

# Introduction to

## The RAYNERs of HALSTEAD, ESSEX

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My objective here is to show how the RAYNER family name came to Halstead and then as they increased in numbers some migrated from Halstead and eventually emigrated to what were then the colonies and today can be found in large numbers in America, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. This is but a small area of the RAYNER name.

I have drawn up the family trees to show how the families started in Halstead and then which ones migrated locally to Bocking and Chelmsford. Some of the Bocking family's children returned to Halstead. Many young RAYNERs enlisted into the armed forces and one member of the Bocking family, after serving in Canada in the army, emigrated to Canada and later to the United States of America. The Chelmsford family line was quite a large family and at least one family member migrated to America. The records available are not always clear on the origins of RAYNER names given. We rely on the identification from baptisms in church records and Wills, which do not usually give the dates of birth of the beneficiaries also family Bibles are useful to make a good family tree, if you can find them.

The Family Trees I have drawn up should take the reader from the mid-1600's through to at least some fifty years ago. Some views are that the past one hundred years, like the census records, should not be published, but as so much information is now available on the Internet I see no reason that a family tree should not be as near up to date as possible.

I have started the 'Halstead Family Trees' from William (1628) RAYNER. All the RAYNER researchers are of the opinion that the parents of this William RAYNER have yet to be identified if that is even possible, but old Wills from the 16<sup>th</sup> century indicate that he was probably born to a RAYNER family of Great Maplestead, some 3.5 miles NNW of Halstead. William married Alice WRIGHT in Earls Colne in 1652 and then lived in Halstead. It is strange to see that although the marriage was in 1652, there are no records of any children before 1663. "William" was a very popular choice of forename over many years. Usually, a new child would be named after either his grandfather or his father, so the name came down through the centuries. Obvious difficulties in identification followed from this practice as well as the often undecipherable writing of a quill pen.

Errors were made by the clergy, not only on the church records but included the "Bishops Transcripts". Like names were often found and identification was only helped when a family had multiple baptisms. But same day, same name, baptisms could later cause identification problems without more details. The problems in family history tracing and identification would probably fill a book. For that reason where Halstead RAYNER were given as 'RAYNOR' I have made them all 'RAYNER'. With several researchers working

