

Where did the Scottish Ray family come from? What is the Scottish coat of arms/family crest? When did the Ray family first arrive in the United States? Where did the various branches of the family go? What is the history of the family name?

The name Ray was first used by a **Strathclyde-Briton** family from the Scottish/English Borderlands. It was a name for a person known as a *timid* or *shy* person. Further research revealed that the name is derived from the Old English word *ray*, that referred to a *roe* or *female deer*.

In the era before dictionaries, there were no rules governing the spelling or translation of names or any other words. Consequently, there are an enormous number of **spelling variations** in Medieval Scottish names. Ray has appeared as Rae, Rea, Ree, Ray and others. First found in **Dumfriesshire**, where they held a **family seat** from early times and their first records appeared on the early census rolls taken by the early Kings of **Scotland** to determine the rate of taxation of their subjects. [▶ More](#)

The freedom, opportunity, and land of the North American colonies beckoned. There, Scots found a place where they were generally free from persecution and where they could go on to become important players in the birth of new nations. Some fought in the American **War of Independence**, while others went north to Canada as United Empire Loyalists. The ancestors of all of these Scottish settlers have been able to recover their lost national heritage in the last century through highland games and **clan** societies in North America. Among them: John Rae who settled in Nevis in 1663; William Rae settled in Philadelphia in 1880; Andrew Rea settled in Charles Town [Charleston], South Carolina in 1767.

**Motto Translated:** Ready for everything.

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