

*Genealogical  
and Historical  
Sketch*

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THE NAME AND FAMILY  
OF  
MEADOW(S)

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## THE NAME AND FAMILY OF MEADOW(S)

The name of MEADOWS or MEADOW is derived from the residence of its first bearers "at the meadow or meadows". In ancient English and early American records the name is found in the various spellings of Medowe, Medewe, Medew, Meader, Meaders, Meador, Meadours, Medo, Medow, Medowes, Medows, Meadowes, Meadowe, Meadow, Meadows, and others. Of these, the last two are the forms most frequently used in America in modern times. Meader may well have been a corruption of Meadow through the same channel as Meador, that is, through the colloquial pronunciation of w as r.

Early seated in the English Counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, as well as in the city and vicinity of London, the families bearing this name were, on the whole, of the gentry and yeomanry of Great Britain.

According to historians, the family traces its descent from Edmund de Wytresham, who was living at Wytresham, County Suffolk, in the latter part of the eleventh century. His son, Robart de Medewe (Robert of the Meadows), was so called from his residence in the vale of Wytresham. From Robart was descended Peter de Medewe, of the year 1188, who was the progenitor of Robart de Medewe, who was living at Hasketon, County Suffolk, in 1328. This Robart was the father of Jeffery de Medewe, who had a son of the same name, who married Margaret Fairfax about 1441 and was the father by her of Jeffery, John, and William Medow, of whom the first left an only son, named John.

John Medew or Medow, the second of the last-mentioned brothers, married a Miss Butler and had an only son, named William, who married Deborah, daughter of Edward Duke. William died in 1540 and was succeeded in estates at Wytresham (now Witnesham) by his son, William Medowe, who left issue by his wife Agnes of William and Daniel, of whom the younger son will be mentioned later. William Meadow (s), the elder of these brothers, married Grizel, daughter of William Mynter, and had three sons, Thomas, Daniel, and Ralph. Of these, Thomas was the father by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of John Lea, of Sir Thomas Meadows, who was Mayor of Yarmouth in 1662; Daniel married Amy, daughter of John Brame, and was the father of Mary and Daniel, of whom the latter (b. 1630) married Joyce, daughter of the Reverend Edward Rivers, and left issue by her of three sons, Daniel, Edmond, and John, of whom the last became a clergyman and left issue by his wife, Bridget Proctor, of John, Daniel (b. 1687), and Elizabeth Meadows; and Ralph was the father of William, Ralph, Mary, and Elizabeth, of whom the first married Mary Rant and had a son named John, who was the father by his wife, Mary Vaughan, of John Meadows, of Henley Hall.

Daniel (b. 1687), the son of the Reverend John Meadows, married Frances, daughter of Francis Thornyflow, and had issue by her of Lucy and John, of whom the son was married in 1751 to Frances, daughter of Humphrey Brewster. To this union were born Philip, Daniel, Frances, and Lucinda. Philip, the oldest of these, married Catherine, daughter of

Robert Rust, and was the father by her of two sons, the Reverend Philip and Daniel Rust Meadows.

Daniel Medowe or Meadow, the before-mentioned younger son of William and Agnes, resided at Chattisham Hall, also in Suffolk. By his wife, Elizabeth Lee, he was the father of Daniel, John, Thomas, Sir Philip, Robert, Margaret, and Elizabeth. Of the last-mentioned brothers, Daniel married a daughter of Sir Richard Broke or Brooks, of Norton, and was the father of John and Robert; John married three times, his wives being Anne Rant, Sarah Fairfax, and Anna Beaumont, of whom the second gave him seven children, John, Daniel, Philip, Sarah, Rebecca, Thomas, and Mary; Thomas made his home at London; and Sir Philip, who became ambassador to Portugal in 1656, in 1661 married Constance, daughter of Francis Lucy. To this union was born Sir Philip Meadow(s), who married Dorothy Boscawen, sister of Hugh, first Viscount Falmouth, and was the father by her of a son named Philip, who married Frances, daughter of William Pierrepont, Viscount Newark, and was the father by her of, among others, a son named Charles, who was elevated to the peerage.

As early as 1429 one "John atte (at the) Medowe" was rector of Metton, County Norfolk; and about the same time "William att the Meadow" was rector of East Beckham, County Norfolk. The records of this line are not, however, complete.

In 1689, one Ralph Meadowes, of London, was the father of a son named William, but the records of the London branch of the family are also incomplete.

The connecting links between the family in England and the first settlers of the name in America are not in evidence, but it is probable that all of the Meadows and Meadow lines trace their descent from one or another of the before-mentioned branches.

As early as 1638 two members of the family, Nicholas and Jonathan or John Meader, came to America and settled in Virginia. Of these, Nicholas made his home in Charles City County, while the other settled in Henrico County. However, the records of their immediate families are not at hand.

Before 1641 Philip Meadows, settled at Roxbury, Mass. In that year he married Elizabeth, daughter of Stephen Iggulden or Iggleden. They had at least one child, named Hannah, and probably removed to another part of New England.

John Meader, who came from England to America about 1650, settled before 1653 at Dover, N.H., and was living in 1656 at Oyster River, now Durham, N.H. By his wife, Abigail Follett, whom he married about 1653, he was the father of Elizabeth, John, Joseph, Sarah, Nathaniel, and possibly, Nicholas.

John, son of the immigrant John of New Hampshire, first married Sarah Follett and had issue by her of five children, Joseph, Nicholas, Elizabeth, Abigail, and Sarah. By his second wife, Elizabeth, and his third wife, the Widow Agnes Clark, he had no further issue.

Of the last-mentioned brothers, Joseph was married in 1703 to Charity Nason and removed with her to Nantucket, where they left issue of Patience, Mary, Hanah, John, Nicholas, Moses, Joseph, Sarah, and Elizabeth; while Nicholas resided at Dover and was the father by his wife Lydia of Keziah, Samuel, Nicholas, John, Daniel, and David.

Nathaniel Meader, son of the immigrant John of New Hampshire, also settled at Dover, where he left issue by his wife Eleanor of five children, Lydia, Daniel, Nathaniel, Elizabeth, and Eleanor. The records of this branch are not, however, complete.

Francis Meader (b. 1744) was a member of the Nantucket line of the family, but settled for a time at Edgartown, Mass., and later made his home at Industry, Me. By his wife, Mary Holley, he was the father of John, Francis, Christopher Pease, Joseph, Anna, Henry, William, Judith, and Julia.

One Henry Meadows was living in Amelia County, Va., before 1772, but the records of the original immigrant of the Virginia line are not at hand.

Records of the name in Revolutionary War include Benjamin, Josiah, Giles, Thomas, and William Meadow or Meadows, of Virginia; Francis, Isaac, Isham, Israel, Jacob, James, Joel, and John Meadows, of Virginia; Vincent Meadow or Meador, of Virginia; Samuel Meader, of Pennsylvania; Isham Meader (also recorded as Meadows), of Tennessee; Joel Meder or Meaders (also recorded as Meadows), of Tennessee; Jesse and Martin Meader, of Virginia; Daniel Meader, of Maine; Francis and Josiah Meader, of Massachusetts; Ebenezer, Samuel, Stephen, and Timothy Meader, of New Hampshire; Peter Meadow, of Pennsylvania; William Meadows, of Pennsylvania; and James Meadows, of Massachusetts. Probably some of these were immigrants from Great Britain, but this is not certain.

Josiah and Jacob Meadows, who settled in West Virginia after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, at Yorktown, were the progenitors of families of the name in Summers County, W.Va., the Middle New River Settlements, and other parts of the South. Josiah had, among others, two sons, Josiah and John Meadows, many of whose descendants spelled the name Meador.

Among the numerous disconnected records of the family in Virginia are those of Hans Meadows, who was living near Richmond about 1788; those of Anderson Meadow(e)s, of Amelia County, who was married in 1790 to Lucy Pollard; those of John Meadow, of Amelia County, who married Polly Whitworth in 1805; those of John Meadows, of Albemarle County, who married Elizabeth Wyant in 1806; those of James Meadows, of Albemarle County, who married Mary Wyant in 1809; those of Jacob Meadows, of Orange and Highland Counties, who married Nancy Roach in 1815 and was the father by her of Thomas, Mitchell, and Sarah; and those of John Meadows, of Greene County, who was the father in the early nineteenth century of a son named Joek, who was the father of John W., Elijah, and Jeremiah M. Meadows.

Chiefly distinguished by their work as educators, authors, and scientists, the Meadow and Meadows families have shown themselves to be, on the whole, thoughtful, determined of purpose, exacting in their demands, not only upon others, but upon themselves as well, and frequently possessed of imagination and ingenuity.

James, Peter, Robert, John, Thomas, Daniel, Ralph, Philip, Josiah, and William are some of the male Christian names most frequently recurrent in the annals of the family.

Among those of the name who have been prominent in America in comparatively recent dates are the following:

- William Ransom Meadows (b. 1875), of Washington, D.C., government official and author.
- Thomas Burton Meadows (b. 1881), of Indiana and Michigan, educator and author.
- Leon Renfroe Meadows (b. 1884), of New York, educator.
- Robert Meadows (twentieth century), of New York, anthropologist.
- John Cassius Meadows (twentieth century), of Tennessee, educator.
- Ethel Babb Meadows (twentieth century), of Missouri, poet.
- Catherine Meadows (twentieth century), of New York and London, novelist.
- Jacob Robert Meadow (b. 1903), of Pennsylvania, chemist.
- Clarence Linton Meader (b. 1868), of Michigan, educator and author.
- Herman Lee Meader (b. 1874), of New York and Pennsylvania, humorist and author.
- Stephen Warren Meader (b. 1898), of New York, author.

A coat of arms of the ancient English family of Meadows, which is believed to have been of common origin with the Meadow family, is described in heraldic terms as follows (Burke, Encyclopedia of Heraldry, 1844):

Arms – “Sable, a chevron ermine between three pelicans with wings endorsed or, vulning themselves proper, on a canton of the third an escutcheon gules, charged with a lion passant guardant or.”

Crest – “Out of ducal coronet or, a demi eagle displayed sable.”

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