

# George Meredith

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**George Meredith**



George Meredith in 1893.

**Born:** February 12, 1828  
Portsmouth, England

**Died:** May 18, 1909  
Box Hill, Surrey, England

**Nationality:**  England

**George Meredith**, OM (February 12, 1828 – May 18, 1909) was an English novelist and poet.

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## Life

Meredith was born in Portsmouth, England, a son and grandson of naval outfitters.<sup>[1]</sup> His mother died when he was five. At the age of 14 he was sent to a Moravian School in Neuwied, Germany, where he remained for two years. He read law and was articled as a solicitor, but abandoned that profession for journalism and poetry shortly after marrying Mary Ellen Nicolls, a widowed daughter of Thomas Love Peacock, in 1849. He was twenty-one years old; she was thirty.<sup>[1]</sup>

He collected his early writings, first published in periodicals, into *Poems*, which was published to

some acclaim in 1851. His wife left him and their five-year old son in 1858; she died three years later. Her departure was the inspiration for *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, his first "major novel".  
[1]

He married Marie Vulliamy in 1864 and settled in Surrey. He continued writing novels, and later in life he returned to writing poetry, often inspired by nature. Oscar Wilde, in his dialogue *The Decay Of Lying*, implies that Meredith, along with Balzac, is his favourite novelist, saying "Ah, Meredith! Who can define him? His style is chaos illumined by flashes of lightning".

As an advisor to publishers, Meredith is credited with helping Thomas Hardy start his literary career.

Before his death, Meredith was honored from many quarters: he succeeded Lord Tennyson as president of the Society of Authors; in 1905 he was appointed to the Order of Merit by King Edward VII.<sup>[1]</sup>

In 1909 he died at home in Box Hill, Surrey.<sup>[1]</sup>

## **Works**

## Novels

- *The Shaving of Shagpat* (1856)
- *Farina* (1857)
- *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859)
- *Evan Harrington* (1861)
- *Emilia in England* (1864), republished as *Sandra Belloni* in 1887
- *Rhoda Fleming* (1865)
- *Vittoria* (1867)
- *The Adventures of Harry Richmond* (1871)
- *Beauchamp's Career* (1875)
- *The House on the Beach* (1877)
- *The Case of General Ople and Lady Camper* (1877)
- *The Tale of Chloe* (1879)
- *The Egoist* (1879)
- *The Tragic Comedians* (1880)
- *Diana of the Crossways* (1885)
- *One of our Conquerors* (1891)
- *Lord Ormont and his Aminta* (1894)
- *The Amazing Marriage* (1895)
- *Celt and Saxon* (1910)

## Poetry

- *Poems* (1851)
- *Modern Love* (1862)

- *Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth* (1883)
- *A Faith on Trial* (1885)
- *Ballads and Poems of Tragic Life* (1887)
- *A Reading of Earth* (1888)
- *The Empty Purse* (1892)
- *Odes in Contribution to the Song of French History* (1898)
- *A Reading of Life* (1901)
- *Last Poems* (1909)

## References

1. ^ a b c d e Meredith, George (1963). *The Egoist*. The New American Library of World Literature (Signet Classics), Introduction (first page).

## External links

- Works by George Meredith at Project Gutenberg
- J. M. Barrie and George Meredith Article by Robert Greenham about J. M. Barrie's friendship with George Meredith.

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deaths | People from Portsmouth

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