

WILLIAM RAYNES

of London, York and elsewhere

I have written before about William Raynes (*CLOCKS*, January 2000), but all my efforts at tracing his origins prior to his apprenticeship

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in London in 1653 had failed. My own golden rule in genealogy is that if research fails to locate the target, try researching his relatives. The best clue we had was an account of his death in 1695 after a fall from his horse when returning to his home at Gilling, near York: 'when coming from Helmsley, where his brother, Thomas Raynes, Gent, lives'. But even that failed.

I spent many fruitless hours searching for Thomas Raynes, Gentleman of Helmsley. Fruitless because I eventually discovered that the contemporary report was wrong. Thomas Raynes never did live at Helmsley, but at Easingwold, and when I discovered that it changed everything. It was my own fault for breaking the first rule of genealogical research which is to believe nothing previously recorded but to start from scratch. Maybe William was riding home from his brother's house, maybe on the Helmsley road, but it cannot have been his brother Thomas's house at Helmsley!

William Raynes, and his brother Thomas, were born into a moneyed armigerous family who were documented in the *VISITATION OF YORKSHIRE* in 1666 by the King's chief herald Sir William Dugdale. The visitations were carried out by Heralds to check up on those who claimed the right to bear coats of arms, and often they included a brief pedigree of the current family members—but not always an accurate one.

Dugdale records three sons and two daughters born to James Raynes of Appleton le Street, not far from Helmsley.



Figure 1. A good, early balance-wheel lantern clock made in the 1660s by William Raynes at Butcher's Row in East Smithfield. Photograph courtesy of Jack and Ann Mcbroom.

They were John, Thomas and William in order of birth. John inherited the family property at Appleton and became a Captain in one of the King's Regiments of Foot, Thomas became an Attorney of the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster,

William a clockmaker. Their father died in 1642 whilst they were all still infants so who knows how or where they were

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brought up.

The information recorded by Dugdale suggests William was born in 1638, which would mean he was 15 when he was apprenticed in London in November 1653 through the Clockmakers Company to 46-year-old William Almond. Almond was himself trained by William Bowyer, a freeman of the Pewterers' Company, and was therefore a mere 'Brother' in the Company of Clockmakers, not a full freeman. This meant he could not take an apprentice directly, as only freemen could, so a device was used regularly for Brothers to bind apprentices 'through' another, in this instance through Ralph Almond, William's younger brother, who was a full freeman.

These apprentices sent far from home were not penniless 'Dick Whittingtons' trudging their muddy way to the capital in rags. They usually went to live in with the master's family during their seven-year apprenticeship, and that master was often someone related to, or at least known to, the boy's own family. The Almonds

came from Cronton in Lancashire and that family was quite probably known to, or related to, the Rayneses, who we later see had contacts far and wide throughout the land.

William was freed from his apprenticeship in January 1660/61 in London, which gave him the right to trade in his own name. The next thing we learn about him is his marriage on 26th October 1663 at, of all places, Calne in Wiltshire,



Figure 2. Detail of the dial centre showing the profuse tulip theme engraving of high quality. Photograph courtesy of Jack and Ann Mcbroom.

to Alice, daughter of Charles Tyler, a local husbandman and ostler (probably meaning one who ran a horse stables). How he came to have connections in Wiltshire is unknown, but this is not the only time he proved to have far-ranging connections. William and Alice appear to have lived in London, at Butcher's Row in East Smithfield in the parish of St Botolph's without Aldgate. Butcher's Row is where he signed his London-made clocks.

He took three apprentices through the Clockmakers' Company: January 1663/64 Joseph Sumner; January 1667/68 William Beadle; January 1668/69 George Crouch from or through Edward Bayley, a Goldsmiths' Company freeman. No work is recorded signed by any of them, which could imply they remained working as journeymen for Raynes after their apprenticeships ended.

Certainly Sumner and Beadle were not freed. Freedom was required by the Company but would probably not have been insisted on if they still worked for Raynes in his workshop. Journeymen

could usually get away without taking up their freedom, as taking it up meant paying a fee. Beadle was married at Allhallows London Wall in 1676, which was quite nearby and implies he was still working for Raynes. George Crouch, however, did take up his freedom in January 1668/69 and was made a freeman of the City, which suggests he intended to work for himself. Crouch was last heard of in 1671.

The next event in William Raynes's life occurred on 24th June 1666 when an unnamed daughter was baptised to the couple at Chesterford in Essex and some 50 miles away. A wife often went to stay with parents or other relatives for the birth of a first child, and this might be the case here. But we must remember that 1665 was the year of the Great Plague, when anyone who could afford it, as William could, took himself and his family well away from the hotspot in London. In 1666 the Fire of London helped kill off the plague but made many homeless, and, although it stopped short of Butcher's Row, it would have been unlikely that

residents would have returned home before the smoke would quite literally have cleared. We know William was back home by 1668.

Their next child was a son, William, baptised on 30th December 1668 at St Katherine's Creechurch, a parish adjoining St Botolph's without Aldgate, where two further children were baptised by them: Mary in 1671 and Thomas in 1673. Butcher's Row would be on the border of both these parishes.

William was last recorded in the Clockmakers' Company archives London in 1672 but we assume he was still there in 1676, when his wife, Alice, was buried on 18th April at St Andrew's Enfield, Middlesex, described as the wife of William Raynes of London. This is yet another event in his life that took place at some surprisingly long distance from



Figure 3. The same clock from the right showing the restored balance wheel escapement. Limited decoration to the hammer stop. Strike fly in line with the wheelwork. Photograph courtesy of Jack and Ann Mcbroom.

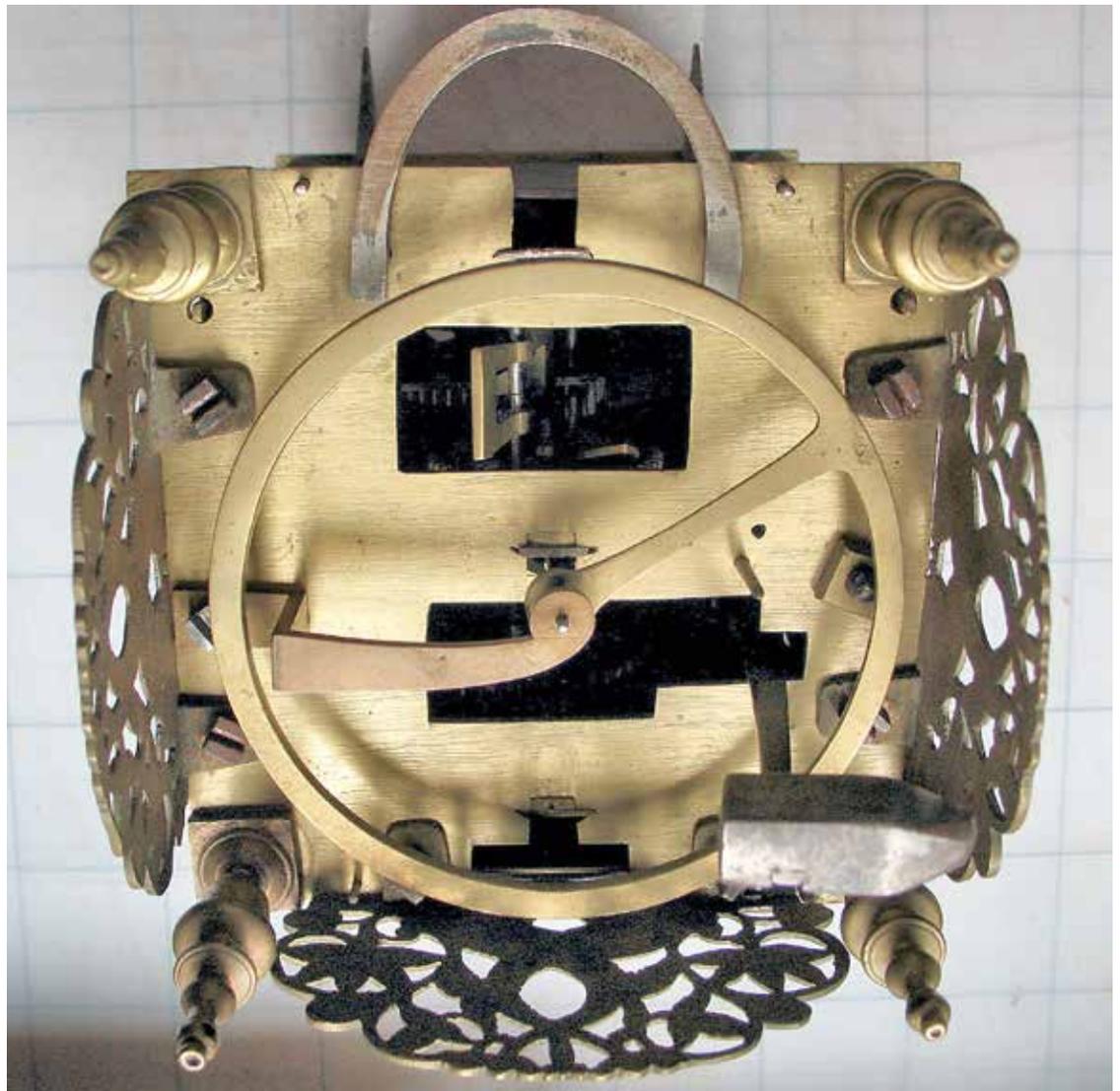
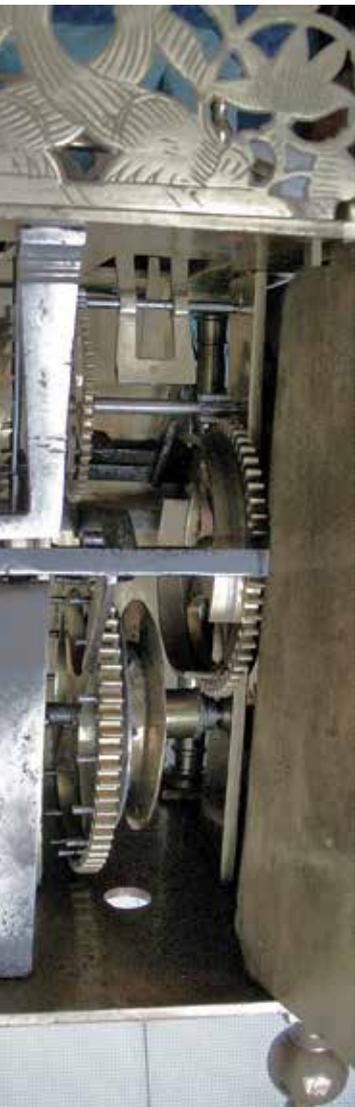


Figure 4. Top plate of the same clock. The fly pierces the plate, as with most lantern clocks. Photograph courtesy of Jack and Ann Mcbroom.

where we expected him to be.

Later he moved to York, but at just what date is hard to define. If we return for a moment to his family, his older brother, Thomas, was living in York, where he was a prominent figure. In 1685 Thomas went to London to present the King with a letter from the citizens of York to congratulate him on the birth of a Prince. In 1687 he became a Freeman of York and in 1688 he became Lord Mayor of York. But the King did not approve of the Corporation and in October sent a messenger to dislodge Thomas and other aldermen and replace them with others who were of the Catholic persuasion, even though they were not freemen. At that point Thomas retired to the Old Hall at Easingwold, where he spent the rest of his life. His wife died in December 1689 of gangrene and was buried in York Minster.

Thomas Raynes left no surviving issue. He was buried on 11th March 1713/14 at Easingwold 'after ten years' affliction in a paralysis'. He left everything to his niece, Anne, daughter of his older brother, Captain John Raynes, she

having already been married in 1702 to William Salvin, ironically a Catholic. This meant that having been ousted from his mayoralty by Catholics, he left his estate to one—something he would hardly have done if he had had other options! The implication here is that William also left no male issue.

Thomas is relevant in so far as the events in his life may give us a clue as to how soon after his wife's death in 1676 William moved from London to York. We believe he had as many as three infant children still living, aged between three and eight—as many as six if we believe Dugdale. My feeling is he would have gone at that time, or at least sent his children, back to York, where family members may have helped care for them. I think he would not have been long in moving himself and his business to York too.

On 11th February 1682/3 William Raynes married Grace Currey by licence at St Cuthbert's church in York. I am assuming this is our William Raynes and if so it implies that he moved to York after

April 1676 and presumably long enough before 1683 to become well enough acquainted with Grace to want to marry her. A guess might be 1680.

In 1687 William Raynes was made a freeman of York 'by redemption' (meaning by payment of a fee). His brother, Thomas, became a freeman in the same year, and Lord Mayor in 1688, though for only a brief spell. Could William have traded in York between 1680 and 1688, when not a freeman? Quite possibly. Traders often got away with doing business without being freemen, for a while at least. But I doubt he could have continued to do so when his brother was soon to become Lord Mayor and it may have been that Thomas's immediate ambition pushed William into his freedom. So his date of freedom does not necessarily mean he was not working there before 1687. He could have been there as early as 1676.

We already know he was killed in a fall from his horse about two miles from Gilling, when returning to his home on 28th December 1694. He was buried at



Figure 5. Rear of the same clock showing hoop and spikes. The back plate carries the spurs. Photograph courtesy of Jack and Ann Mcbroom.



Figure 6. This miniature lantern clock by William Raynes of London is in fact an alarm timepiece, ie non-striking.

Gilling on 5th January 1694/95 as 'William Raynes of ye City of York'.

We cannot judge how long he worked in York by the volume of work recorded by him. Gentleman clockmakers like William Raynes seldom worked their fingers to the bone and when we come to look at the clocks known by him, they are not numerous. By this I mean clocks recorded by myself (I have noted such things for many years), but obviously there must be others unknown to me. His London work is known through only three lantern clocks from a working period of 15 to 20 years. His York work is known through two (perhaps three) lantern clocks and three longcase clocks from a working period of between seven and 19 years. Some makers from this same era have scores of clocks to their names, like Thomas Loomes, by whom 30 or more are known from a 15-year working life.

With nine clocks from a 35-year working life Raynes can hardly have been deeply smitten with the work ethic.

The verge pendulum was in use in London, almost exclusively by the Fromanteels (who introduced it) and their immediate allies from at least 1658 till about 1670, by which year examples began to appear in the provinces. For example a verge pendulum lantern clock dated 1670 is known by William Holloway of Stroud. But many makers of lantern clocks kept to balance wheel movements long after they were aware of the pendulum, and even into the 1690s and this included many London clockmakers. We are not sure why but we can guess. It was slightly cheaper than a pendulum version, may have been a little easier to make and was probably easier for a customer to handle as it did not need to be level or set in beat.

The long pendulum with (what became known as) the anchor escapement was devised around 1670—experts still quibble as to when and by whom. The earliest dated example I know of a provincial longcase clock with anchor escapement is one dated 1675 by Lawrence Debnam of Frome, also having the name of his apprentice, James Delaunce, engraved inside. So any long pendulum clock made in provincial England in the late 1670s or 1680s is very early and very unusual.

It seems that makers of lantern clocks in London in the later seventeenth century did not take to the anchor escapement. By 1680 the anchor escapement on London lantern clocks is virtually unknown. If they made their clocks with pendulum control it was almost always with the short, verge pendulum. A lantern clock by William



Figure 7. This miniature lantern clock is signed 'William Raynes' on the chapter ring, though it bears no resemblance to his known London or York clocks. Photograph courtesy of Messrs Christie's, Amsterdam.

Holloway with original anchor escapement and long pendulum is dated 1685 and is regarded as an exceptionally early provincial example.

William Raynes's London work is known by only three lantern clocks (no longcases). One is the miniature pictured here signed 'William Raynes Butcher's Row East Smithfield'. A second, later converted to a spring movement, is signed 'William Raynes Butcher Row East Smithfield'. The third is the re-converted balance wheel clock pictured here and signed 'Wm. Raynes in Butcher Row in East Smithfield Londini', now in the USA. A miniature lantern clock, signed on the chapter ring 'William Raynes', was sold at Christies Amsterdam rooms in 2006. This latter clock bears no resemblance to any of his other work and I am not convinced that it was made by him and have not included it in my counting. ☐

NEXT MONTH
The York years

It's like a bus. You wait for ages for one and then two come at once. Books on Comtoise clocks, I mean. In last month's issue we reviewed *COMTOISE: IRONMAN AND SURVIVOR OF THE CLOCK WORLD* by David Holmes. This month we are reviewing *SPECIAL COMTOISE CLOCKS AND LANTERN CLOCKS* by Chris Hooijkaas.

Though originally written in Dutch, *SPECIAL COMTOISE CLOCKS AND LANTERN CLOCKS* has been published in a bilingual format, with the text also translated into English. This may be seen as a rather cumbersome format, but you soon get used to it. And, as any publisher knows, it is considerably cheaper to publish a single book for two markets—the Netherlands and the English speaking world—than it would be to publish two separate versions.

Regular readers of these reviews will know that we are very keen on self-published books: the horological world would be a much much poorer place without them. Self-publishing does have its limitations, though. The books produced are often rather amateurish and sometimes not very well thought through. The book under review here is in some ways very professional, but in others slightly less so. For example, the photographs are for the most part rather on the dark side. Some of the photographs are numbered, but by no means all, and this seems a shame because where the photograph lacks a number (and a corresponding number in the text) it is not always clear what it is a photograph of and, consequently, why it has been included.

That said, there are a great many photographs—over 2000, I believe—and though dark they are otherwise crisp and clear. We all know the reputation the Dutch have for being able to speak perfect English. Well, Chris Hooijkaas (who I presume did his own translation) does not let the side down. His English is concise and idiomatic.

'In collecting I focus on "special" clocks,' he tells us in the Foreword. "'Special" is rather loosely defined. What I mean is that the clocks in question should have something that fascinates me.'

For the purposes of the Comtoise part of this book, 'special' Comtoise clocks are split into a variety of types, starting with 'Comtoise clocks with chapter rings and cartouche dials' and finishing with some particular examples of special Comtoise clocks.

The second part of the book deals with lantern clocks. When we describe lantern clocks in this magazine, we are normally considering English (or occasionally Scottish) lantern clocks. But clocks of this general form were made elsewhere in Europe, particularly in France. The first chapter in this section is accordingly about French lantern clocks, and this is followed by a chapter on 'Lantern clocks made outside France', for example in the Netherlands, Belgium and England. The final chapter in this section is called 'Special lantern clocks' and includes such oddities as a French lantern clock with sweep seconds and a month going lantern clock. ☐

SPECIAL COMTOISE CLOCKS AND LANTERN CLOCKS by Chris Hooijkaas (2016) is published by Hooijkaas Books, Wassenaar. ISBN: 978-90-825553-0-1. It is available from the author, price €49 plus postage, who can be contacted at chris@hooijkaas.net.

