

Smith

The surname SMITH ranks as the fifth most common name in Ireland, not always entirely due to the immigration of Smiths from England and Scotland. The name was assumed as the surname of MacGowan families by descendants of the Mac Gabhann sept of County Cavan. Ireland was one of the earliest countries to evolve a system of hereditary surnames. They came into being fairly generally in the 11th century, and indeed a few were formed before the year 1000. The spelling as Smyth is favoured by many families of the name in Ireland. It was an occupational name 'a worker in metals'. Medieval smiths were important not only in making horseshoes, ploughshares, and other domestic articles, but above all for their skill in forging swords, other weapons and armour. The name is most common in the Aberdeenshire area, and also throughout the Midlands and in East Anglia. Early records of the name mention Philip le Smeth, recorded in 1273, and William le Smeth appears in 1300. Johanness Tagge Smyth was listed in the Yorkshire Poll Tax of 1379, and Robertus Smyght appears in Ireland in 1400. An eminent member of the name was Henry John Stephen Smith (1826-83). He was the Irish mathematician, born in Dublin. He was educated at Rugby school, and Balliol College, Oxford, of which he was elected a fellow. In 1860 he became professor of geometry. He was the greatest authority of his day on the theory of numbers. Many Highland families migrated from Scotland to Ireland during the 17th and 18th centuries, and were granted the lands of the native Catholic Irish. People heard of the attractions of the New World, and many left Ireland to seek a better life sailing aboard the fleet of ships known as the 'White Sails', but much illness took its toll with the overcrowding of the ships which were pestilence ridden. From the port of entry many settlers made their way west, joining the wagons to the prairies, and many loyalists went to Canada about the year 1790, and became known as the United Empire Loyalists. The associated coat of arms is recorded in Sir Bernard Burkes General Armory. Ulster King of Arms in 1884. Registered in Ireland.

ARMS - Argent two arms issuing from the dexter and sinister holding a flaming torch in base an arm issuing from the dexter holding a sword

CREST - A peacocks head in his pride ducally gorged or

MOTTO - MENS CONSCIRE RECTI
A mind conscious of rectitude