

Extract from letter written by Mrs. Grace P. Dean,
Meriden, Connecticut, June 22. 1897.

The name Southmeade is recorded in England six descents prior to 1620. It is also written Southmead. Babson in his History of the town of Gloucester, Essex Co., Mass., also writes the name "Southmead". Savage in his Genealogical Dictionary of the first settlers of New England, writes the name Southmead or Southmayd. Although the name is slightly changed in orthography, it is the same family name in each instance. No other person of the name is known to have emigrated to this country, and all the Southmayds as far as known are the lineal descendents of William of Gloucester, Mass., and can be traced directly to him. That the name was one of respectability, is evident from their many alliances by marriage with various highly honorable houses in New England. Copied from Southmayd Genealogy by Edwin Stearns of Middletown, Connecticut. I found in the English Book of Heraldry the name spelled Southmedde.

Arms.

Southmeade Wrey Chadford Co. Devonshire, Eng. six descents are given in Vis. 1620. Per fees wang gu and erm, an eagle displ in chief or.

The above description is from the General Armory of Great Britian and Ireland by Sir Bernard Burke C B LL D.

Arms granted to Sir William Southmeade of Devonshire, Eng. 1604.

Abbreviations "Vis 1620". The Herald's visitations of Co. Devon in the year 1620. "fees wang" a horizontal band with waved edges across middle of shield "gu" red "erin" ermin finished in imitation of ermine fur!!! and said to indicate royal blood- disp. displayed wings expanded "chief" upper-division of shield "or" yellow or gold.

The Harlem M.S.S. 1163-1164 in the British Museum contained the Original drafts of the Visitations of Devon which was carried out in 1620 by Henry St George and Sampson Dennard under Camdena's directions. These documents in the handwriting of the heralds themselves, are for the most part signed at the foot of each pedigree, by the head of the family, or by some one in his behalf. In M.S.S. 1163 they also mark # in red chalk to show that they had been duly copied out. These M.S.S. appear to be the most authentic record of the visitation which is attainable and have been followed by the present publication.

In the early part of the sixteenth century to the Herald visitations document of high authority and value Royal Commissions were issued under the great Seal to the two Provincial Kings of Arms, Clasenceny and Norway, authorizing and commending each by himself or his deputy to visit the whole of his province as often as he should deem it necessary to summons before him all those who bore or assumed to bear Arms and were styled esquires, to cause them to produce authority for bearing and using same and other like devices, etc. etc.. Also to reprove, control and make infamous by proclamation all such as unlawfully and without just authority usurped or took any name or title of honor or dignity.

All persons who can deduce descent from ancestor are entitled to any their Arms by right of inheritance.

The Southmayds proved their right having had it in family more than five generations England.

*The above was given to me by the
late O. A. Southmayd.*