



Ready For Everything

Ray Coat of Arms / Family Crest



England



Scotland



France

Ray Family History

Ray Name Meaning

English (of Norman origin): nickname denoting someone who behaved in a regal fashion or who had earned the title in some contest of skill or by presiding over festivities, from Old French rey, roy 'king'. Occasionally this was used as a personal name. English: nickname for a timid person, from Middle English ray 'female roe deer' or northern Middle English ray 'roebuck'. English: variant of Rye (1 and 2). English: habitational name, a variant spelling of Wray. Scottish: reduced and altered form of

McRae.French: from a noun derivative of Old French raier 'to gush, stream, or pour', hence a topographic name for someone who lived near a spring or rushing stream, or a habitational name from a place called Ray.Indian: variant of Rai.

This is a surname with one of the most ancient origins. It derives from an Olde British word 'ea' pronounced 'ay' and describes someone who lived by a stream. More pragmatically it probably referred to somebody who lived on dry land by a stream, since before the days of land drainage to find 'dry land' was vital. It is true that some nameholders particularly those who originate in the Sussex - Kent region of England, may derive from the town of Rye, which means what it says - 'the place where corn was grown'. In Early English the descriptive phrase was 'aet paere ea' (at the island) which by the Middle ages had become 'at ther ee', and thence was further shortened to 'atte rie' and hence the modern surname which can be found as Ray, Rea, Reay, Wrey, Raye, and even Nye, formerly 'atten ea'! Examples of early recordings include William atte Rea in the 1327 Subsidy Rolls of Sussex, William bith Ree in the 1293 rolls of Worcester, and John atte Reye in the Essex Rolls of 1327. The Coat of Arms granted in Northumberland has the blazon of a blue field, a plate between three silver crescents. The first recorded spelling of the family name is shown to be that of Ralph de la Reye, which was dated 1279, in the Hundred Rolls of Oxfordshire, during the reign of King Edward 1, known as 'The hammer of the Scots', 1272 - 1307. Surnames became necessary when governments introduced personal taxation. In England this was known as Poll Tax. Throughout the centuries, surnames in every country have continued to "develop" often leading to astonishing variants of the original spelling.



The Ray surname is suspected to originate with Clan MacRae of Scotland. At this point, the earliest known patriarch is Abel Ray. Some speculate of a possible connection to Daniel Ray, an early immigrant from the U.K. to Plymouth, Massachusetts. However, Daniel Ray is unlikely to have a Scottish connection.

Research is also confusing because there are at least two individuals named Abel Ray who served in the War of 1812.