

# DARIUS MEAD

## HIS ANCESTORS AND SOME OF HIS MANY DESCENDANTS

1728 – 1791

By RUSH MAXWELL BLODGET, 1937

### EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

December 23, 2003

Welcome to the history of the Mead family of Western, Pennsylvania as told by Rush Maxwell Blodget in 1937. This fascinating work has laid idle in the closet for over 60 years. A visitor to my Web site found the memoirs of Mary Jane Mead, my great grandmother, the granddaughter of Darius Mead, the grandson of the Darius Mead at the center of this story. The visitor was looking for genealogy information on her Mead family ancestors. She had no knowledge of this manuscript. Wanting to see this fine work gain wider circulation, I transcribed it into electronic forms, one a PDF and the second a page on my family history site at [www.Bliley.net](http://www.Bliley.net).

This manuscript was transcribed from an original 8-1/2" x 11" copy in September 2003 by me, a descendant of Darius Mead. The original publication was prepared using a manual typewriter with the Courier typeface. The body of the document was double-spaced and quotations were indented and single-spaced. I have attempted to duplicate the general layout of original document but have single-spaced it throughout and added the table of contents. Inserted quotations are in a sans-serif face and indented. Spelling, grammar, and punctuation have been left as found in the original manuscript with few exceptions.

Two weeks after posting the manuscript on my [Web site](#), I began researching a list of commercial Web sites with message boards on Meads. I found a couple that were unfamiliar to me, one GenCircles.com. I decided to test the site's GEDCOM listings and did a search on Rush Maxwell Blodget. Much to my surprise, I found a listing and his son's name with an indication he was still alive! I immediately did a search of the telephone listings and found one for Rush Maxwell Blodget in California. I called and had a wonderful conversation with the author's son. He told me his bother, David, was working on linking items in the Darius Mead story to their father's research archives. When the work is done, I will post it on this Web site. In the meantime, Rush's son has provided me with a photo and brief biography of his father which I quickly added to the site.

The story on the Web has also brought me in contact with a distant Wagner cousin who was able to provide me with a collection of photos of my Bliley family from Harbor Creek, PA. The photos include family portraits from as early as 1862. What a true blessing and unexpected byproduct of the Darius Mead story.

I hope you find this booklet interesting and educational reading, and maybe fill in some holes in your family genealogy. It is obvious, the author did considerable research and held a strong emotional bond with the Mead family.

What a wonderful turn of events thanks in part to the Internet. The manuscript is believed to have remained as a private publication with distribution limited to the participants of the 1937 Mead family reunion. It is assumed the content is not copyrighted. If anyone knows of another form of this manuscript or a previous copyright holder, please contact me.

I hope you find this book interesting and educational reading, and maybe fill in some holes in your family genealogy. It is obvious, the author did considerable research and held a strong emotional bond with the Mead family.

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# **DARIUS MEAD**

**HIS ANCESTORS AND SOME OF HIS MANY  
DESCENDANTS**

**1728 - 1791**

**IN**

**PROLOGUE, DRAMA, AND EPILOGUE**

**PREPARED FOR LEOTA WHITEHILL DAY, OF YOUNGSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA CHAIRMAN  
PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

**MEAD FAMILY REUNION**

**JULY 1937**

**BY**

**RUSH MAXWELL BLODGET**

**LA CANADA, CALIFORNIA**

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**PROLOGUE**

***WILLIAM MEAD-----THE IMMIGRANT***

***JOHN MEAD -----THE REALTOR***

***JONATHAN MEAD-----THE STAY-AT-HOME***

***JONATHAN MEAD, JR -----THE BLACKSMITH***

## **WILLIAM MEAD - IMMIGRANT**

**1600 - 1663**

It is June 1635 in Boston, in Massachusetts Bay Colony. Several rows of log cabins are lined along the crooked streets. The church of hewn logs looms heavily against the sky line. The colonists are busy in their gardens or gossiping on the dusty streets. They still have their English woolen clothes, for they have not yet learned to make clothes of deerskin. Several ships stand in the harbor. They have been arriving so frequently this spring that they have almost - but not quite ceased to be a novelty.

Here comes another one around the point. Might as well see who gets off the ship. Possibly some old friend will arrive.

The ship is the "Elizabeth" from Old England. The rope ladders are put over the side, and the passengers are eager to come ashore in the small boats.

Among the passengers is a certain WILLIAM MEAD, his wife Martha, and three children - Joseph, Martha and JOHN. They are from Lydd, in County Kent, England. They have been on the water since April. The ship has been crowded. The fare has been coarse. No potatoes, for potatoes do not come into common use for many generations. No canned fruit. No medicines, and no comforts. The babies are ailing. Martha is "poorly". Great Sire Mead brings the babies down the rope ladder one at a time and then helps Martha down.

"This", says William to Martha, "is America," "It doesn't look like much to me" says Martha.

Great Sire WILLIAM, we see you, standing uncertainly on the shores of America, your wife by your side, and your tired babies at your feet. You have come to America, and, for that reason, we, your descendants can say to each other, "I am I", and "you are you".

He has not come to America for "freedom", for he had plenty of that in England, as freedom is thought of in 1635. Nor has he come for religious liberty, any more than the rest of the colonists had. He does not like Catholics, Jews, Quakers, or other special types of religions, any more than the first comers. But, by cricky, he is not going to be bossed by those straight laced Bostonians any more than is necessary. Watch and see if he does.



William, we will bid you goodbye in Stamford. There your good wife will pass away in 1657 and you will follow in 1663. You have planted us in America, and we must make the best of it, in spite of Republicans and Democrats and Prohibitionists and Hollywood and the dole and the National Recovery Act. Your blood now flows in the veins of a million people. You have given to America statesmen, doctors, lawyers, generals, Judges, engineers, carpenters, teachers, plumbers, P. T. A. members and woman's club presidents. Because of you, we descendants may say to each other "I am I" and "yon are you". By and large, we are glad you came.

## **JOHN MEAD - REALTOR**

**1634 - 1699**

JOHN, the son of William, is one of the red nosed, shivering little children, who landed in Boston back in 1635. He goes with his daddy to Wethersfield, and thence to Stamford. In 1656 - age 22 - he marries Hannah Potter, the only daughter of the widower William Potter of Stamford. The real estate business is beginning to boom. Leading citizens (we have them today in every community in America) take to writing long documents with dotted lines at the bottom. A journey to the forest, a little rum, a little wampum and a few coins, and the Indians have signed their marks on the dotted lines, and the "leading Citizen" has become a "man of vision", entitled to be called "Squire".

The next step is for the squire to prepare another set of papers, with more dotted lines. These are for the neighbors. The squire is going to let them all in on his deal - at a profit to himself.

They are still doing it, with or without water, sewers, gas and what have you.

John is a little wary at first. He is not so sure of the country building up. Anyway, the Dutch are getting bolder in their claims to Connecticut. They have issued one or two manifestoes.

So John and Hannah slip over to Hempstead, in Long Island, which is safely English. He is hardly settled, in 1660, when King Charles II makes a princely present to his Catholic brother, the Duke of York. The gift is long Island.

If you want to know how the colonists felt in 1660 about King Charles II and popery, just scan for a moment names in the *baptismal* records of New England in Colonial days:

Not a Charles in the lot of them,

So John and Hannah move back to Connecticut in 1660, and find the Dutch much subdued by growing English power.

Way down in the southwestern corner of Connecticut, just north of Now Amsterdam, a few stubborn land grabbers have been banging on through *changing administrations*, siding from time to time with the Dutch or English as might seem most advantageous to their private interests. The region is called by the suggestive name of Horseneck. Robert and Angell Rusted have land for sale; also Richard Crabbe and Gershom Lockwood and William Lowe and John Bowers. John finds that Richard Crabbe has had the most trouble with the Dutch, and is more anxious to sell than the others. So he drives a cash bargain, and on October 26, 1660, buys the "Old Horseneck Farm". It is bounded "by ye sea on ye southeast, by William low on ye east, by ye fence on ye northwest and north by ye hye ways and hethcotes and Angel Rusted's on ye west".

John Mead has settled down. He and Hannah have, in due time, eleven childre. But John Mead is still land hungry. He is descended from generation after generation of tenants - paying rent to landlords, and tithes to the church - but never owning the land.

John falls for every silver tongued real estate promoter that comes along. He buys and buys and buys. He becomes a "prominent citizen". Never having gotten in on the ground floor in any of the Indian land. grabs, he is not a "leading citizen" or "squire". But he is nevertheless a "Prominent citizen".

In due time he becomes owe of himself. Son of generations who in England had been required to tip his hat to the gentry, he is put to the test in America as to whether human nature is not the same the world over. There is an oft told tale about him which will bear retelling:

On an autumn day, in old Connecticut, John Mead can be seen riding toward Dumpling Pond, near Greenwich, taking grist to mill. As he approaches the River Myanos, he over., takes an old quaker, jogging along slowly on foot# carrying a heavy load# In a real spirit of kindness, he offers to take the quaker's load upon his horse *and* thus give the quaker an easier journey,

"No", replies the quaker. "Thee don't get my bundle, for *I can* read men's thoughts. Thee wants to got my bundle, and then thee'll run off. Thee don't get my bundle." "Very well", is the simple reply, and they go on slowly together. At last they come to the brink of the Myanos. Here Mr. quaker is really in trouble. How to cross the river, two or three feet deep, dry shod, is a puzzle. So he gladly accepts a second offer of assistance from the horseman. The bundle is mounted in front, John Mead in the middle, and the quaker behind. Arrived at the center of the stream, in pretending to adjust his stirrup, John Mead catches the quaker by the heel and dumps him into the river. Such treatment is too much even for quaker forbearance, and the victim seizes handsfull of pebbles and would seek vengeance, does not John Mead threaten to put the bundle in the water also. This threat and the lecture following it gradually cools off the fellow's anger. Mead informs him that all has been done for his own good, to teach him a lesson. And the lecturer says he hopes the stranger will never again profess to read men's thoughts. "For", he says, "I asked you to ride, kindly, in

the first place, when you refused; but at the second time of asking, I really intended to do just as I have done". So saying, he tosses back the bundle and rides on, leaving the quaker to apply the moral as he thinks proper.

Tut! Tut! Sire John: Have a little caution. Some day your descendants may seek refuge among the Quakers.

Having severed relations with the sombre Massachusetts elders, with their Bradford, their Winthrops, their Mathers and their Cottons, the Connecticut elders set about forming a government. While not one whit less bigoted than their Massachusetts brethren, they prefer to divide their bigotry into two parts, keeping the bigotry of the church for spiritual things, and the bigotry of the state for temporal affairs. The debates in their meetings show clearly that they are determined to separate church and state., A "Generall Courts" is established, composed of representatives of several towns, such as Wethersfield, Hartford, New Haven and Stamford.

This "Courte" serves as a unicameral legislature. In 1650 the "Generall Courts" crystallizes the trend of Connecticut political ideas in a solemn and basic pronouncement, the kernel of which has been carried down through the generations and embodied in the American Constitution. For in 1650, the "Generall Courte" enacts in effect that no punishment shall be given except by due process of law enacted by representatives of the people. Here is what the "Generall Courts" says:

No man's life shall be taken away; no man's honor or good name shall be stained; no man's person shall be arrested, restrained, banished, dismembred, nor any way punished; no man shall be deprived of his wife or children; no man's goods or estate shall be taken away from him nor any ways undamaged, under color of law or countenance of authority; unless it bee by the Vertue or Equity of some express law of the country, warranting the same, established by a generall courts and sufficiently published, or in case of a defeat of a law, in any particular ease, by the word of God.

Having made it plain that there shall be no punishment except by "due process of law", and that such laws can only be made by themselves, the "Generall Courte" proceeds to the enactment of a few choice bits of law, to be known to posterity as the "Blue Laws of Connecticut".

Those old laws embody a stern morality. Iconoclasts may throw their stones; skeptics may sneer; libertines may gnash their teeth; but the robes of American decency are yet draped over the iron moral framework of those laws; as these iconoclasts, skeptics and libertines learn from day to day what they are finally brought to the bar of the court or public opinion. These are not laws of forgiveness, nor do they breathe the sweetness and light of tender conscience. They assume their own foundation of righteousness, and specify that which is taboo. The punishments are severe, and history records that they are effective in old Connecticut.

You will note that the church is not mentioned; but the snub is apparent in the statement that only the "Generall Courts" can make the laws. There is an equally important snub In the words used, for on close inspection it appears that neither the King not his governor can make laws. In those few words, in 1650, those stubborn pioneers, in their primitive environment, surrounded by savages, actually defied the power of both Church and King.

The echoes of that defi have rung down the ages into our Constitution, and within the last year (1936) the Supreme Court of the United States has declared that the President cannot make laws, and presidential bureaucrats cannot punish, either under "codes", "regulations", or "executive decree". Such an attempt under the New Deal" is declared to be usurpation of power.

The well informed do not refer to the Connecticut Blue Laws with derision. To the code of 1640 of the Generall Courte of Connecticut, may be traced the American origin of almost all our civil institutions. The laws are few and simple, but so worded as to cover the gamut of Colonial life and conduct, and set up a stabilized form of government. The preamble states in part:

"When a people are gathered together, the word of God requires, that to meinteine the pease and union of ouch a people, there should bee an orderly and desent government established according to God, to order and despose of the affaires of the people".

On the subject of schools, the code says:

"It being our cheife project of that old deluder, Sathan, to keepe men from the knowledge of the Scriptures, as in former times, keeping them in an unknowne tongue, so in these later times, by perswading them from the use of tongues, so that the true sence and meaning might bee clouded with false glasses of saint seeming deceivers; and that learning may not be buried in the grave of our forefathers . . . . It is therefore ordered by the courte that every towneshipp within this jurisdiction after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty howsholdors, shall then forthwith appointe one within their towne to teach all such children . . . ."

The age of majority for men is fixed at 21 years; civil process provided for; methods of surveying specified; burglary and theft defined; idleness prohibited; and sundry offences forbidden 'With penalties provided. It is in fact difficult to find any fault with the "Blue Laws". Some of them might well be enacted today - most of them are in force today in some form or another. Punishments in the Blue Laws are different - flogging and sitting in stocks or banishment. Perhaps we might readopt some such punishments to the advantage of our commonwealth.

Upon such rocks are our legal structures builded, God help America when those who nibble at the foundations of our state succeed in destroying the principles of representative government and the precepts of morality so sternly

laid down and faithfully followed in old Connecticut. In his later years John Mead has a controversy with Rev. Jeremiah Peck over the subject of infant baptism. John Mead does not believe in eternal damnation for unbaptized infants. Rev. Peck refuses to baptize the children of those who do not "believe", until the parents shall repent. John Mead makes a test case of the matter, but finds himself and four friends in the minority. Rev. Peck, after due consideration by the deacons of the church, is again "cauled" as minister. Whereupon John Mead prepares the following protest:

Protest

We John Mead Sen. & Jun. Nathaniel Howe, Francis Thorne, Theo. Close, John Hubble, Sen, and Johathan Husted do enter our protest against ye above said rendering this our reason, Which is as followeth, that this caule is not according to ye rules of ye gospel Mr. Jeremiah Peck refusing to baptize our children. Secondly ye above sd John Mead's reasons are because sd Jeremiah Peck hath given him John Mead offence.

By the close of the year, 1689, however, the Reverend Peck has "given offense" to so many that he is dismissed.

John (2) Mead raises his family of eleven under the sunshine and shadows of the Connecticut Blue Laws. In his middle age, in 1679 - 1680, and in 1686, he is himself a member of the "Generall Courte". He dies in 1699. He probably does not serve in King Phillip's War, for that war is fought in Massachusetts. His children are; John Joseph, Hannah, Ebenezer, David, Jonathan, Benjamin, Nathaniel, Samuel, Abigail and Mary.

Great Sire John, I am not so sure you used Christian kindness on the poor Quaker. You knew when you first offered him the lift that your Connecticut fellow Colonists were accustomed to abuse Quakers. Naturally, he was suspicious. When you later had him at your mercy, you had your chance to be kind. Your descendants way smile at your-wit, but you might have set a better example for them. However, we look with a great deal of sympathy upon your "protest" against the "cauling" of Rev. Peck, who was dictatorial in refusing because of the beliefs of the parents, to baptize the infants offered for that sacred rite. Surely the beliefs of the parents should not be used against the babes in the cradle.

## **JONATHAN MEAD - THE STAY AT HOME**

**1665 - 1726**

This now habit of buying lands has a logical outcome – the lands must be disposed of. John the Realtor hangs on as long as he can, in the old English way. But, when he dies he wills it in the Colonial way he subdivides it, among all his sons. On March 16, 1695, feeling the *uncertainties of life*, he sends for a neighbor, Salmon Treat, and a nephew Zachariah (son of his brother Joseph), who has learned readin' and writin' up Boston Way, and dictates his will. He cannot

write, so he signs with his mark. In 1699, the will is offered for probate before Jonathan Bell, Commissioner. The opening clause reads:

"Know all men by these presents yt I John Mead Senior of Greenwich in ye collonie of Connecticut for ye love good will and affection which I have and bare towards . . . "

then follows the subdivision of the old Horseneck farm and the lands acquired by old John Mead:

Item . . "To my son John Mead deceased (for his son John my grandson) a Sertaine persale of land and Meadow lying and being in Greenwich being bounded by ye land yt I John Mead bought of John Bowers Noth; and a line drawn frm ye northeast corner of ye land I bought of Angell Heusted to a grate rook lying in ye frunt fence. All ye land lying in this compass with ye house as it is bounded. Ye frunt of said land being bounded upon ye hyways west. The reare upon ye sea Southeast" . . . also "two acres in ye home lott . . ."

Item . . . "To my son Joseph Mead a Sertaine parsale of land and Meadow lying in Myanos Neck estemed seven acres, be it more or less, as it is bounded . . . also three acres of land in Stanford Southfield near ye upper gate."

"Item . . . "to my son Ebenezer Mead . . . a persale of meadow in ye Hosack Meadow estimed two acres and a half . . ."

Item . . . "to my son JONATHAN MEAD of ye town of Greenwich . . - a home lott layed out to me at horseneck, and all my lands lying within Horseneck field & a Persale of land containing three acres more or less, lying at ye Southeast end of Widow Howe's lott",

Item . . . "to my son David Mead of ye towne of bedford now in ye government of New York . . . ye accomodation lying an& being at bedford, both lands and meadows, as it was granted to me."

Item . 9 . "to my son Benjamin Mead of . . . Greenwich five acres at Sticklin's brook . . . my lands at Coscob . . . and ten acres of upland on ye road."

Item . . . "to my son Nathaniel Mead of . . . Greenwich - - an acre and two rods of meadow in ye Southfield a - and seven acres at a place called Crock . . . also 2/3ds of my lands as it shall be laid out in Patrick's list."

Item . . . "to my son Samuel Mead all my land on ye east side of ye hye waye by my house both meadow and plow land bounded by ye grate rock yt lyeth in ye fence. . . and upon a straight line to ye Northeast corner of ye meadow land yt I bought of Angell Husted Jr. Also all my land upon Elizabeth Neck . . . also all my alotment in Stanford Eastfield, on shippan, which was my father Potter's. . . also yt persale of land I had of the overseers of my father Potters estate, lying within Stamford bounds, fronting ye hye waye by ye Southfield."

The great subdivider, Sire John, has thus given farms to all the boys, but has not mentioned the girls. He even devises to Samuel the estate of his deceased father in law, Wm. Potter, although his wife, Hannah Potter Mead, only child of Wm. Potter, is still living. But he gives Samuel an additional parcel lying by the farm of Gershom Lockwood. on consideration that Samuel "do well and honorably maintain his mother with a convenient room in ye house, such a room as his mother Shall chuse, and with such other things as may be suitable for her subsistence, during her widowhood". There were to be no aged parents in the garret room in this family.

Jonathan (3) was born about 1665, on his father's Horseneck Farm. At the death of Sire John (2) the great subdivider, Jonathan acquires title to a "parsale (parcel) of three acres, a lot yt (that) VMS layed out at Horseneck, and all of Horseneckfield". He is married in his early twenties to a girl from Stamford, named Martha Finch. Jonathan (3) is too young for service in King Phillip's War, and too far from the frontier for Indian service. The young folks grow up in safety and a fair degree of comfort. The continuous round of labor and church, church and labor, is rather boresome. The children grow restless, and prefer sleighing and dancing and corn husking bees to church. Jonathan (a), like his father, is inclined to resent arbitrary control by the church, and his children inherit the spirit of liberality,

The local minister, Joseph Morgan, becomes first alarmed, then discouraged. So on May 6, 1700, he calls a "publique meeting" Greenwich and Horseneck worshipers and tells them "firstly, that there is not a Unitie in Ye place for publique worship of God; 2ndly that he does not see a probabilitie of there coming in gospel order, having given you warning long ago; and thirdly, because I see not yt (that) masters of families do laye restraint upon there families on ye Sabbath night, which is a hindrance to my worke".

But the people heed not, and Joseph Morgan tenders his resignation. Greenwich accepts, but Horseneck decides to try a little harder, and keeps Rev. Morgan for a while. What decision Jonathan (3) comes to we do not know, but we think the retention of the unrelenting type of minister adds to his burdens in raising those five boys and four girls.

### **Crossing of the Trails of the Meads and Davises.**

About this time Philip Carteret, Governor of New Jersey, feels the need of increasing his population. In these Colonial days, when politicians become real estate minded, they first set aside an area for colonization. Next they allocate large blocks of land to the politicians and their favorites. Then they invite settlers into the area, and the activities and industry of the settlers quickly add value to the reserved blocks of the non-resident politicians. So in 1665, Governor Carteret sends out messengers to all the colonies, inviting them to come to New Jersey.

Connecticut is peculiarly susceptible to the siren call of real estate promoters.

In 1667, a caravan from Hartford, Connecticut, led by a man of mature years, and his wife and three sons, journeys by ox team and lumbering carts from Hartford through Greenwich to New Jersey. He is not related to the Meads. He has never heard of them, but today we think of him, and of the early Meads, with the same interest - possibly with the same affection. That man is Stephen Davis, who had, like William Mead, come from England to find a home in America. He had first arrived in Hartford in 1646. He has heard the siren call of the political real estate promoters of New Jersey After arriving in New Jersey, Stephen Davis settles first in Newark; his sons John, Thomas and Jonathan in Elizabethtown; and his greatgrand sons in Westfield, New Jersey, During the Dutch interregnum, when the latter seize control of New Jersey (1673) as they had earlier done In parts of Connecticut, Stephen and his sons become Dutch Burghers, taking the oath of allegiance to the flag of the Netherlands. Very soon the English repossess New Jersey, and Stephen becomes an Englishman again,

Our interest in Stephen Davis being a very personal one, I will mention one side light on his character before leaving him to sire his progeny in New Jersey: (quoting from the archives of Newark, New Jersey):

"In 1667, after arrival on the Banks of the Passaic, Stephen Davis was one of those who 'associated' together in the endeavor to carry on spiritual concerns and also civil and town affairs according to God and Godly Government.

"In 1687, when the sealers of weights and measures were appointed to establish a standard, it was agreed that Stephen Davis, half bushel shall be the standard which shall be most suitable, and all measures shall be sealed with an "N" (Newark); and all weights shall be tried with brass weights if they can be had, and if not, by Stephen Davis' weights, which have been sealed in New York".

I know of no more splendid tribute to a man's honesty, than to be made the "Standard" of weights and measures.

We shall leave Stephen Davis and his sons and grandsons here in New Jersey, but we shall meet a descendant of Stephen again in 1781, in Pennsylvania.

In the meantime, we shall return to Greenwich, Connecticut, where Jonathan Mead (3) is living on the old Horseneck Farm. After a peaceable life, he passes away in 1726, and his children are: Jonathan (4), Sarah, Martha, James, Isaac, Timothy, Mary, Hezekiah and Rachel.

Jonathan, I see that you and your neighbors are barefoot in summer, and wear moccasins in winter. However, on Sunday you put on your stiff pair of "straights" Both shoes are alike,. Square across the toes. Stiff and unyielding, notwithstanding the bear's grease you have rubbed into them. The leather came from your own cows and took three years to tan. The traveling cordwainer (cobbler) made them up for you. And you still plant rye and wild oats and Indian corn and you have no potatoes. Potatoes will complete the journey from America to

Ireland, and back to New England pretty soon. You have spent your life on the old farm seemingly without adventure.

P. S. I hope the children do not shock Rev. Morgan too much.

## **JONATHAN MEAD - THE BLACKSMITH**

**1689 -**

The settlers in the older Colonies along the Atlantic seaboard have had a comparatively easy time of it. The Indians have plenty of land, and now that King Phillip's War is over, are reconciled to the surrender of the coastal areas. The "poor Palatines" have been thrust forward along the Mohawk as a barrier against the Red Men, and a few Scotch Irish have followed.

By 1725 the Yankees have about exhausted the possibilities of real estate speculation in the older coastal provinces. The bolder ones have bought lands from the Indians, and resold it in smaller tracts to settlers. The oncoming generations are numerous, They cast covetous eyes toward the vacant lands. New York lies on the north and west, but most of Its lands are hold by the Dutch patroons, or by Livingston, or by Sir William Johnson, that magnificent figure of the Mohawk country. Pennsylvania lies on the southwest, but has a mixture of Quakers and Palatine Germans and quarrelsome Scotch Irish and Walsh. Northward along the Hudson River is a "no man's land" extending to the Hampshire Grants (Vermont) claimed by all, and owned by none.

The French are entrenched on the St. Lawrence, with headquarters in Quebec and Montreal. The French are organized, with centralized authority. They claim everything west of the Alleghenies. They are in league with the Indians. They think, move and act as conquerors.

The English colonies are disorganized. They are jealous of one another. They are settlers and home makers, and not military conquerors.

The French, with their Indian allies, drive down the Hudson, from Lake Champlain, and destroy the settlements and scalp the settlers. But the Yankee settlers, crowded in their coastal areas, with farm houses bulging with children, move north, south and west, stop by step. Thousands are killed, with thousands captured, to become the adopted children of the Indians, or the slaves of the French in Quebec. Still they come, wave on wave, frightened and apprehensive, but land greedy and covetous, The Saxons become barterers in land, for speculation, and commence to move, and move, and move.

From now on it will be hard to keep a Mead in one place for long.

Even while the ring of danger is closing around New England. and the towns of western Massachusetts such as Deerfield, and the towns of Hudson River

Valley, such as Schenectady, are being burned and the settlers killed or captured, syndicates are being formed in Connecticut to buy large tracts of land in outlying places, and sell farms to their neighbors. Nine esteemed gentlemen, calling themselves the Nine Partners, obtain a tract up the Hudson in New York State, Just opposite the northwest corner of Connecticut.

Jonathan (4) is a blacksmith. He is late in finding himself a wife. If he had a first wife who left no children, we are not informed. The ancestral wife known to us is Sarah Rusted of Huguenot descent. The name was Eustace, then Heustis, then Hustis and finally Rusted. Jonathan marries her in 1726, when he is 37. Four sons arrive: DARIUS, Eldad, Eli and Jonathan.

Jonathan (4) listens to the various real estate agents, and selects Nine Partners as his new home. It is safely outside the zone of French and Indian Invasion. He closes a deal and goes up the Hudson. He feels no call to take up arms. He has his little farm and his black smith shop. He is beyond the reach of the arm of the English King. The French King, with his Indians, does not now come further south than the northwest corner of Massachusetts.

Jonathan does not seem to understand that the fate of the English settlement hangs in the balance. The spirit of non-conformity seems to persist in his bosom. He feels no sense of responsibility to the English King, and no fear of the French. Even when the King's soldiers march thro', he is indifferent. Let me quote from the New York Archives, from a report made by an English Captain upon the desertion of three of the King's soldiers who have taken refuge in Nine Partners.

Report

By Captain Paul Rycant, made at Poughkepsie.

Sertjt Cassidys account of the ill treatment he received from Jonathan Mead the Blacksmith and Timothy Driskill at Nine Partners when on command after Deserters.

That Lieut. Lyons detached him & a sergt of the 55th with ten men in pursuit of throe Deserters from the 17th Regt. which he had information were concealed by the Inhabitants of Nine Partners, when he with the Command came to a place called the City he . . . with a corporal and three men contined the rout to the line Partners. . . he gave the sergt of the 55th Lieut. Colonel Darbys orders and pass which he had received from Lieut. Lyons. As soon as he came to Nine Partners he was informed the deserters had been lately at Sutherlands Mills and was told he might got some account of them at Jonathan Meads a blacksmith who lived near the Mills, when he came to the blacksmith shop he asked Mead if he could inform him of any deserters he answered he knew of none and if he did he would not tell . . . afterwards he came to the house of one Freeman who told him . . . they had stole a coat from him . . . the said Freeman went next day with the Sergt in pursuit of the Deserters . . . when they came to Driskills house he told the Sergt he knew of no deserters . . . they seized Driskill and he confessed that one of them was married to his daughter . . . and after they had settled in what manner they were to act he with one man wont to a house and after they were got into

bed the above mentioned Jonathan Mead a blacksmith with about 30 other people forced into the house and dragged the Sergt and Allan Cooper a Grenadier into different rooms and beat them in a most cruel manner, saying Damn the King and all such rascally fellows that were after deserters, and after they were tired beating them kept them prisoners all night without having any proper authority for it, the next morning the Constable came to them and said he had

a warrant to take him and his party before a Justice of the Peace. . . The Justice abused them roundly saying that Lieut. Lyons his officer & he deserved both to hanged and uttered many abusive expressions & would not even suffer them to say anything in their defence but committed them unheard to the Common Goal, nor would the Justice take cognizance of their information nor of Mead the Blacksmith heading a possy breaking into the house beating them in a most terrible manner and using ye tratrous expressions against the Kings sacred majesty,

An attorney at Poughkeepsie told me if the Sergt. had not imprudently given his orders and pass to the other Sergt. the Justice of the Peace upon producing it would not have committed them.

By what information I could collect from the inhabitants, those of the Nine Partners are a riotous people and Levellers by principle.

Paul Rycout Capt.

To Lieut. Col. John Darby,"

Jonathan (4), there comes down to us from the echoes of the past, no word to tell us why you behaved that way. The King furnished those soldiers to protect you from the French and Indians. You might better have helped to keep the army intact. We are also a bit surprised at your profanity, We find it hard enough in 1937 to be good, without having a bad example set by a great great great great grandfather.

# ***THE DRAMA***

## ***DARIUS MEAD THE PATRIARCH***

- GREENWICH
- NINE PARTNERS
- HUDSON
- HOOSAC
- VALLEY
- WYOMING
- VALLEY
- MEADVILLE

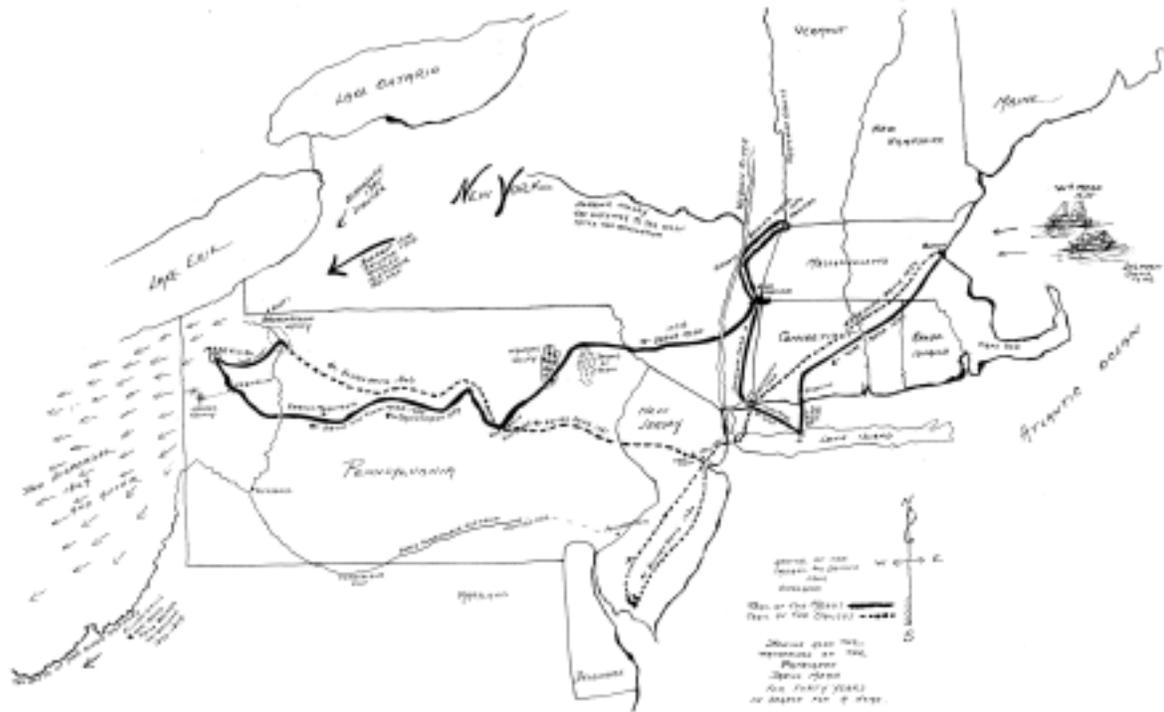
## **DARIUS MEAD**

**1728 - 1791**

Down on the old Horseneck Farm, on March 28 1728, a child is born. On his father's side he is Yoeman English. On his mother's side he is Huguenot French and English gentry. His mother names him "Darius" after a Persian conqueror. If she could foresee his forty years of wandering through four colonies, his sufferings, disappointments and death in the wilderness, she would surely name him Moses. It is one of the blessings of motherhood to hold the babe close, and dream that he will grow to happiness, success and mastery. It is well that Sarah cannot see into the future.

Darius Mead grows to manhood in Greenwich and Nine Partners. He takes to wife Ruth Curtis of Stamford. He strikes out for himself, moving further northward up the Hudson River to a point called Fondall, now called Hudson. Then he hears of a beautiful valley still further north. Leaving Ruth in Fondall, Darius goes with a party on a tour of inspection. The year is 1751. There is peace between France and England. The Indians are quiet. Darius and his party go over a ridge, and there below them is the Valley of the Mingling Waters - the Hoosac Valley - a land of singular beauty and fertility.

Darius in 1751 knows something of the history of the Hoosac. The French claimed it in 1724 and built a fort - Fort St. Croix - only to be routed by the Indians. The English claimed upper Hoosac in 1739, only to be routed by the French. The Dutch claimed it somewhat later and their settlement - Dutch Hoosac - was burned in King George's war of 1746. But now all is peaceful, and Darius Mead and his Connecticut comrades select a spot to be known as West Hoosac. West Hoosac was believed to be in New York but in fact lies across the line in Massachusetts in the northwest corner of the state, where Williamstown now stands. Titles are duly applied for, and may be acquired by completing a clearing and a cabin by September 10, 1753. Darius returns to Fondall (Hudson) to be present at the birth of his first son - David - in 1752. He then returns and clears his land and builds a cabin, completing it on time. He next joins with the other settlers in a petition to the Captain General of New York, asking that a meeting be "warned" (notified) to settle a minister and allot the common lands. In December 1753, the proprietors hold their first meeting, and Darius, then 25 years of age sits in the meeting.



**Map of travels of Darius Mead Throughout His Life**

The young Colonist is ready to go back to Hudson for his family in 1754, when dire news comes. On May 28th., a party of French and Indians arrives at Dutch Hoosac, burns it and goes on to Pownall, Vermont, which is also burnt. War has been declared again between France and England, and the most important stake is in America - the hinderland beyond the Alleghenies.

For some reason West Hoosac and the decayed old Fort Massachusetts are not molested in the first raid.

The West Hoosac pioneers, having discovered that they are living in Massachusetts, quickly petition the General Court of Massachusetts for funds to build a fort. The General Court, with its usual indifference to pioneer sufferings, refuses the money and tells the settlers to take refuge in Fort Massachusetts near by. But the man of Connecticut are still resentful of Massachusetts "insolence", and stubbornly hold their ground, They build a fort of their own, to be known as Fort Hoosac, on what is now the site of Williams College.

The fort is poorly manned and ill equipped, having only eleven soldiers and no cannon. Darius Mead with his long rifle, joins the soldiers in the fort. Skirmishes take place in the nearby forest. Scouts and stragglers are killed. The enemy retires, and Darius goes home on visits but leaves his family in Hudson. On July 11, 1756, at twilight, about 100 French and Indians return and attack the fort, but are repulsed by the brave defenders.

Darius Mead gazes out from the fort on the Land of the Mingling Waters. He thinks of the blood that has been shed for a century on its hills and meadows -

the blood of the Mohawk, the Mohigan, the Pequot and the Delaware; the blood of the French and the Dutch and the English. He thinks of his family, waiting for him in Hudson. He is essentially a man of peace. He does not condemn the Indians. They have been robbed and betrayed by the white man, and degraded by his rum. The Yankee governments are weak and selfish and disorganized. Land titles are uncertain. It is best to give up this blood soaked land and seek a new Canaan. Darius gives up his farm, and returns to Hudson.

It is now of no interest to Darius that Quebec falls in 1760, and the last French and Indian war is over. From 1761 to 1774 he raises his family. David, his eldest son, marries. Ashel and John reach man's estate. By 1774, Darius has become a patriarch. He is 46 years old, and, it is high time he establishes his dynasty in some safe place.

His brothers and some of his cousins talk of going north to the Hampshire Grants, but the titles there are in dispute, being claimed by both New York and New Hampshire, and bloodshed is sure to come.

The ingratiating real estate men from Connecticut again appear on the scene. They tell of a beautiful valley to the south, called the Wyoming Valley. A man named Lydias claims to have bought the valley from the Indians, and is selling farms. Though Connecticut born, Darius is suspicious. He investigates. He finds that Pennsylvania has a better claim to the Wyoming Valley, and is also selling farms.

Darius knows that the quaker government of Pennsylvania is on good terms with the Indians. An Indian seldom kills a Quaker. The Lydias title is simply a land grab, and will be quickly disposed of.

Darius, you had better keep out of this. He who buys a lawsuit buys troubles.

But Darius buys a Pennsylvania title, and in 1774, with his numerous children and his brother Eli, commences the long trek down the Hudson, across Ulster and Sullivan Counties, to Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania.

Arriving at his destination, he finds that 200 Connecticut families have preceded him and are in possession. Unable to obtain possession of his farm, Darius moves down to Sunbury (Shamokin) to await legal justice.

### **The Villain**

Just as the life of Darius Mead is a continuous drama, so every drama must have its number one villain. In the history of the western Meade, that villain is Captain Bull, a Delaware Indian. When the trail of Darius Mead enters Wyoming Valley, it crosses the trail of Captain Bull.

The drama has its prologue in 1736, when the Iroquois enter a solemn treaty not to sell any lands in Pennsylvania to any person or persons except Penn's heirs. The plot develops when, in 1754, some Mohawk chiefs very irregularly sell some land in Wyoming Valley to Lydias, the agent of the Connecticut company. Next, in 1757, we find the Penns conferring with Teedyuscung, the Delaware chief, father of Captain Bull, and promising to reserve the Wyoming Valley to the Delawares as a hunting ground forever. In 1758, Teedyuscung demands fulfillment of the promise, and Pennsylvania is unable to comply because the Iroquois have not yet conveyed the Valley to Pennsylvania. The next scene shows over 100 Connecticut settlers, purchasers under the Lydias title, moving into the Valley. They plant grain, and go home for their families.

In May 1763, they return with their families. Pennsylvania orders them to depart, being obligated to hold the land for the Delawares. The Yankees defy the Quakers, and stand on their shaky Lydias title, derived from the Mohawks. Ejectment suits are brought. Sheriffs are driven off. Pennsylvania is in a dilemma.

But Captain Bull and his Delawares are not, They are indignant. Teedyuscung has been murdered in April 1763. Captain Bull, the son, decides on direct action, and to take by force where the law is futile. He has lived in Ohio with his exiled Delawares for ten years. He has there imbibed the spirit of the dead Pontiac, and the Great Conspiracy is still in his heart. He hates the white man. On October 15, 1763, while the Connecticut farmers are at work in the fields, 135 Delawares, led by Captain Bull, swoop down on the settlement, with tomahawk, fire and scalping knife. When they leave, they take 20 scalps, and leave death and ruin behind them. The survivors flee to Connecticut.

Two days later, Pennsylvania troops arrive, under order to dispossess the Yankees. Finding the bodies of the dead, they bury them. They look about, and find their "ejectment proceedings" already fairly complete. So the gentle, peace loving Quakers burn the rest of the cabins, the seed corn, the barns, and the equipment, and consider the incident closed. Imagine the surprise in the City of Brotherly Love when, in the following spring, the stubborn Connecticut Yankees with their carts, their cows, their children, their seed corn and their plows, trudge painfully back, skirting the north line of the Shades of Death, and resume work on their blackened farms.

There are more suits, more threats, more writs and processes, and more parading of militia, but the Yankess stay in Wyoming Valley.

We will leave Darius waiting for a moment while we write a few words about the Wyoming Valley. I have on the wall of my study a century old steel engraving entitled "The descent into the Valley of Wyoming". A wagon road slopes along the hillside descending into a vale of peace and prosperity; a village in the center with a white church dominating a group of buildings. The picture holds one's attention. I turn to Lossings "Field Book of the Revolution" - that magnificent record of our Revolutionary days, (recorded in painstaking detail in

the early "40's" after the war for independence) - and I find a description worth repeating:

"History and song have hallowed the Valley of Wyoming, and everything appertaining to it seems to be wrapped in an atmosphere of romance. Its Indian history, too, long antecedent to the advent of the whites is full of poetry which clusters around the progress of the aborigines . . . It is diversified by hill and dale, upland and intervals. Its character of extreme richness is derived from its extensive flats or river bottoms, which in some places, extend from one to two miles from the stream, unrivaled in expansive beauty unsurpassed in luxuriant fertility . . . the sycamore, the elm, and more especially the black walnut, while here and there, scattered thru the fields, a huge shell bark yields its summer shade to the weary laborers, and its autumn fruit to the black and grey squirrel or the rival plow boys. Pure streams of water come leaping from the mountains, imparting health and pleasure in their course; all of them abounding with delicious trout. Along these brooks, and in the swales, scattered through the uplands, grow the wild plum and the butternut, while, wherever the hand of the white man has spared it, the native-grapes may be gathered in unlimited profusion

"Such were the common scenes when the white man first came to Wyoming, which seems to have been founded by nature, as a perfect Indian Paradise. Game of every sort was abundant. The quail whistled in the meadow; the pheasant rustled in its leafy covert; the wild duck reared her brood and bent the reed in every inlet; the red deer fed upon the hills; while in the deep forests, within a few hours walk, was found the stately elk . . ."

Such is the second land sought by the patriarch Darius Mead as his land of Canaan. His search for a new home in this paradise is to bring only sorrow to him and his loved ones. He is a Connecticut Yankee, claiming under a Pennsylvania title, and finds himself in 1774, shunted aside to Sunbury, to await the settlement of the land titles. The Pennamite wars, as they were called continue until the Revolution is well under way. In 1776, Darius and his sons David, John and Darius, Jr., enlist on the Whig or Rebel side. Their enlistment records are as follows:

Darius Mead, enlists as No. 146183, 3rd class, 5th Battalion, Lancaster County militia.

David Mead, the eldest son, born 1752, enlists in the 10th Battalion, Northumberton County militia, and is promoted in 1776 to ensign of the 7th Company.

Ashel Mead, the next son, is killed in the Wyoming Massacre, as hereafter related (the Indian-Tory Massacre, not one of the Pennamite Massacres). There is no record of any enlistment.

John Mead, born 1756, enlists when 20 years old, in 1776, in the 5th class, 10th Battalion, Lancaster County militia, serving under Capt. Andrew Stewart.

Darius Mead, Jr. enlists at age 17, in 3rd class, 10th Battalion, Lancaster County militia, on tour Northumberland County.

The history of this eventful period in this Valley, following the Pennamite Wars, has been detailed to fill volumes. I shall presume to cover but a few of the high lights.

Many of the inhabitants are Tories. The Indians, loyal to their ancient treaty with the King of England, align themselves with the Tories. The Whig inhabitants of the vicinity enlist in the Rebel army, and are transferred to other battle fronts. The Valley is "virtually abandoned by Congress" to quote the historian. Its own men are away from home on other service duties.

The war on the New York Frontier and in the Mohawk Valley is a bloody one, with victory first to the Loyalists, and then to the Rebels. The loyalists wish to divert soldiers from the armies of Washington, and in June of 1778, plan a sortie from Niagara, southeasterly across New York into the Wyoming Valley. There are, to defend the Valley, only 40 or 50 regulars, and the untrained militia in which the Meads are serving. On the news of the raid, grandfathers, boys and women seize such weapons as are at hand. Gun powder is scarce. Down from Niagara comes the Loyalist Colonel, John Butler, with a detachment of Johnson's Royal Greens, (Tory rangers) with from 5 to 700 Indians, among whom is the revengeful Captain Bull. The women and children of the Valley flee to "Forty Fort" for safety. Aged men form the garrison, All outside the forts fall before the bloody tomahawk. Aschel Mead is not enlisted, but he comes from Sunbury (Shamokin) to help protect the helpless Colonists.

The Rebel militia holds a council of war, and decides to attack the enemy, stationed at Wintermoot's fort. The date is July 2, 1778. The battle ground is a level plain, partly cleared and cultivated, and partly covered by scrub oaks and yellow pines. Let us draw a curtain on the awful story of that battles The Rebels are quickly routed and every one of their captains is slain. They flee in confusion, the Indian, under Captain Bull, following and slaughtering all stragglers without quarter. Some escape. Aschel Mead is killed and his body terribly mutilated. A remnant surrender, and are promised quarter, but upon surrendering their arms, are mercilessly murdered by the Indians. Many escape, and commence a long trek back to Connecticut. One group of 100 women and children hurry in wildest terror, through the wilderness, with but a single man to guide them. This is the second flight from Wyoming.

Following the battle, on July 3rd., 1778, Col. John Butler, with his Royal Greens and his Indian allies destroy Forty Fort with fire and tomahawk, putting all the refugees to death; then follows Pittston Fort. The fugitives from all over the Valley then gather at Wilkes-Barre Port. At daylight on the morning of July 4th., the occupants of the fort flee, and the Indians take possession of the fort and reduce it to ashes. The flight of these refugees is the third great flight from Wyoming Valley. The horrors of that flight had best remain untold. Stragglers are tortured, killed and scalped. Starvation and suffering dog the steps of those

who escape, and behind them, the captives are burned, butchered, and hacked to pieces. This flight is through the swamp called "Dismal Swamp", or "Shades of Death", a huge swamp that lays as a great barrier between the Wyoming Valley and the Colonies on the east. As the weaker ones languish, the others are compelled to push on, to save as many of the children as possible. Babies are born en route, and the mothers stagger on with their new born infants. No pen is gifted with the ability to correctly describe the sufferings of these Yankees on their return to Connecticut. It is better that the story be barely sketched, for the details are too horrible-to relate. In every slaughter, Captain Bull incites the Indians to greater and greater cruelties.

Darius Mead and his surviving sons, notwithstanding their Connecticut origin are not among the Connecticut refugees. Their long residence in Nine Partners, New York, and Hoosac Valley (Massachusetts and New York) has given them a clearer understanding of the land titles, and their acceptance of title from the government of Pennsylvania has made them Pennsylvanians. For that reason, on the defeat of the militia by the Tories they flee directly home to Shamokin, and escape the horrors of the "Shades of Death".

Hundreds of settlers are made permanent captives by the Indians, and among them is the famous Frances Slocum, who is providentially identified in 1837 on a reservation in Illinois. She has married an Indian and raised a family. She has forgotten her name, but is identified by her brother through a song her mother used to sing. She dies as an Indian in 1847. Other captives escape from time to time, or are redeemed. Some adopt Indian life, and refuse to return to their people.

The flight of July 4, 1778 from Wyoming to Connecticut is followed by the fourth great flight, commencing July 12, 1778. This flight is a panic flight of all the settlers on the west branch of the Susquehanna, when they hear of the fate of Wyoming. The few trails and timber roads are crowded with the settlers, with their babies and cattle and belongings. This flight is called the "Great Runaway", but its pathos is confined to the panic and sufferings of the settlers.

Many seek refuge in Shamokin, and Darius Mead furnishes a refuge to his Connecticut persecutors. The Indians have returned to New York State, and few of the settlers are killed..

Out of this battle and back to Sunbury comes Darius Mead and only three of his grown sons. Darius is saddened. His hope now is to get away from the selfishness of civilization, to a land where men can live in peace. While the Revolutionary War continues, he and his sons remain in the militia, protecting the frontier as best they can. For three years they attempt to clear the titles to their Wyoming lands, without success.

### **The Trails Cross Again**

Let us digress a moment to revert back to that Stephen Davis who with his sons had crossed the path of the Meads in Greenwich in 1667.

Honored and respected and full of years, Stephen Davis has passed away in Newark, New Jersey. His son John has reared a family in Elizabethtown, and he has gone to his reward. John's son John 2nd. has moved a few miles from Elizabethtown to a settlement called Westfield, where he has established a numerous dynasty. His neighbors are the Fraziers, the Lyttels, the Bonnells and the Tuckers. Some are Scotch Presbyterians, driven out after the Argyle rebellion. Some are Huguenots. Some are Long Island English. The Scotch dominate the town, and Presbyterianism becomes the leading religion. The families intermarry. In 1762, a child is born in Westfield - sixth in descent from Sire Stephen. He is christened "Elijah" in the old Presbyterian church. While he is yet a boy of 13, the Revolutionary War commences. The Governor of New Jersey - Wm. Franklin, a son of Benjamin - is a Tory. The state is a hot bed of Toryism. As the war progresses, Elijah grows older, and leans toward the Rebels.

There is no chance to enlist in Westfield. No company is made up there. So, at the age of 17, in 1780, he kisses his mother goodbye and slips away to South Jersey - to Cumberland County - and enlists in the militia company of his distant relative, Captain Elijah Davis. His term is to expire in 1781. He transfers to the Continental line in 1781. At the time of his enlistment, he is described as "17 years of age; 5' 6" in height; slim built; swarthy complexion". As one of the regular soldiers of the Continental line, Elijah Davis has many experiences, which are not part of the story of the Meads. His enlistment over, he straggles, weary and dirty and- filthy with vermin, back to his home in Westfield. From the barn, he calls out for soap and clean clothes, for he is not fit to enter the house until scrubbed.

The war is not over, but Elijah has seen enough, On October 9, 1781, the returned soldier is united in marriage to a little 16 year old Scotch-Huguenot girl - Desire Lyttell, daughter of Isaac Lyttell and Jemima Frazee. The record of the marriage is still to be seen in the old Presbyterian Church in Westfield.

In a quaint old history of the Passaic Valley, written by one of the Lyttell family, is this abrupt note about Desire Lyttell. "Married Elijah Davis and went to Shamokin". In those days, Shamokin and Sunbury were one and the same settlement, lying just south of the Wyoming Valley. If Elijah Davis and his bride "went to Shamokin" to get away from the war, they were rudely disappointed. They find the back country in a constant state of alarm. Indian raids are a common occurrence. Tory bands carry on a guerilla warfare. To protect the country, the militia continues to recruit men, and in a few weeks Elijah has enlisted. His command is the 3d. Class 5th Battalion of Lancaster County Militia.

At the first alarm, he meets his new comrades at arms. THE TRAILS OF THE MEADS AND DAVISES CROSS FOR THE SECOND TIME. For Darius Mead, now a man of 53 years, finds himself one of the new comrades of this 19 year old veteran of two states Elijah Davis of Westfield, New Jersey. Together they answer

the Indian and Tory alarms, and together they defend the frontier. At the close of the war, lawless bands of renegades, Indians and half breeds continue their depredations. As late as 1785, according to the Pennsylvania Archives, David Mead writes to the Council of Safety, pleading vainly for aid in quelling the lawlessness and disorder in the Wyoming.

### **The Sigh of the Weary.**

Peace! Peace! Is there to be no peace? Bad titles, French and Indians at Hoosac; bad titles, Tories, Indians and bandits at Wyoming. There must be a land of promise, somewhere, somehow, and the weary Meads renew their inquiries about distant valleys and far off meadows.

Patience, Darius. You are weary of battling the frontier. Why seek a wilder one? Stay yet awhile in Wyoming. Perhaps peace will come and find you.

But David and John are married, and numerous grandchildren are filling the cabins. The Dynast must have a wider domain. Darius calls a meeting, and a company is formed, to take up land across the wilderness on the western line of Pennsylvania.

In 1788, Darius sends out a scouting party, composed of sons, David, John and Joseph Mead, with Thomas Martin, John Watson, James Fitz Randolph and Thomas Grant of Sunbury, with Cornelius Van Horn and Christopher Snyder of New Jersey.

Elijah does not join this party, but remains in Shamokin. His trail is to cross that of the Meads a third time long afterwards in Warren County.

Up to this time, all trips to the western lands have been made through Cumberland Gap, on the south. No determined effort has been made to go due west over the hills and valleys.

The Patriarch Darius Mead sends this party to blaze a new trail directly west through the wilderness, and to bring back word to him of that which they might discover.

The party follows up the Susquehanna River, to the mouth of Anderson's Creek, near Curwensville, Clearfield County, Pennsylvania. From there it strikes boldly overland, blazing a new wilderness trail, ever afterwards to be called "Mead's Trail". This trail extends through Jefferson, Clarion, Venango and Crawford Counties.

On the evening of May 12, 1788, the pioneer band builds a camp fire beneath a wild cherry tree on the banks of French Creek, near the present site of the Mercer Street bridge, Meadville, Pennsylvania. Other white men have been there before. French trappers have come south from Canada prior to the French and Indian

wars in the "50's". American and Tory scouts have passed that way during the Revolution. But these hardy men, led by the Yankee Meads, under orders from their sire in Sunbury, are the first to claim the land as a home.

It is great to be in at the beginning - to see the start of things -even though the effort be one of danger and suffering. It is springtime -springtime in a new land, fertile, free, away from the greed and strife of the white man and apparently safe from the tomahawk of the Indian.

The next day after that eventful first meal under the Wild Cherry tree - a meal without coffee, without bread, without potatoes - a meal of wild game and a concoction of roots and herbs - the party erects a log cabin between the Cussewago and French Creeks, and prepares grounds for -planting. John Mead builds a cabin above what is now called Vallonia, at a point now on the outskirts of Meadville, just east of the present location of the fair grounds, between the stream and the ravine. David builds a double log cabin on the bluff of French Creek, and for defence against the Indians, surrounds it with a 15 foot stockade with a square block house on the northwest corner.

Their houses are completed in the autumn, and John and David Mead go back to Sunbury to report to their father Darius, and bring back their families. The following spring (1789) Darius, the father, comes on to Mead's Settlement, bringing his wife and the younger children.

John Mend (6) has married, in Sunbury, Catherine Foster of Northumberland County, and she shares the dangers of his westward venture.

### **Pioneer Travel.**

The year 1789 in Eastern Pennsylvania is the heyday of the Conestoga Wagon. When a traveler has no Conestoga Wagon, or when there were no roads whatsoever, he might use a cart, ride horseback, or walk. Conestoga Wagons are a product of Pennsylvania Dutch ingenuity, and are named after the town of Conestoga, Pennsylvania. The underbody is painted blue, and the upper woodwork bright red and each wagon has a cover of cotton or linen stretched over big hoops and bleached white in the sun. Sometimes they travel in groups of ten or fifteen. The driver rides one of the horses. On mountain roads a man goes ahead blowing a horn to keep the road clear.

In 1788 Conestoga Wagons can only go as far as Lancaster. In 1789 one venturesome driver with a stock of cloth and household utensils, drives his wagon as far as Pittsburg - but over a southern route, not over Mead's Trail. In 1789, the year that the Meads "go west", there is no wagon road across central or northern Pennsylvania - none except in the south. The only route is over Mead's trail, and the only transportation is by pack train with the men and families walking, or riding on horses. Even carts are out of the question.

The role of these pack- trains in the first overland migration is of vast importance. One driver rides the lead horse; then another rider; then more laden horses, and so on, with riders bringing up the rear. All other able bodied - members of the family walk. The average speed is less than two miles per hour, ten hours per day. We have no diary of the journey. But we can reason that Catherine Poster rides a horse over that trail, with pillows and bundles tied to the saddle, and little four year old William Mead in her arms -or perhaps carrying more than one child.

The journey from Sunbury (Shamokin) with the babies, is an undertaking to try the stoutest heart. After their arrival, they live in the log cabin when it is safe to do so, and when the Indians are hostile, they retire to the Blockhouse at Franklin. These disturbances, while fraught with danger, yet are looked upon as a passing phase of development of the new western frontier. Pontiac had tried in the "60's" to arouse the Indians in the northwest centering about Detroit, but had failed, and with his death, in '63, had passed, it was supposed, the last great concerted Indian attempt to stop the advance of the whites. The alliance between the Iroquois and the King during the Revolution, had not been an attempt of the Indians to throw back the Whites - it had been an act of loyalty in a barbarian heart to keep the treaty with the King made during the French and Indian Wars. Surely the Indians will see that their destiny lays in peaceful submission to the whites, and an allocation of territory, subject only to the age old perfidy of the white men in seizing new territory from the savages when need comes for more land. But this is not to be. The wisest of the Indians negotiate for an allocation of territory, but the younger hot heads are bitter, and keep up the struggle of murder and death.

### **Indians Again.**

Yet another Indian war is to come, this time from the Indians centering in the Ohio Territory, to culminate in their sound thrashing by Mad Anthony Wayne. Serious trouble begins in 1789, and by 1791, the war is on in earnest. Many of the colonists at Mead's Settlement flee in terror back to the older settlements, but the Meads stay on. Then all seems safe, they remain in their log cabin. When danger threatens, they take refuge in the Blockhouse, or send the women and children in canoes down French Creek- to its junction with the Susquehanna at Fort Franklin.

In 1791, the whole of Western Pennsylvania is seething with unrest. Some of the Indians are friendly. Some wish to exterminate the whites, or fix a boundary which is to be forever the limit of white aggression. The tribes from Detroit to the Gulf are exchanging visits and having war councils. The Meads all take their families to Fort Franklin, where a garrison has been established. Darius acquires a farm near the Franklin Blockhouse.

### **The Last Battle.**

On April 1, 1791, the settlers at Meadville and Fort Franklin receive a visit from a friendly Indian runner, carrying a message from Flying Cloud, a friendly Seneca, and a half brother of the famous Chief Cornplanter, warning of danger from hostile Indians from the west (Ohio). Eleven Indians have been seen prowling the vicinity. The Meads have always been friendly with the Indians, especially Cornplanter, and Darius, the patriarch, now aged 63, having no fear, continues his plowing alone in his fields on his new farm near Fort Franklin. Night is falling, and he must unhitch his horses, and return to his cabin.

Have a care, Darius! The Indians have suffered for 150 years  
the perfidy of the white man, and you can expect no mercy if  
you are captured.

My warning is too late. Out of the shadows of the forest, around the clearing, come two silent figures, one Indian grey with years, and the other young. They seize Darius Mead from behind, bind his arms, and lead him away into the western forest. For hours they travel, and in due course reach Chenago Creek in Mercer County. There they tie our great sire to a tree, and lie down to sleep.

As Darius leans his aching body against the tree, he thinks with heavy heart of his long struggle for a home. He hears the pounding of the surf on the old Horseneck farm. He remembers his mother, and the journey to Nine Partners. Then his marriage and the removal to Hudson. He recalls the Valley of the Mingling Waters, and the fight against the Indians. Then the tiresome migration to Wyoming, and the failure of his land title. He remembers the Delawares, led by Captain Bull, and the terrible mutilation of his son Aschel. He thinks of his wife and his other sons, and their families down at Fort Franklin.

The dying embers of the Indian camp fire flare up, just as one of his captors turns in his sleep. The features of the older savage become distinct in the fire light. Memories of the past awaken in Darius Mead. Memories of the terrible massacre in 1778, back in Wyoming Valley. The face of the savage is the face of Captain Bull !!

The man of peace gazes in startled agony at those terrible features. The descendant of four generations of whites, who had never wronged any man, much less an unschooled savage, is a captive in the power of the men who had killed and butchered his beloved son.



**The Last Battle – Darius Mead and the Delaware Indian Chief  
in their death struggle, 1791**

Be calm, Darius. Your situation is desperate. You are bound hand and foot, your arms cramped behind you around the tree. Is it possible you can escape? Your only hope is to break your thongs by patiently sawing them against the tree.

His arms are free !! He steadies himself for battle, and relaxes his stiffened limbs !! He poises for the struggle!! God strengthen his arms !!

A stone ! The younger man is stunned. Now Darius has the younger man's tomahawk. But as he rises, the older man, Captain Bull, jumps to his feet. The Red man is startled from sleep; the White man is cramped from his thongs. They are both long past middle age - both in buckskin and moccasins. The one has a single scalp lock - the other matted locks of graying hair spreading over his shoulders. For a moment they face each other, and then they lunge to the combat.

*Darius Mead Ancestors & Descendents*

Captain Bull, beware the wrath of a peaceful man !  
Darius Mead, beware the desperation of a man  
blindly seeking to avenge his race!

It is a battle to the death. When daylight comes again, Darius Mead has avenged the death of his son, and Captain Bull has given his life for his people.

The first to learn of the disaster is Conewyando, a friendly Seneca Chief, who sends his daughter to tell the family of the finding of the bodies. David and John, and several of the grandchildren, go to the scene of the death. They bury great sire Darius where he fell, under the forest trees, and bury the body of Captain Bull beside him. The other Indian is not heard of for some time, when it is learned that, wounded by the brave old patriarch, he had crawled away, and has later died of his wounds.

Darius Mead, your life was full of trouble and disappointment. You tried first the Valley of the Mingling Waters, where you had to live in Fort Hoosac for safety. As the patriarch of the Pennsylvania Meads, you led your tribe to the next promised land - the beautiful Valley of the Wyoming, only to be driven forth to Sunbury and lose your beloved son in the battles that followed. Then you sought a third promised land across the mountains, and like Moses of old, you were thrown back by the Canaanites. You were never to make your home in any valley of your choice. From the Fort at Franklin you could ascend your Mount of Nebo, and shading your eyes with your band, glimpse the land for which you were making your last struggle. David and John were to be your Joshua, and lead your tribe into the final promised land after your death.

Darius, you had but little of life's joys to live for, as we know them in 1937. But backward through the lane of cypress trees, along the pathway of our generations, we can see you plowing and planting in the field that day, a century and a half ago, hopeful of the harvest to feed your loved ones. And we know that you loved your life then, as we love ours now. We sense the shock of your capture by the savages - the journey through the wilderness and the lashing of your aged but sturdy body to the tree. We tense with fear as your still strong arms break their bonds, and see you crash into battle with those two barbarians. We see your brave fight, and see the Indian Chieftan Captain Bull, as he is crushed by your blows. We see his companion crawl away to die. We see you sink under your injuries, and die alone in that wilderness beside the body of your captor. And, to modify the description of the grave of Moses:

By Nebo's lonely mountain  
On this side Jordan's wave,  
In a vale in the land of Moab  
There lies a lonely grave,  
And no man knows that sepulcher,  
And no man sees it e'er;  
For the angels of God have smoothed the sod,  
That covers the dead man there.

*Darius Mead Ancestors & Descendents*

Your life came to an end. You battled that you might guide yours to a place of peace, far from the strife that had followed your loved ones across the hills and over the rivers.

You battled against ignorance and barbarity. And if we are to be worthy of you, we must battle against ignorance, and sin, and cruelties in whatever form we shall meet them.

## **EPILOGUE**

### **SONS AND GRANDSONS**

- **DAVID**
- **JOHN**
- **JOSEPH**
- **DARIUS**

### **BROKENSTRAW**

### **VALLEY**

### **SAW MILLS**

### **RIVER RAFTERS**

### **THE DISPERSAL**

## THE SIXTH GENERATION AND AFTER

After the subsidence of the Indian trouble, David and John and Joseph and Darius, Jr., and Ruth "Betsey and the other children of Darius return with their families from Fort Franklin to Meadville, never again to be driven away. The promised land has been possessed, after the patriarch has died for his tribe.

The new settlement is first called "Mead's Blockhouse" -then just "Mead's" - and then Meadville.

David Mead (6), the eldest son, becomes an outstanding man, eventually becoming a major general of Militia in Pennsylvania. His descendants remain in Meadville, and scatter westward from there.

John (6) is of quieter temperament and prefers the quiet life. He lives sedately on his farm at Vallonia. Many times when danger threatens, he moves his family to the Block House at Fort Franklin, working his farm whenever conditions will permit him safely to prosecute his labors. He enlists in the War of 1812, but does not engage in any battles, as far as we have any record. After these dangers are over, he lives the remainder of his life in retirement and passes away in 1819, leaving five sons, John, Darius, Chambers, William, Joseph and one daughter. He had earned his retirement. Born in Hudson, New York, he has spent his boyhood in the Hudson River Valley; his young manhood in the eventful days of the Wyoming Valley troubles, his mature years fighting Indians on the Frontier, and his later years in the second war with England. He meets each crisis quietly and with courage, and all his descendants honor him. His widow, Catherine Foster Mead, after his death, lives with her son William in Youngsville, and lies buried there in the little cemetery on the hill. Most of his descendants move northward to Warren County before scattering. Some move to Missouri - one remains on the old farm.

John Mead, you have earned your rest. As boy and man you went forth to battle. Not to the blare of trumpet nor in the gay trappings of a grenadier. Quietly you went, to do your duty, to protect your home, and honor your flag and country. You were a man of peace. You lived not to kill, yet were forced to enter the fray. You loved the sunshine and the field. You loved the grasses and the trees, and the children at play in the garden. You attained no honors except the record of a blameless life. At the end of your journey, you were weary, and you lay down to rest. With your loved ones about you, you closed your eyes in dreamless sleep. Through all the generations of the Mead's a there is none gentler, kindlier or manlier than you.

During the Indian uprising, and in 1793, Darius (6) Jr. and his brother Joseph go up the Allegheny River or, a scouting trip to ascertain the extent of Indian activity. Their trips led them into the Valley of the Brokenstraw, where they note the fertile lands and the fine timber. There they find a camp called Indian Run,

but it is deserted. Indian Camp Run flows from the north. Into the Brokenstraw Creek, within the limits of the borough of Youngsville.

Two years later, in 1795, Darius (6) and Joseph (6) (the latter then unmarried) move to Brokenstraw Valley, Darius bringing his family. They see the need for a saw mill and a grist mill, and build them for the needs of the settlers who gradually come in by Indian Trail. There remains today hardly a trace of these old landmarks.

Joseph (6) was but six years old during the days of the Wyoming Massacre, and his brother Darius Jr. was but fourteen. Their active career does not begin until after the death of Darius the Patriarch.

### **WOMEN OF THE MEADS**

While discussing the trials of the pioneers, we must remember that where the man went, there also were the pioneer women, sharing each hardship. There comes to me the memory of a story, told to me in 1895 by my grandfather Archimedes Madison Belnap, son of Elizabeth Mead, who was daughter of William Mead, the son of John Mead (6). This is the story as written down by me at my grandfather's knee when I was but fourteen years of age:

"A sister of one of the Meads who founded Meadville married and had four sons. One day when her husband had gone to the mill, the Indians attacked her log cabin. She killed some of them with the axe at the door, as they tried to force their way into the cabin; and when they tried to come down the chimney, she threw a feather bed on the flames and smothered them".

The story is brief, but I wrote it as it was told to me. I have found no corroboration. I believe we need none. It was family tradition in 1835, when my grandfather was a boy. At that time Meadville itself, was only forty five years old. The story was told to me sixty years after my grandfather heard it, and forty years have elapsed since the story was told to me and written down by me. Historians, novelists and scenario writers have borrowed the theme to use with other heroines and other times and places again and again since 1835, but when my grand father heard the story in Pittsfield, Pennsylvania, from his grandfather William Mead, the living memory of those harrowing events was fresh in the minds of the Meads of Youngsville. My grandfather's memory was excellent and while I do not know which daughter of the Meads was the heroic woman of the story, yet I am glad to be able to pay my tribute to the women, as well as the men, of the tribe of Mead. All subsequent fiction displaying that incident and crediting that heroic defense to other women are but paraphrases of the glorious heroism of that daughter of the Meads.

### **THE TRAILS COME TOGETHER**

In the meantime, the trails of the Meads and Davises cross for the third time, Elijah and Desire Davis, with their children, follow from Shamokin across Mead's Trail, and arrive in Warren County in 1803, building a log cabin at Columbus. In 1804, they move to Irvineton and build a log cabin on the exact spot where the Cornplanter Hotel is afterward built. Elijah Davis conducts a ferry at Irvine. One day a handsome young man named William Mead (7) son of John (6), dressed in coonskin cap and homespun cloth, rides up to the ferry, and there for the first time meets a young miss Susan Davis, daughter of Elijah Davis, later to become his wife. Both William. and Susan were born in Shamokin in 1784. William had been carried over "Mead's Trail" from Sunbury to Mead's Fort in his mother's arms; Susan had grown to young womanhood in Shamokin, And had then gone direct to Warren County. Many other intermarriages have taken place between those families since that time, so that it might almost be said today that to be a Davis is to be a Mead.

### **THE SEVENTH GENERATION (in part).**

In 1805, three sons of John Mead (6) move to the Brokenstraw Valley. They are John (7), William (7) (referred to above) and Joseph (7). At first they help their Uncle Darius (6) in his mills. Later, William obtains a farm on Mead's Run, just back of the highway, between Youngsville and Pittsfield, and builds a log cabin. To this log cabin he takes his bride, Susan Davis. There remains today no trace of that cabin.

### **RIVER RAFTERS**

William Mead (7) and Elijah Davis, his father-in-law, become river rafters. The romance of these early days on the Brokenstraw, over a century ago, is wrapped around these brawny forebears of ours, singing their lusty songs as they pole their rafts around the bend past Pittsfield, and down to the river below.

Each year they build their rafts on the frozen Brokenstraw, and load them with lumber and shingles. On the arrival of the freshet, the rafts float down stream into the Allegheny, thence down past Pittsburg to the Ohio, where the "rafters" sell their lumber, and walk home. While "river rafting", William Mead and Elijah Davis meet Philo Guernsey Belnap, who has moved to Pittsfield from Northeast and is also a river rafter. In due course, Elizabeth Mead (8), the daughter of William Mead and Susan Davis, is married to Philo Guernsey Belnap. They have five sons and one daughter. From that union there are many descendants, the writer having the honor to be the grandson of Archimedes M. Belnap (9), the eldest son (also a river rafter).

### **LATER GENERATIONS - THE DISPERSAL**

Volumes could be written of the descendants of Darius (5) Mead, but each descendant knows the history of his own branch better than I. If in these last few paragraphs, I have stressed the line of John (6), William (7), it is because it is my line and I know that line best.

By common acceptance of the term, genealogy is a compilation of the descendants of a selected ancestor, the record being confined rather closely to the descendants carrying the family name. A family tree is a record of the ancestors of a selected person, and does not digress far into the collateral lines. For an great portion of the data contained herein, credit must be given to the Genealogists of the Mead family, Mrs. A. D. Norton, Mrs. Leota Whitehill Day and others. Nevertheless, the writer, while possessing a mass of genealogical material relating to the Meads, obtained from them and other sources, has never coordinated it, confining himself to the study, on the family tree method, of his direct ancestors. Hence, I do not intrude upon the field of genealogy which I know is, and will be ably covered by the genealogists of the Mead family.

Descendants of Darius (5) are scattered over the forty eight states. I have met them on many occasions. Once in California I had a witness named Roy Mead under cross examination. His astute anticipation of my every question baffled me, and yet I continued to note the peculiar wave of his iron gray hair. During a court recess I said to him: "By Chance are you a descendant of Darius Mead, who was killed by the Indians in 1791?" He answered: "Yes, and my own grandfather back in Illinois, was named Darius".

Again, I once attended a public meeting in Chatsworth Park, California. The chairman was a middle aged, grave and dignified man named Nelson Gray. The peculiar wave of his hair intrigued me - it was so like my grandfather's. After the meeting I told him that he reminded me of my own people, but that none in my family were named "Nelson" except a Nelson Mead. He answered: "Nelson Mead was my uncle".

And again, once I had occasion to call at a house in Sierra Madre, California, and the gentlewoman who greeted me seemed intangibly familiar to me. At the close of the interview I said: "Are you by chance from Pennsylvania?" She said "Yes, I was born on an island near Warren, Pennsylvania". I said: "Are you by chance a Mead?" She answered: "Yes, my father owned a mill on Mead's Island".

Good 'blood is persistent. The Courage - the forthright manhood - the fundamental honesty - that enabled the sons of Darius to blaze the trail directly west across Pennsylvania, and found a city in the wilderness, has descended, I am sure, in some measure, to the many hundreds of descendants of that martyred pioneer.

From each ancestor we receive something which goes to make us what we are. If we do not honor those ancestors, we do not deserve to be remembered by our posterity. You are met today to do honor to Darius Mead and his sons and grandsons. I wish I might be with you. If I could, I know that I would be "among

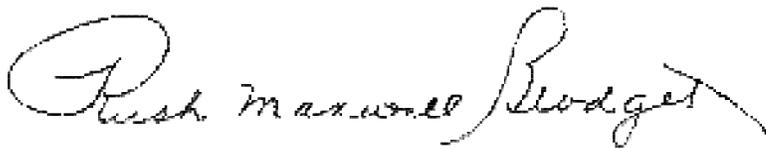
*Darius Mead Ancestors & Descendents*

my own people" - a people who honor their country and their flag, who honor their fathers and mothers, and who do their mite from day to day to make life better for their fellow men. I am glad that all the descendants of Darius are self reliant, making their own way, supporting their government and not asking the government to support them. I am glad that they still insist that their laws be made by their legislature and not by their church elders or by their executive. I am glad that they are adhering to the spiritual, intellectual and political inheritance brought down to us from our Colonial forefathers.

William Mead of England (1) detested bigotry and intolerance, and left Massachusetts to get away from them. John Mead of Connecticut (2) helped lay down in old Connecticut, the rule that no man shall be governed, except by representatives of his choice, or punished except by due process of law passed by those representatives. Jonathan Mead of New York (4) valiantly contended that no man shall be compelled to submit to seizures or searches without writ or warrant duly issued and properly displayed. Darius of Pennsylvania (5) taught us that out of successive failures may come victory - and that the final victory is triumph over barbarism and ignorance, tho' it cost us our lives. John (6) taught us that strife for success is but the passing -show, and that the reward of a long struggle is victory over self, and the inward peace which follows.

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William Mead sat in an English cottage in 1635, before an open fire, his wife Martha by his wide, and his children by his knee. He decided to venture forth to that new land, America, across the Seas, and because of that decision you are you, and I am I. The blood of our greatsire flows today in the veins of not less than a million Americans, and the current of human events is not what it would have been had he remained in England.



RUSH MAXWELL BLODGET

May 21, 1937

200 copies only. This is copy Number [blank]

*Darius Mead Ancestors & Descendents*

[ Editor's Note: The following page appears to be a worksheet  
the author intended to be used at the reunion. ]

Fill in your descent from DARIUS MEAD

- 1. Wm. Mead
  - b. Lydd, County Kent, England 1600
  - d. Stamford, Connecticut 1663
- John Mead
  - b. Lydd, County Kent, England 1634
  - d. Greenwich, Connecticut 1699
- Jonathan Mead
  - b. Greenwich, Connecticut 1665
  - d. Greenwich Connecticut 1726
- Jonathan Mead
  - b. Greenwich, Connecticut 1689
  - d. Nine Partners, New York
- Darius Mead
  - b. Greenwich, Connecticut 1728
  - d. Mercer County, Pennsylvania 1791

- 6. John Mead
  - b. Hudson, New York 1756
  - d. Meadville, Pa. 1819
- 7. Wm. Mead
  - b. Sunbury, Pa. 1784
  - d. Youngsville Pa.
- 8. Elizabeth Mead
  - b. Brokenstraw Valley
  - d. Youngsville, Pa,
- 9. Archimedes M. Belnap
  - b. Pittsfield, Pa. 1829
  - d. Bakersfield, Cal. 1910
- 10. Carra M. Belnap
  - b. Youngsville, Pa. 1860
  - d. Bakersfield, Cal. 1893
- 11. Rush M. Blodget
  - b. Youngsville, Pa. 1881

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

Children:

- 12. Rush II, b. 1918
- 12. Arba, b. 1927
- 12. Claude b. 1928
- 12. David b. 1930