

THE BOWATER FAMILY

The Bowater family was English. Early Bowaters were found throughout the western counties of Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire. The particular Bowater Family that the John Bowater who came to Pennsylvania belonged to came from Worcestershire.

John Bowater came to America first in 1677 and finally in 1684 to stay. His granddaughter, Sarah Bowater, married John Beals II. Phoebe Beals, daughter of John and Sarah Beals, married Charles Canaday. This is how the Bowater family ties in with this Canaday Family History.

I have seen several other histories of the Bowater Family and some have some early generations that I have trouble corroborating. I will begin this short history with the first one I can positively identify, John Bowater.

JOHN BOWATER SR.

There is a reference in the London Public Records office on June 27, 1622 (fourth month old style) referring to a sale of two shares in the Virginia Company by Francis Carter to John Bowater.

The John Bowater that came to America was born about 1629 and was married to Ann Carter, Francis Carter's daughter. Because of this, I feel the John Bowater mentioned in 1622 would have been his (John Junior) father.

There is another reference of Francis Carter passing over nine additional shares in the Virginia Company to *'Bowater of London, Merchant'* and others. The total was nine shares and Bowater received two.

Assuming the John Bowater born in 1629 was the eldest son, John Bowater Senior would have been married about 1627 or 1628 and therefore probably was born in about the 1600 to 1605 time period. In order to have received shares, he would have had to be over the age of sixteen in 1622.

He did not come to America, but remained in England. The family seems to have come from the Bromsgrove section of county Worcestershire. Roger Boone has found a record that John Senior died at Spelalfields, White Chapel, London. It was here that John Junior married Ann Carter, so they seem to tie in nicely.

JOHN BOWATER JR.

John Bowater, junior or some other numerical designation, was born in Bromsgrove, County of Worcestershire, England in about 1629. He was married about 1650 to Ann Carter, I think the daughter of Francis Carter. There is a record of the marriage at Spelalfields Hamlet, Whitechapel, London. According to one source, Ann Carter was born in Bromsgrove in 1632.

John and Ann had at least one child, Thomas, who was born in 1655. There may have been others, but if there were, they did not come to America, and I have no record of them.

By the 1660s, John had become a follower of George Fox and his Quaker faith. He became a minister or at least traveled extensively `spreading the faith.' In 1677, he sailed to America and held a number of Quaker Meetings on the eastern shore of Virginia from 1677 to 1678. The following is from a HISTORY OF CHESTER COUNTY:

John Bowater visited Virginia. In a list of the names and places and Friends in America, where John Bowater was received and had meetings and held services for the Lord, the following are mentioned which are known to be in the section of Virginia (eastern shore) of which we speak: James River in Virginia, James River at Chuckatuck, Pagan Creek, Moody Creek in Accomak, Savidge Neck, Nesswatakes and Ochanack.

John's wife Ann died on February 25, 1679 in Warwickshire, England. She is buried at the North Friends Burying Grounds.

John remarried sometime about 1681 to Frances Corbet, daughter of William Corbet of Worcestershire, England. He then spent the next few years, 1681 to 1683, in prison in London for his religious beliefs.

At the Dudley Monthly Meeting in Worcestershire, on May 21, 1684, John and his wife received certificates to transfer to the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting in America. His son Thomas Bowater had moved to America the year before.

John Bowater and wife presented their certificates to the Friends Monthly Meeting at the Governor's House in Philadelphia on November 4, 1684 (9th month old style).

John and Frances and their two young children, Mary and Elizabeth, joined the Chester, Pennsylvania Monthly Meeting on May 7, 1688.

John Bowater as a minister established his own meeting, the Bowater Friends Meeting, at his home in Nether Providence, Middletown Township, Chester County. Meetings were held there until a new church was built in 1700 on lands of Joshua Hastings adjacent to John Bowater's land. The Meeting was still named after him.

In July of 1702, the Bowater family moved to Williston (Weston), Pennsylvania and the old meeting house was renamed the Middletown Monthly Meeting.

John was active in both church and community. He was on many church committees and on several Grand Juries.

John Bowater died at his farm in Middletown Township, Chester County on November 4, 1704 (9th month old style) and his will, written on July 20, 1704, was proven in court on November 17, 1705 in Weston, Chester County. The will mentioned his wife Frances and five daughters.

Frances lived another fifteen years and died in 1720 in Concord Township of Chester County. Her will was proven on December 28, 1720.

The Following is what I know of the children of John Bowater. By his first wife, Ann Carter, I know of only one child:

THOMAS BOWATER, This is our line and his life is covered in the following section.

John and Frances Corbet Bowater had these children:

ANN BOWATER born November 30, 1684 in England and died there February 25, 1685.

MARY or MERRY BOWATER was born in Pennsylvania on August 25, 1685. She married Stephen Ailes.

WILLIAM BOWATER born February 19, 1686 and died young.

ELIZABETH BOWATER was born February 23, 1688. She married William Pussey and she died in 1740.

JOHN BOWATER a twin born August 3, 1690.

ANN BOWATER was the other twin born August 3, 1690. She was the second Ann, the first having died as an infant. She married William Chandler.

ALICE BOWATER was born in 1692. She was married twice, first to Jacob Pyle and then to Moses Mendenhall in North Carolina.

PHEBE BOWATER was born about 1694 and married Shadrack Scarlet.

THOMAS BOWATER

Thomas Bowater was born on May 10, 1655 in Bromsgrove, County Worcester in England.

Most people researching on the line are assuming that this Thomas is a son of John and Ann Bowater. The age is right. However, there is no proof. He did join the Friends Meeting in Chester County in 1688 at the same exact time as did John and Ann Bowater.

There is a reference on page 77 of THE HISTORY OF CHESTER COUNTY stating *"...Thomas, whose relationship to them is unknown, produced his certificate (from Philadelphia to Chester) at the same time."*

In a later HISTORY OF DELAWARE COUNTY by Smith, on page 448 there is, *"Thomas Bowater thought to be a brother to John a minister of Middletown."*

I am taking the line of least resistance and guessing that Thomas is indeed a son from John Bowater's first marriage.

Thomas decided to come to America and in order to pay for his passage had indentured himself to one Francis Fincher. According to the ship's log or manifest, "*Tho. Bowater out of Worcestershire, servant to ffrancis ffincher out of Woster City, glover, for three years.*"

Thomas Bowater arrived in Philadelphia on the Delaware River on board the ship called *BRISTOL COMFORT* on the 28th day of the 7th month in 1683. In the old style this indicates he Arrived in September 1683.

Thomas joined the Friends Meeting in Philadelphia on certificate dated in England March 14, 1683. After serving his three year indenture, he took up residence in Edgemont Township of Chester County.

When he was 'free' and turned twenty-one, he married Sarah Edge on October 14, 1686. Sarah was another Quaker and was the daughter of John and Jane Edge. For more details on this family, see *THE EDGE FAMILY HISTORY*, which follows this history.

They had two children, Sarah and Thomas. Sarah Edge Bowater died at a very early age on February 26, 1692 at the age of about thirty-five.

On March 2, 1695/6, Thomas purchased 100 acres from John Fox in Edgemont Township in Chester County.

In February of 1701, Thomas married a widow, Frances Barnet. They remained in Chester County until 1720 when they transferred to the New Garden Monthly Meeting also in Chester County, Pennsylvania.

They took their two children with them. Thomas died probably in the 1720s and I have no idea when Frances died, but probably also in Pennsylvania.

The following is all I know about the children of Thomas Bowater.

SARAH BOWATER was born on January 17, 1688 in Chester County, Pennsylvania. She married twice. First to John Beals on September 14, 1711 in Chester County. John died in Frederick County, Virginia in 1746. Sarah remarried on February 2, 1748 to Alexander Underwood in Monocacy, Prince George's County, Maryland. After he died she moved with one of her children to York County, Pennsylvania where she died in 1765. Her life is covered in more detail in the preceding *BEALS FAMILY HISTORY*.

THOMAS BOWATER JR. was born about 1690. He traveled with his family to Guilford County, North Carolina where he died in the early 1750s. I know nothing more of this Thomas Bowater.