



BODIAM CASTLE

THE MOST
DISTINGUISHED
SURNAME
APSEY

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ORIGINS

The name Apsey dates back to the days of the Anglo-Saxon tribes of Britain. It is derived from their residence near one or more notable aspen trees. The surname Apsey is derived from the Old English word "æpse," which means "aspen." The surname may also be a nickname in jest, for a timid person, referring to the trembling leaves of the tree.

ANCIENT HISTORY

Apsey is a surname which has withstood the test of time. Throughout the ages this Anglo-Saxon family has been an intrinsic part of the society to which it belonged. Over the centuries the Apsey family has influenced, and in turn been influenced by, the course of history.

Historians have carefully researched the ancient manuscripts. Documents such as the Domesday Book, compiled in 1086 A.D. on the command of William the Conqueror, were used during the course of research. Other sources include the Ragman Rolls (1291-1296), a record of homage rendered to King Edward 1st of England, the Curia Regis Rolls, the Pipe Rolls, the Hearth Rolls, parish registers, baptismals, tax and other records. The first record of the name Apsey was discovered in the county of Middlesex in southern England where they held a family seat from very ancient times. During the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, unlike many Saxon families, bearers of this name managed to hold onto much of their holdings and these are recorded in the Domesday Book, (DB) a census taken in 1086 by King William of all land holders.

SPELLING VARIATIONS

Records show that the Apsey surname underwent a variety of spelling interpretations, many of which are still in use today. References to bearers of the surname occurred in many manuscripts, and from time to time was sometimes spelt Apps, Apse, Abbs, Abb, App, Apsey, Epps, Ebbs, Epsey, Epp and Ebband these different versions of the name even occurred between father and son. Many spelling variations occur in records indicating the same person. For example, it was quite common for a person to be born with one spelling, married with another and have yet another appear on his or her gravestone. Church officials or scribes spelt the name as it was told to them, phonetically.

EARLY HISTORY

Records indicate that the distinguished family name Apsey is descended originally from Anglo-Saxon stock. The Saxons were led by Commanders Hengist and Horsa and settled in England from the Rhine Valley in about the year 400 A.D. At first they settled on the southeast coast, but by the 5th century they had already begun probing north and westward, slowly advancing to the Welsh border. During the next four hundred years they forced the ancient Britons back into Wales and Cornwall to the west, and as far north as Cumbria and Southern Scotland. The Angles, on the other hand, occupied the eastern coast, the south folk in Suffolk, the north folk in Norfolk. On the east coast the Angles frequently ravaged north as far as Northumbria and the Scottish border. Anglo-Saxon rule prevailed for five centuries with the nation divided into five separate kingdoms. A high king was elected as supreme ruler. In the 9th century the rival kingdoms were unified, but threats from outside of England meant that peace was hard to achieve. In 1066 the Norman invasion from France and their victory at the Battle of Hastings, meant that many of the vanquished Saxon land owners lost their land to Duke William and his invading nobles. In 1070, Duke William devastated the north with an army of 40,000 men. Many Saxons and rebellious Norman landowners fled north over the border into Scotland.

Over time peace was restored to the land and the Apsey family emerged as notable Englishmen in Middlesex, but by the 15th century they had moved north to Durham where they held large estates and their seat was at Cleadon. There was a Somerset family bearing the name Apsey, who claim to trace their lineage to Thomas de Apse, who held lands in that county during the reign of Edward II (1307-27). One branch of bearers of this name had family seats in the Hall, Barrow Point Hill, and Pinner in Middlesex.

EARLY NOTABLES

Distinguished members of the family at this time included App of Cleadon.

THE GREAT MIGRATION

Turmoil at home made the New World appear attractive to many families in England. They immigrated to Canada, the United States, Australia, and to continental Europe. Bearers of the Apsey family name risked the hazardous voyage to start a new life in new lands. This decision to emigrate was never made casually, for while there were hardships at home, the journey across the sea was so perilous that up to 40 percent of a ship's passengers would not reach their destination.

SETTLERS

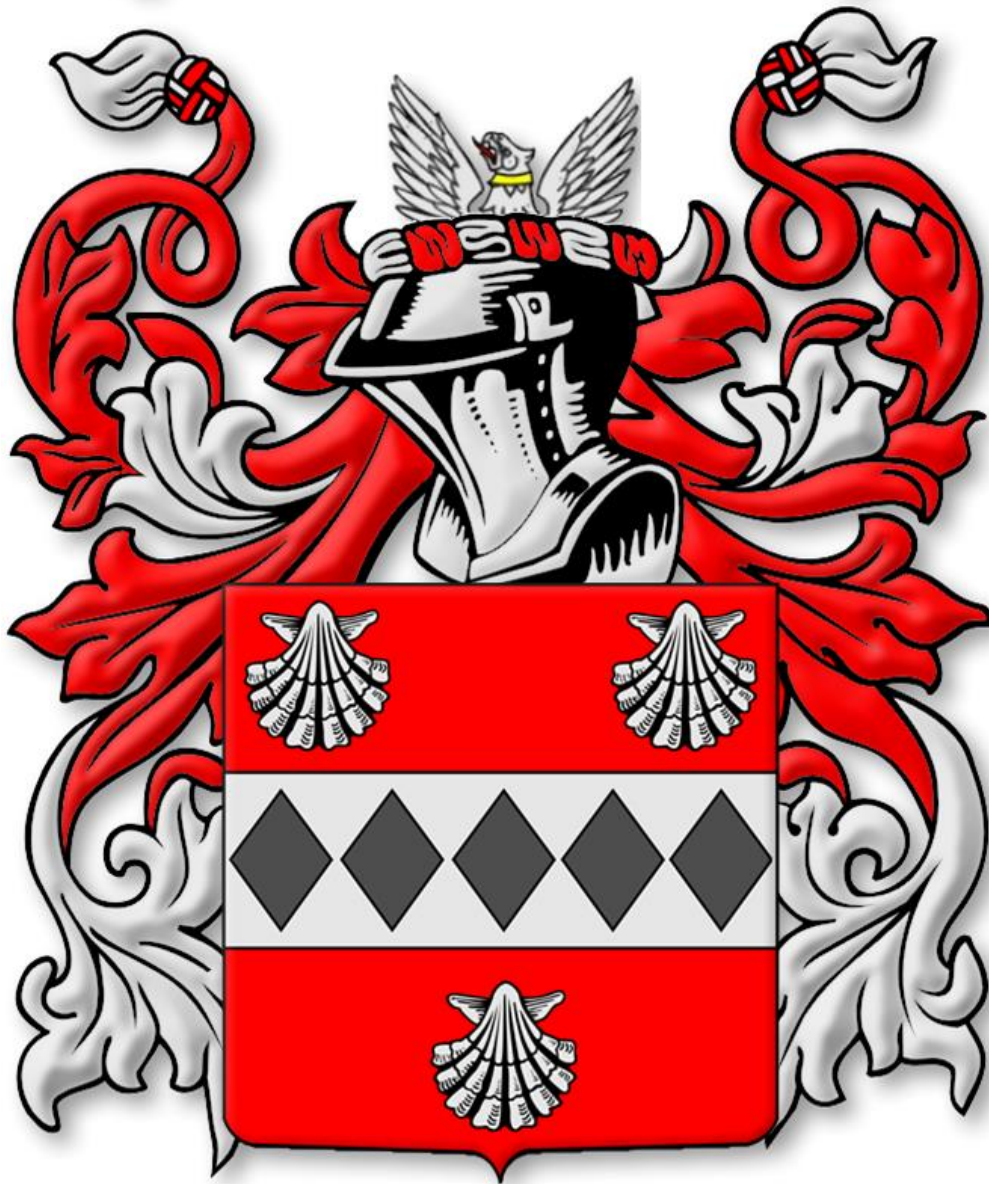
There are 112 settlers with similar origins in the Appendix.

CURRENT NOTABLES

Canada was among the destinations selected by these immigrants. The first European colonists to come to Canada were of French origin, arriving in the 17th century. However, it was inevitable that the French empire came to be challenged, and at the end of the Seven Years War, in 1763, Canada was ceded to the British. Soon after this, the first large group of English speaking immigrants arrived in Canada: they were the United Empire Loyalists who arrived in the decades during and following the American Revolution. Most of the Loyalists settled in the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes region. It was not until nearly a century after this that Canada began to develop into the great nation it is today. After Confederation, Canada acquired Rupert's Land, and this, along with other contributing factors, marked the beginning of westward expansion. Soon, this western frontier attracted immigrants from all the European nations.

There are 51 notables with similar origins in the Appendix.

In Te Domine Speravi



Apsey

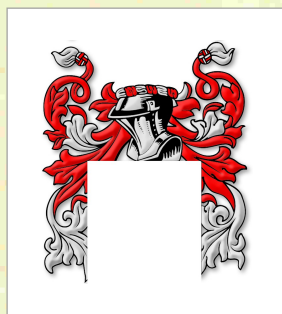
SYMBOLISM

INTRODUCTION

The practice of representing people with symbols is ancient, and in England this habit evolved with feudal society into a system of distinctive devices on shields. The heralds developed an extensive armory that had the important function of distinguishing members of the upper class from each other, whether at court or on the battlefield. Since then, heraldry has grown into a complex field with many rules and a terminology that requires some knowledge to interpret.



ACHIEVEMENT OF ARMS OF
APSEY



MANTLE OF APSEY

An Achievement of Arms such as the Apsey arms depicted on the left typically consists of these parts: the Escrolls, displaying the family motto and name, the family crest (if any) seen above the helmet, the actual Coat of arms (also known as 'arms,' or 'the shield'), the Helmet depicted below the crest, the Torse on top of the helmet, and the Mantle draped from the helmet. Each of these elements will be described below. Supporters were a later addition to the Achievement; they are somewhat rare, and are usually personal to the grantee.

The mantle was spread over and draped from the helmet and served as a protection, 'to repel the extremities of wet, cold, and heat, and to preserve the armour from rust.' The numerous cuts and slits suggest that it had been torn and hacked on the field of battle. The style or design of the mantling is up to the individual heraldic artist, and it is usually depicted in the main color and metal from the shield. The helmet (or Helm) varied in shape in different ages and countries, often depicting rank. The Esquire's Helm, as depicted here, is generally shown silver, with a closed visor and facing to the dexter (its right). On top of the helmet is a Torse or wreath which was formed by two pieces of silk twisted together. Its purpose was to hold the crest and mantle on the Helm.

MOTTO

The motto was originally a war cry or slogan. Mottoes first began to be shown with arms in the 14th and 15th centuries, but were not in general use until the 17th century. Thus the oldest coats of arms generally do not include a motto. Mottoes seldom form part of the grant of arms: Under most heraldic authorities, a motto is an optional component of the coat of arms, and can be added to or changed at will; many families have chosen not to display a motto.

The motto for the Apsey coat of arms displayed here is:

IN TE DOMINE SPERAVI

This translates as:

IN THEE, O LORD, I HAVE PLACED MY HOPE.

SHIELD

Shields (or Escutcheons) at first were painted simply with one or more bands of color or 'ordinaries'. Later, the ordinaries were used in conjunction with other figures or symbols.

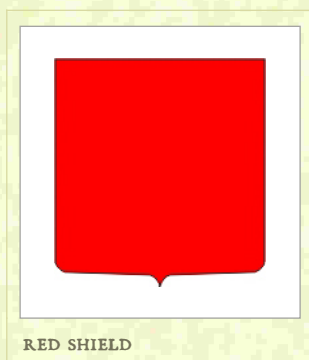
The Coat of Arms for the surname Apsey can be described as follows:



THE APSEY SHIELD

APSEY ARMS

On a red shield, five black fusils on a silver fesse, between three silver escallops.



RED SHIELD

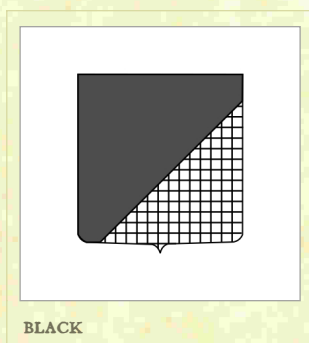
Gules, derived from an Old French word *goules* or *gueules* meaning "throats" translates into modern English as "red" and is the military color for excellence and fortitude. It is symbolic of nobility, boldness and ferocity, and can also represent fire and summer. Some ancient laws restricted its use to princes and their families. Red corresponds to the metal copper and is denoted in engravings by numerous perpendicular lines.

Symbolic Virtues: Red denotes the virtues of charity and courage, and indicates the qualities of valor, patriotism, and creative power. Those who bear a red insignia are obliged to right wrongs and win fame in arms.

Precious Stone: Carnelian, Ruby

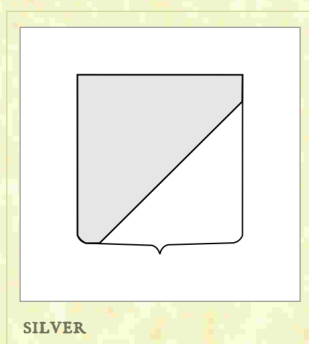
Planet: Mars

Obligations: To right wrongs and win fame in arms



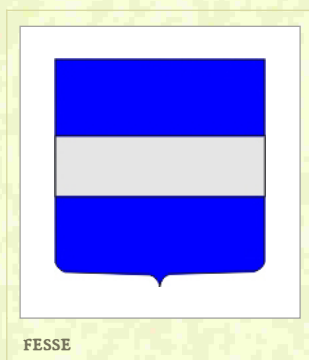
BLACK

Sable (Archaic or literary English for black) or black, the coldest of the colors, corresponds to lead. Black, or "sable," is symbolic of sadness. It also corresponds with winter and is a humble color, suitable for the deeply religious. It denotes the qualities of knowledge, piety, serenity and work. Engravers represent it with numerous horizontal and vertical lines crossing each other.



SILVER

Argent (from the French for silver), or silver is one of the two metals used in heraldry. It is usually represented on a shield by the colors gray or white. This metal represents nobility, peace and serenity. It is associated with the qualities of purity and chastity, because the metal withstands the test of fire.



FESSE

The fesse is a broad, horizontal band across the center of the shield that represents the military belt and girdle of honor of the ancients. It signifies that the bearer must always be in readiness to act for the well being of the people. It is supposed to occupy a full third of the height of the shield, though it is seldom drawn this way, and it is subject to the lines of partition. Its position is directly across the center of the shield unless the fesse is described as enhanced or abased. There can only be one fesse on a shield. If more than one is present then they are termed bars.

THREE

"Three" devices, beasts or ordinaries of the same have a special significance in heraldry. First of all, there is the obvious reference to the Trinity in the design that would signify observance of the Christian doctrine. Secondly, with many Arms it brings balance that is steeped in tradition. To better understand this latter scenario, we must look at the evolution of shield in personal armory. Kite shields that were the most popular from the the 10th-14th century evolved into Heater shields that had flat tops c. 1250. This was the time of heraldry's beginnings and when "three" objects were used for balance in each corner of the shield. Later, with the advent of the "chief," "chevron" and "bend" three devices brought balance to these ordinaries too.



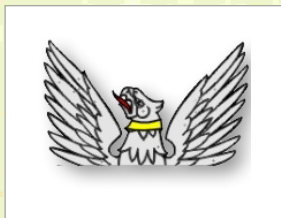
ESCALLOPS

ESCALLOPS

The escallop is one of the most widely used heraldic symbols in all countries. Before the days of heraldry the symbol was the emblem of St. James, the patron saint of pilgrims and consequently the escallop became a badge worn by all pilgrims attached to hook or hat. The escallop was introduced into armory to signify a soldier who had made long journeys or voyages to far countries, borne considerable naval command, or gained great victories. It is an emblem of safe travel and is found on the shields of many families during the time of the crusades. Because its shells, once separated, can never be rejoined, the escallop is also an emblem of fidelity.

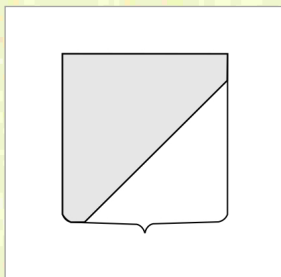
THE CREST

The Crest was worn on top of the helmet, and was usually made of wood, metal, or boiled leather. It provided the double advantage of easy identification and the addition of height to the wearer. The Crest for the surname Apsey is described as follows:



THE APSEY CREST

**A SILVER EAGLE'S HEAD WITH WINGS
DISPLAYED AND A GOLD COLLAR.**



SILVER

SILVER

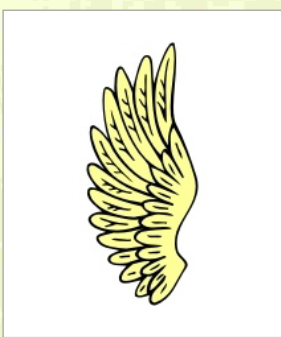
Argent (from the French for silver), or silver is one of the two metals used in heraldry. It is usually represented on a shield by the colors gray or white. This metal represents nobility, peace and serenity. It is associated with the qualities of purity and chastity, because the metal withstands the test of fire.



EAGLES HEAD

EAGLES HEAD

Parts of the eagle such as the head, wings, legs or talons, are common symbols in heraldry. The head of any creature stands for honor. After all, the head is the center of knowledge, thinking and learning for the body. The eagle itself was a symbol born by men of action, occupied with high and weighty affairs. It was given to those of lofty spirit, ingenuity, speed in comprehension, and discrimination in matters of ambiguity.



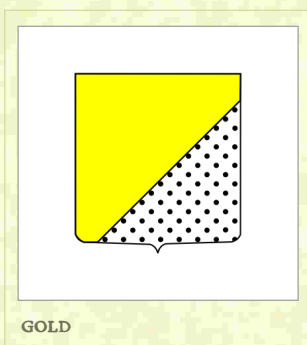
WINGS

WINGS

Wings are symbols of speed and protection. They are also religious emblems of justice and spirituality. Many European crests are blazoned to appear between a pair of wings, also called a "vol."

DISPLAYED

Displayed is a term that refers the spread out position of winged creatures, most commonly the eagle, of lying face down, wings, legs and tail extended, and the head or heads turned to the side. The wing tips may be either up or down. Symbolically, a displayed beast is at its most ferocious and intimidating.



GOLD

"Or" (from the French word for gold) is the tincture of gold, or in heraldic terms "or," was considered the noblest color. One of only two metals used in heraldry, it exceeds all others in value, purity and finesse. It represents the light of the sun, and was once borne only by princes. Gold is said to gladden the heart and destroy all works of magic. It is also associated with excellence and achievement, and the bearer surpasses all others in valor. It is represented on coats of arms by the color yellow, and in engravings by an indefinite number of small points.

COLLAR

The collar represents retention and restraint. It may indicate that the bearer has endured some great temptation or be a general symbol of the endurance required to forego temptation in this life to achieve Christian salvation in the next.

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX - NOTABLE LIST

SURNAME VARIANTS OF APSEY

- Stuart Epperson, co-founder and chairman of Salem Communications
- Tom Epperson, American screenwriter
- Jim Abbiss, British music producer
- Gordon Abbs, Australian radio operator at Mawson Station in 1956, eponym of Mount Abbs, Antarctica
- George Ebbs, Irish footballer who played in the 1920s and 1930s
- H. Van Epps, American Democrat politician, Alternate Delegate to Democratic National Convention from South Carolina, 1964
- Edwin Asp, American politician, Dry Candidate for Delegate to Michigan convention to ratify 21st amendment from Dickinson County, 1933
- Henry E. Asp, American Republican politician, Member of Republican National Committee from Oklahoma Territory, 1896; Delegate to Republican National Convention from Oklahoma, 1920
- John Esp, American Republican politician, Elected Montana State House of Representatives 61st District 2010
- Louis L. Happ, American Democrat politician, Delegate to Democratic National Convention from New York, 1904
- Cyrus Happy, American Republican politician, Presidential Elector for Illinois, 1876
- J. H. Happy, American Republican politician, Delegate to Republican National Convention from Kentucky, 1880, 1896
- John Wayles Eppes (1773-1823) American attorney and politician, United States Senator from Virginia (1817-1819)
- Mary "Polly" "Maria" Jefferson Eppes (1778-1804) born Mary Jefferson, the younger of Thomas Jefferson's two daughters who survived infancy
- Francis Wayles Eppes VII (1801-1881) American grandson of President Thomas Jefferson
- Rev. John Abbs (1810-1888) English missionary who spent twenty-two years in Travancore, Southern India
- Louisa Sewell Abbs (1811-1872) née Skipper, the wife of Rev. John Abbs who helped establish the lace and embroidery industry in Travancore, Southern India
- Richard Eppes (1824-1896) American planter and surgeon in the Confederate States Army during the American Civil War
- Sir George Abbiss OBE (1884-1966) British police officer in the London Metropolitan Police appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 1933 Birthday Honours

- Isidore Abb (1890-1967) American politician, Candidate for New York State Assembly from Kings County 9th District, 1927

APPENDIX - SETTLER LIST

AMERICAN SETTLERS

SURNAME VARIANTS OF APSEY

- Mrs. Epps, who landed in Virginia in 1623
- Peter Epps, who landed in Virginia in 1623
- William Epps, who landed in Virginia in 1623
- Francis Eppes, who was on record in Virginia in 1625 with his three sons
- Francis Epps, who arrived in Virginia in 1625
- Edward Ebbs, who arrived in Maryland in 1633-1641
- Edward Abbs, who settled in Virginia in 1635
- Edward Abbs, aged 37, arrived in Virginia in 1635
- Elizabeth Epps, aged 13, arrived in America in 1635
- Edward Abbes, who landed in Virginia in 1637
- Thomas Abbs, who came to Virginia in 1649
- Henry Abbs, who landed in Virginia in 1649
- Edmond Apps who settled in Virginia in 1650
- Edmond Apps, who landed in Virginia in 1650
- Row Happ, who arrived in Virginia in 1652
- Matthew Ebbs, who landed in Maryland in 1663
- Thomas Ebb, who arrived in Maryland in 1665
- Hannah Ebbs, who arrived in Maryland in 1665
- John Epperson, who landed in Virginia in 1719
- Philip Happ, aged 34, landed in Pennsylvania in 1748

CANADIAN SETTLERS

SURNAME VARIANTS OF APSEY

- James Apps Jr., aged 19, landed in Montreal in 1848
- Peter Ebb, who landed in Manitoba in 1875
- Cornelius Epp, who arrived in Manitoba in 1875
- Helena Epp, age 36, arrived in Quebec in 1893
- Frank Epp, aged 40, landed in Quebec in 1893

AUSTRALIAN SETTLERS

SURNAME VARIANTS OF APSEY

- Moses Epps arrived in Adelaide, Australia aboard the ship "Buckinghamshire" in 1839
- John Edward Ebbs arrived in Adelaide, Australia aboard the ship "John Munn" in 1849
- Sarah Ann Ebbs arrived in Adelaide, Australia aboard the ship "John Munn" in 1849
- Edward Montague Ebbs arrived in Adelaide, Australia aboard the ship "John Munn" in 1849
- Alfred Howard Ebbs arrived in Adelaide, Australia aboard the ship "John Munn" in 1849

NEW ZEALAND SETTLERS

SURNAME VARIANTS OF APSEY

- Thomas Epps, aged 32, a gardener, arrived in Nelson aboard the ship "London" in 1842
- Mary Epps, aged 32, arrived in Nelson aboard the ship "London" in 1842
- Eliza Epps, aged 7, arrived in Nelson aboard the ship "London" in 1842
- George Epps, aged 5, arrived in Nelson aboard the ship "London" in 1842
- Martha Ann Epps, aged 3, arrived in Nelson aboard the ship "London" in 1842

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Here is a listing of some of the sources consulted when researching British surnames. The resources below directly or indirectly influenced the authors of our surname histories. We have most of these titles in our library, others we have borrowed or had access to. Source materials have been chosen for their reliability and authenticity. Our research into surnames is ongoing, and we are continually adding to our source library. For each surname history, we seek and refer to sources specific to the surname; these are generally not included in the list below.

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The National Archives (USA): <http://www.archives.gov/>

College of Arms (England): <http://college-of-arms.gov.uk/>

MEDIEVAL ROLLS

Where available we consult Medieval rolls or use their information as reprinted in secondary sources.

Subsidy Rolls: taxation records from the 12th to the 17th centuries.

Assize Rolls: records from court sessions

Pipe Rolls: rolls of the Exchequer of accounts of the royal income, arranged by county, for each financial year. Many 12th and 13th century documents have been published with indexes by the Pipe Roll Society.

Calendarium Inquisitionum Post Mortem: Feudal inquiries, undertaken after the death of a feudal tenant in chief to establish what lands were held and who should succeed to them. Records exist from around 1240-1660.

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Curia Regis Rolls (Rotuli Curiae Regis): Rolls and Records of the Court held before the king's Justices. Various translated and published, London 1835),

Feet of Fines: Legal agreements, usually about property ownership

Register of the Freeman of York: list of freemen from 13th-18th century, published by the Surtees Society, Francis Collins (editor) in 1897.

Charters: documents recording grants, usually of land recorded by the Chancery

Historia Regum Britanniae ("The History of the Kings of Britain"): a legendary account of British history, accredited to Geoffrey of Monmouth in around 1136.

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Extra Credit goes to Wyrldlight at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bodiam-castle-10My8-1197.jpg> for the picture on the cover.