



# The Society Scroll

Newsletter of  
The Ocean County Historical Society  
26 Hadley Avenue

Toms River, NJ 08753

Phone: 732 341-1880 FAX: 732 341-4372

"Telling The Stories Of Ocean County"

On-Line Extra - June 2009

## Elizabeth Meirs Morgan

*Excerpt from Family History*

### Elizabeth Meirs Morgan

1913 – 2004

Historian

Botanist

Environmentalist



"I'll go slowly, so you can keep up with me."  
E.M.M.

Elizabeth's earliest known ancestor is Christopher Meirs, born about 1700, died 1765. Although some accounts say that he came from Scotland, we have found no corroborating evidence. However, British public records include a number of Meirs (spelled the same way as Elizabeth's maiden name) in England reaching back to the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. Since we have found no specific information on Christopher's antecedents, we assume he may have emigrated from England.

Elizabeth is descended from Christopher through his son David (a shoemaker); his grandson Apollo (a successful farmer) by his first wife, Unity Shinn; his great-grandson John Meirs I and Lucretia Stockton Gaskill; his great-great grandson John Gaskill Meirs (John II) and Elizabeth Waln Meirs (scion of the Waln family, a prominent Quaker family that arrived in Pennsylvania in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century as part of William Penn's party); and great-great-great grandson John Meirs III and his wife Sarah Henshaw Meirs.

Elizabeth's mother Sarah was the daughter of English immigrants. She was a school teacher in Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey. She had two sons by a previous

marriage to Albert F. Bright, Forrest Bright and Norman Bright. Some years after she was widowed, she married John Meirs. Elizabeth was born on July 12, 1913 at the family home in New Egypt, and her brother John Meirs IV was born there on October 7, 1914.

Elizabeth's father was a lawyer who practiced in New Egypt. He was very proud of his daughter. He carried her around town to show her off when she was a baby, and often took her with him when he made his business calls. Elizabeth's mother ensured that her children got a good education. Elizabeth's aunts, Mary Ann (known as "Mamie"), Lucretia (known as "Louie"), and Elizabeth (known as "Lizzie") owned Walnridge Farm, which is still in the family, near Cream Ridge, N.J. They all had considerable influence on Elizabeth as she grew up.



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Elizabeth and her brother John (Peddie School; Princeton, B.S. 1937, C.E. 1938) were very close, and remained so into their senior years. John died in November, 1993.

Elizabeth attended ST. Mary's Hall School in Burlington, then earned her B.A. and M.A. in History from Bryn Mawr College. She was a social worker and teacher until she married the Rev. Luman J. Morgan in 1941. Her son James Sackett Morgan was born on January 27, 1944 and her son Nicholas Waln Meirs was born on September 20, 1946.

Even as a child, Elizabeth showed keen interest in the natural world. She was late for her first day of classes in elementary school because she was watching the butterflies. She loved to canoe, fish, and engage in other sports. She was always ready to go on an outing of any kind. Her curiosity remained an essential characteristic until the last. She was an avid reader, and made friends easily with people of all backgrounds. She love to tell stories and was full of life and humor.

Elizabeth published many articles on the environment and local history in local newspapers and newsletters of the Ocean County Historical Society and other organizations in which she was active. She also wrote books on the Episcopal Church, especially Christ Church in Toms River, where her husband was rector for many years. She was the subject of numerous interviews with journalists from papers ranging from the New York Times to the Asbury Park Press. During the last years of her life, Elizabeth and her niece Caroline Meirs collaborated in researching and writing the Meirs family history for members of the Meirs family.

Caroline Virginia Meirs

Excerpted from [Elizabeth Meirs Morgan 1913-2004 Historian Botanist Environmentalist](#)  
by Ocean County Historical Society 2004, pages 3-4

Would you like to explore your family tree as Elizabeth and Caroline did? Come to OCHS's Strickler Research Center where trained researchers can help you to get started! Our hours are: Tuesday and Wednesday 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM, and the first Saturday of each month 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Other hours can be arranged by appointment if you call us at 732 341-1880.