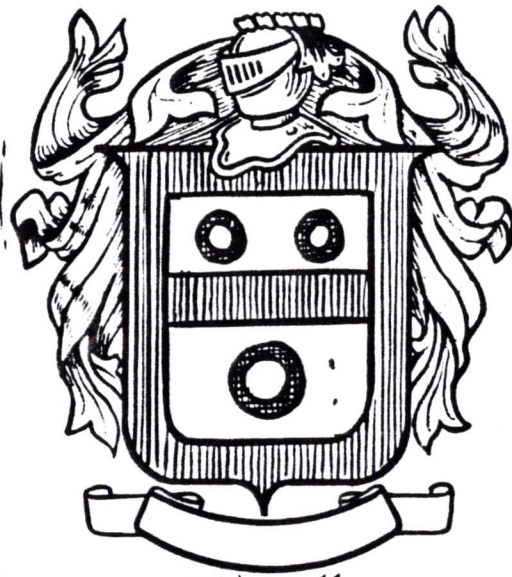


Coat of Arms

Historiography

The Tidwell Coat of Arms illustrated left was drawn by an heraldic artist from information officially recorded in ancient heraldic archives. Documentation for the Tidwell Coat of Arms design can be found in Burke's General Armory. Heraldic artists of old developed their own unique language to describe an individual Coat of Arms. In their language, the Arms (shield) is as follows:


"Ar. a fess betw. three annulets sa. a border engr. gu."



Tidwell

When translated the blazon also describes the original colors of the Tidwell Arms as it appeared centuries ago. Family mottos are believed to have originated as battle cries in medieval times. A Motto was not recorded with this Tidwell Coat of Arms. Individual surnames originated for the purpose of more specific identification. The four primary sources for second names were: occupation, location, father's name, or personal characteristics. The surname Tidwell appears to be locational in origin, and is believed to be associated with the English, meaning, "one who came from Tideswell (Tidi's stream), in Derbyshire." The supplementary sheet included with this report is designed to give you more information to further your understanding of the origin of names. Different spellings of the same original surname are a common occurrence. Dictionaries of surnames indicate probable spelling variations of Tidwell to be Tidswell, Tiddswell, Tideswell, and Tidsall. Although bearers of the old and distinguished Tidwell name comprise a small fraction of the population there are a number who have established for it a significant place in history. They include: RICHARD T. TIDWELL (Tidswell) (fl. 1850) British legal writer. His published works include, "A New Law of Marriage and Divorce", written in 1857 with W. Holdsworth, "Practice and Evidence in Divorce Cases", written in 1860 with R.D.M. Littler, and, "Inn-Keeper's Legal Guide", written in 1864. JOSIAH BLAKE TIDWELL (1870-1946) American Clergyman and educator. Was a teacher, President, and business manager in Decatur, Texas, for the Baptist College, between the years 1898 and 1909. Professor of Biblical literature for Baylor University in 1910ff. Author of many Biblical works, among them, "The Bible, Book by Book", written in 1914 and revised in 1922, and "Christian Teachings About Social Problems", written in 1940. ROBERT E. TIDWELL (b. 1883) American educator and Director of the Alabama State Department. Between 1918 and 1920, he was a teacher for the Training Service, and Professor of education for Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama (1954ff.). Representative to U.N.E.S.C.O. from 1948 to 1949, and educational consultant in Baghdad, Iraq in 1957. No genealogical representation is intended or implied by this report and it does not represent individual lineage or your family tree.





YOUR NAME AND YOUR COAT OF ARMS -- -- Priceless Gifts From History

Until about 1100 A.D. most people in Europe had only one name (This is still true in some primitive countries today). As the population increased it became awkward to live in a village wherein perhaps 1/3 of the males were named John, another sizable percentage named William, and so forth.

And so, to distinguish one John from another a second name was needed. There were four primary sources for these second names. They were: a man's occupation, his location, his father's name or some peculiar characteristic of his. Here are some examples.

Occupation: The local house builder, food preparer, grain grinder and suit maker would be named respectively: John Carpenter, John Cook, John Miller, and John Taylor.

Location: The John who lived over the hill became known as John Overhill, the one who dwelled near a stream might be dubbed John Brook or perhaps John Atbrook.

Patronymical: (father's name): Many of these surnames can be recognized by the termination---son, such as Williamson, Jackson, etc. Some endings used by other countries to indicate "son" are: Armenian's---ian, Dane's and Norwegian's---sen, Finn's---nen, Greek's---pulos, Spaniard's---ez, and Pole's---wicz. Prefixes denoting "son" are the Welsh---

Ap, the Scot's and Irish---Mac, and the Norman's---Fitz. The Irish O' incidentally denotes grandfather.

Characteristic: An unusually small person might be labeled Small, Short, Little or Lytle. A large man might be named Longfellow, Large, Lang, or Long. Many persons having characteristics of a certain animal would be given the animal's name. Examples: a sly person might be named Fox; a good swimmer, Fish; a quiet man, Dove; etc.

In addition to needing an extra name for identification, one occupational group found it necessary to go a step further. The fighting man: The fighting man of the Middle Ages wore a metal suit of armor for protection. Since this suit of armor included a helmet that completely covered the head, a knight in full battle dress was unrecognizable. To prevent friend from attacking friend during the heat of battle, it became necessary for each knight to somehow identify himself. Many knights accomplished this by painting colorful patterns on their battle shields. These patterns were also woven into cloth surcoats which were worn over a suit of armor. Thus was born the term, "Coat of Arms."

As this practice grew more popular, it became more and more likely that two knights unknown to each other might be using the same insignia. To prevent this, records were kept that granted the

right to a particular pattern to a particular knight. His family also shared his right to display these arms. In some instances, these records have been preserved and/or compiled into book form. The records list the family name and an exact description of the "Coat of Arms" granted to that family.

Interest in heraldry is increasing daily. This is especially true among people who have a measure of family pride and who resent attempts of our society to reduce each individual to a series of numbers stored somewhere in a computer. In our matter-of-fact day and age, a "Coat of Arms" is one of the rare devices remaining that can provide an incentive to preserve our heritage. We hope you'll agree that it is much more than just a wall decoration.

If you are interested in a more in-depth study of the subject of this paper, may we suggest you contact the genealogical department of any fair-sized public library. We especially recommend the "Dictionary of American Family Names" published by Harper & Row and also "The Surnames of Scotland" available from the New York Public Library as excellent sources on the meaning of surnames.

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