

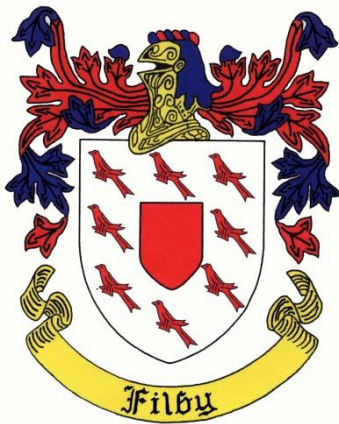
Filby Surname Origins

The Name "de Filby"

It is to be remembered that a name such as "John de Filby" means John of Filby or John from Filby, and it is the SECOND of these alternatives which is the real meaning i.e. someone living in a place 'other' than the village of FILBY - but who has come from there. This probably explains why the name Filby is found all over England and the world, except in the village of Filby itself, as few return having spread their wings.

About 1200 AD surnames had not been invented, but were beginning to be both desirable and necessary. Where they lived, what trade they had, and hair colour were all used as 'descriptive' surnames, i.e. John the wood, John the carpenter, John the fair. From about 1390 surnames had developed even further, by dropping the 'de' or 'of' or 'the' thus becoming John Filby.

The Filby Coat of Arms



The Blazon of Arms of the ancient family 'de Filby' was found in records at the Norwich library and is taken from the book 'The Norfolk Armoury' by Benjamin Mackerell, (ref; Vol.2 p81) The Filby Association received authority for its use from the Norfolk and Norwich Records Office, and a copy of the blazon was prepared and posted in All Saints Church at Filby during the 1971 'Homecoming'.

The Filby Blazon;

Argent an escutecheon between an orle of martlets gules centre shield with border of martlets on a silver background.

(A red centre shield on a silver background which has a border of 'martlets' (birds) 'Gules' (red) is the indicator for Mars and means military prowess and magnanimity.

To date a Filby Crest has not been found, therefore our Filby Coat of Arms does not support a Crest on its Helm.

(The Helm is the knight's helmet, and the type denoted the rank of the bearer. It is not actually part of the Crest but merely a support. The closed Helm denoted esquire or gentleman; the steel helmet is always placed sideways.

The Torse is a rolled up scarf, also known as a Crest wreath, it is twisted ribbon of two or more tinctures, of which six are visible on the Crest.

(It was originally used to hide nuts and bolts used to secure the Crest to the Helm)

To date no Motto for the Filby Coat of Arms has been found.

In 1434 Sir Hugh Halsham held the Manor of Filby.

In 1463 Sir Geoffrey Boleyn purchased land in Filby. His grand-daughter Alice Boleyn married Robert Clere who was great grandson of Alice Filby, this Robert Clere was uncle by marriage to Anne Boleyn, Queen of England. The Cleres' were a very wealthy family in the Manors of Filby. (*See The Manors of Filby – in Archives*)

In 1542 Mary Boleyn, sister of Anne, confirmed the Manor of Filby to Sir James Boleyn.

In 1544 Church record for baptism of Joan, daughter of Thomas Filbye of Wilby, Suffolk.

Assorted spellings of the name "Filby"

Until the 20th Century most of the population were illiterate and in all cases of recording birth, marriage and death the writing of the name fell upon the Scribe or Cleric of the day, and even they only interpreted what they thought they heard. It was often found that many of the same family had different spellings for their surname; they may even have thought it desirable to use 'Philby' or 'Fileby' to distinguish themselves from a brother who preferred 'Filby', or simply a local accent or speech impediment.

For instance; two close cousins, Robert Hayward Filby and Mary Anne Filby eloped to London and were married on March 1, 1849. This was such a disgrace in those days that they were forced to add an E to Robert's surname. From that date onwards their eleven children and all their descendant's surnames was recorded as Filbey.

Tree T01 and T02