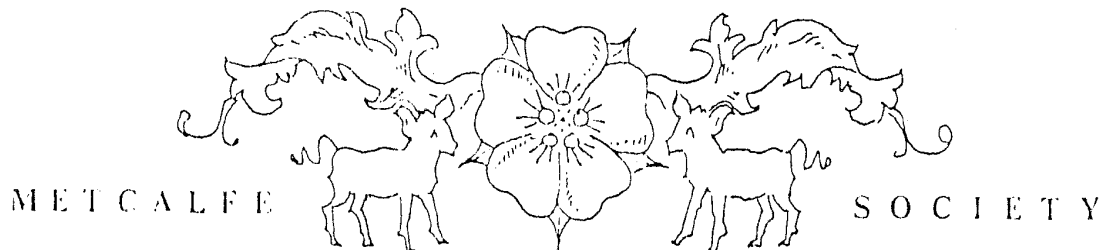


M E C C A N E W S



Nº 13

August, 1984

Dear Member,

It's Newsletter time again and I am delighted to say that this time I have more material than I can use in one issue. please don't despair if your contribution is not in this one as it will certainly be kept for the next. Having more material than we need is a lovely position to be in and grateful thanks are extended to all contributors. Keep on sending things in or there won't be a Newsletter at all.

This brings me to the question of future Newsletters. Unfortunately we shall not, in future, be able to duplicate Newsletters cheaply any more and ask if any member is able to do this for us otherwise subscriptions will have to be increased drastically to cover increased costs. Any offers of help to the Secretary please.

We are including in this edition, an article about Blind Jack of Knaresborough by Mrs. Lucy Rowlands (Member No. 45).

It is the first of what we hope may be a series of articles about famous Metcalfes, or infamous ones for that matter. If anyone has a story to tell about his or her ancestors which will be of interest to other members, please don't hesitate to send it along.

We hope as many members as possible will be at Claremont in September. One member, Mrs. Alison Rogers, is coming all the way from Australia. That's enthusiasm for you!

Until then, happy researching.

Yours sincerely,

VERA ADAMS (Ed.)

FAMOUS METCALF(E)S

* BLIND JACK METCALF OF KNARESBOROUGH

When Jack Metcalf was born on August 15th 1717, his parents, poor and hardworking, could have had no idea that their little child would have such an extraordinary life, in spite of a great misfortune which befell him.

At the age of six he fell victim to smallpox, and though he survived the illness, became completely blind. Such misfortune could have resulted in a life shut away from danger and adventure, but not so this child, who braved outside and learned to find his way around, his little hands on the walls of the thatched cottage below the castle at Knaresborough, which was his home. Within months he was venturing to the streets, and by the age of nine he could run errands to any part of the town, and was strong and healthy.

He went birds nesting with other boys, and bravely climbed the trees, directed to the nests by boys on the ground. This was in the days when eggs and young birds would be collected, something we now would not wish to do. However, it made him an expert climber, and later he learned to fish in the Nidd, and memorising his way to the famous "Dripping Well", he earned money leading sightseers there to see the fossilated objects there. When he could swim and dive, he once saved the lives of three companions who were in difficulties in the water, and even earned money later by diving to bring up drowned persons from the River Nidd.

His father had a horse, and young Jack was taught to ride, so that by the age of ten he was at home in the saddle. In the evenings at home, he learned to play the fiddle, and became so skilled that later he was invited to play for dancers at the country parties.

The local Squire Woodburn invited him to join him in the hunt when he was only twelve, and he took to hunting late into the night, as it was no handicap to him, day and night as one. However, he gave this up after his hounds killed some lambs.

He kept a dog and took to hare coursing. The neighbours marvelled at his acute senses his confidence and shrewdness. His fiddle provided his living, and by the age of fifteen, he was offered a permanent job, playing at the Harrogate Assembly Rooms to entertain the guests. He made friends with the gentry, and racing and cockfighting became his next interest. Saving his money, he bought his first race horse when he was twenty.

By now he was over six foot tall, and broad, with long powerful arms and massive shoulders, and it was not long before he won his first race, under a heavy wager. The course was a mile long, a circle marked by white posts, and the race was run three times around it, and many did not believe he could keep to it. However, he arranged with friends to man each post with a handbell, so that at each he would know when to turn, and he had no trouble beating his competitors.

Visiting the races at York, he often acted as a guide to those making their way back to Knaresborough and Harrogate. The track was a winding one, over moorland, but he was able to take his companions safely home.

Later he learned to play bowls skillfully, and also cards, using ones with raised figures - his opponents calling out their cards as they laid them down, and eventually he became very hard to beat. He also became a very efficient boxer, and on one occasion, when a local bully made a nuisance of himself, took up Jack's Challenge, thinking he would have no trouble fighting a blind man, ended up howling for mercy from an unmarked challenger.

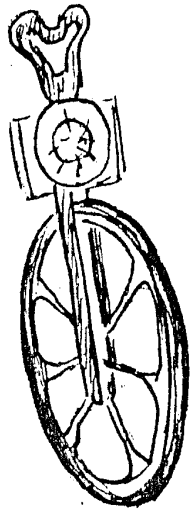
Now twenty one years old, he became popular with the ladies when playing his fiddle at the various halls and hostleries - the Queen's Head, the Green Dragon, as well as the Royal Oak (later to become the Granby) at the latter becoming involved with the daughter of the owner. She was Miss Dolly Benson, who fell in love with the blind fiddler. Jack hoped to marry her, but confessed that he had been involved with an older woman, who was citing him as father of her unborn child, and to avoid this, he moved away to Scarborough, and on to Whitby to stay with his Aunt. He decided to visit London for the first time, and took a boat, paying his way by his fiddle. He met up in London with a Harrogate man, who soon found him work at various gatherings, providing music. At one such affair he met a Colonel Liddell, M.P. for Berwick on Tweed, owner of Ravensworth Castle, Newcastle on Tyne, who was returning North to his estate by chaise. He offered Jack a seat but the latter said he



JACK'S BIRTHPLACE
KNARESBOROUGH.



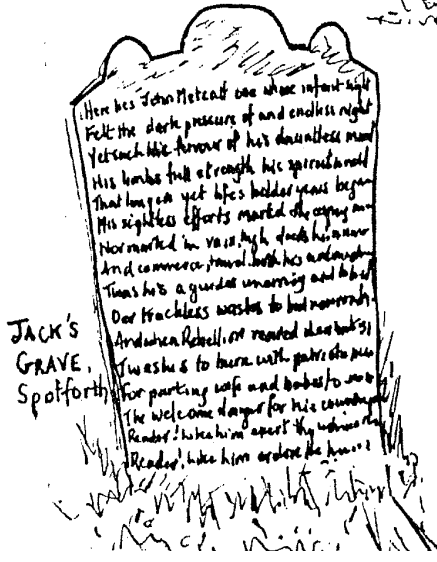
BLIND
JACK of
KNARESBORO



The Viameter.



JACK LEAVES
for Whitby.



JACK'S
GRAVE,
Spofforth



The Spofforth Smallholding.

would return on foot, and the Colonel gave him a guinea for shoe repairs, and promised him ten more if he got to Harrogate before the chaise!

They started off at the same time, but because of the dreadful state of the roads in those days, each nightfall Jack reached the Inn ahead of the Colonel's chaise. On the Saturday night halt the Colonel said he would rest on the Sabbath, but Jack pressed on, reaching Harrogate ahead of his friend, who was later pleased to pay up!

During Jack's months of absence his dear Dolly had been forced by her parents into an engagement with Anthony Dickenson, a young man of property, the banns had been called, and the wedding date fixed, to the wanderer's dismay! When, on the morning of her Wedding Eve, Dolly sent a message to Jack to meet near her home, and in their fond reunion she told him she was still true to him, and hated her future bridegroom, Jack boldly suggested they should run away to a neighbouring town and marry, and she gladly agreed. Next day the 200 guests at the meal arranged by the unfortunate Mr. Dickenson learned that the bride-to-be had fled, and she returned later as Mrs. John Metcalf.

They later bought a house in Knaresborough, and Jack continued to play his fiddle at Harrogate, and set up a four-wheeled chaise and a one-horse chair for use of the visitors, the first public carriages in the town. Then, when their first child, a daughter, was born, bringing a welcome reunion with Dolly's disapproving parents, Jack decided to branch out in other trades. He went to Whitby, and started a fish transporting business, using pack-horses, keeping up with his chaise hire service, as well as dealing in horses, and after their second child was born, he continued his journeys to the coast, and conveyed goods to Leeds and Manchester, walking with his pack-horses often for two days and a night with little rest.

By the time of the 1745 Rebellion, Squire Thornton of Thornville Royal was raising a company of Volunteers, and enlisted Jack's help with recruiting suitable men. This he did with much ardour, and in two days he had raised 140 volunteers. Those found suitable were trained and provided with uniform, and when asked by General Wade to march them to Newcastle by way of Boroughbridge, Colonel Thornton and his men had Jack, dressed in blue and buff uniform and gold laced hat, marching at their head, fiddle in hand, playing and singing such patriotic songs as "Britains Strike Home"

They marched the 90 miles to join Pulteney's Regiment, setting up tents on Newcastle Moor in 6 inches of snow. Later they crossed to the North-west to intercept the rebel army, in severe wintery conditions. Prince Charles' Army, after marching south to Derby, had turned back to Scotland, and Thornton's Army too, marched over the border and camped near Falkirk on January 16th 1746.

Next day the Jacobites surged towards them across 3 miles of open country, and Jack played his fiddle to stir on Wade's men, but the cannons were bogged down in the swampy ground, and the Highlanders cut down men and horses with their broadswords. Many men fell to the claymores, and the ground was soon covered with dead and wounded. The officers fled, and the Battle of Falkirk was lost.

Captain Thornton had been able to escape and take refuge in the cottage of a loyal woman, who helped his escape, and he reached Edinburgh safely. Jack, who was captured, was released on account of his blindness, and he made his way to join the King's forces, and Captain Thornton. In several engagements, the Duke of Cumberland was so impressed by the way Jack kept step, and performed his duties, that when a Ball was later given at Aberdeen, he was asked to play for the dancers, which he did, for 8 hours! "Well done, Metcalf" said His Royal Highness, and he offered Jack his patronage in London.

However, the Young Pretender was still rallying men to his cause, and by April 1746 plans were afoot, so Cumberland roused 9000 troops, and led them west from Aberdeen to Nairn, where the men rested in readiness for battle. On April 10th, on Culloden Moor, the rebels were engaged, and this was the end of the Jacobite cause!

The English guns cut down the ranks of Highlanders, and the Stewarts of Appin, the Mackintoshes, Macdonalds and Camerons, hurled themselves against the Duke's men. A storm broke, and the Highlanders advanced with claymores wielded, but coming face to face with bayonets, and pressed on by the weight of their numbers, they died bravely. In half an hour the battle was over, with many of the Jacobites dead or badly injured, and Bonny Prince Charlie fled, to become a refugee for many months. All but 50 of Cumberland's men survived; Jack joined Thornton's men to march home to his wife and family, who welcomed him with open arms.

This was the end of soldiering for Jack, who went back to his fiddle-playing at Harrogate, and having picked up some other ideas during his travels, he started off to Scotland as soon as peace was restored to buy goods to sell in England, and he also became involved in smuggling

by ship from Newcastle. After several dangerous trips, his wife tried to persuade him to stick to legitimate employment, so he went in for horse-dealing again. So acute was his touch, and he judged the animals so well, that he was soon considered one of the best judges in the horse trade.

In 1751 he started the first stage wagon to York from Knaresborough, driving it himself, summer and winter. He began to take an interest in mensuration, and could calculate the contents of a piece of timber or a stack of hay using his own methods. This led to his interest in road-building, which he started after an arrangement with the Queen's Bays, who were quartered in Knaresborough, for when he learned that they were to travel north, he combined their movement with the return of the Bland's Dragoons to York. Providing their transport he made a good profit.

Now in his late thirties, Jack had acquired a great knowledge of the North of England, it's appalling road conditions - deeply rutted and neglected, with travel after dark very dangerous for coaches, and roads becoming blocked due to breakdowns. Food could not be moved, so crops were lost, and shortage of goods occurred, and in spite of the turnpike system, the movement of animals on roads caused much surface damage. Jack learned that a road was to be built from Harrogate to Boroughbridge, and the surveyor, a friend of Jack's, gave him the chance to build the strip from Minskip to Ferrensby, where there was often flooding.

First Jack put up a building for the workmen and stabling for the horses; he bought a local quarry and gravel-pit, cutting a road in to the site. He had a special device to measure and assess the terrain, called a "Viameter", and sometimes he used a staff and his feet, to judge the surface.

After completing his first project, he continued building roads over hundreds of miles in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Starting work by 6.00 a.m. he would arrive on foot, with food for his men, and on very swampy and difficult land he used a method of laying bundles of ling and whin side by side, and these covered with more bundles at right angles, after which stone and gravel were laid over them. This method was so successful that more and more contracts were received, and he continued with this and other methods he devised for 40 years. Later George Stephenson used this method to make a base for his railway tracks over the bogs of Chat Moss, Lancashire in 1830.

Jack's roads in Lancashire and Cheshire included Buxton to Whaley Bridge (the contract for this was £2500) Chapel le Frith to Macclesfield, Stockport to Ashton under Lyne, and in the course of these projects he was also involved in bridge building - none of which ever fell! Some had 9ft arches and 24ft spans.

He also designed and built the toll houses on these roads. His first bridge was built at Boroughbridge, a spot where surveyors had pronounced the impossibility of a road and bridge due to boggy ground. So successful was his work that many other contracts were awarded. In all, nearly 200 miles of turnpike were created.

By this time Jack was 60 years old, still very active and healthy, and eager for new projects, and he moved to Stockport to where one married daughter lived, mainly as by now Dolly his wife, was crippled by rheumatism, so she could be cared for. He became interested in the cotton industry, in which his son-in-law had become a prosperous merchant.

When poor Dolly died in 1778, she was buried in Stockport churchyard, where on her tombstone was inscribed:

"IN MEMORY OF DOROTHY, WIFE OF JOHN METCALF
WHO DIED APRIL 12th 1778, aged 61 years"

"At Harrogate, in Yorkshire I was born,
But now My Body lies under this stone,
To you I've left Behind it's sure to be
your Body when in dust will lie the same as me
take care in time to obtain a happy fate,
and don't neglect for fear it may be too late,
All you that come these lines to see,
Prepare in time to follow me".

After losing his wife, Jack decided to invest in spinning - he set up a small mill near Stockport with 6 spinning jennies and a carding machine, buying cotton and yarn from Lancashire. He acquired some looms and started to manufacture calico and velvet, transporting them to sell in Knaresborough.

He still kept his interest in road building, until when at the age of 75, he decided to retire, and move back to his native Yorkshire - to Spofforth, where another married daughter lived, on a smallholding, and here he lived out his last years.

He became interested in farming, and in buying and selling hay and timber. He would use his own method to measure them, spanning his arms, and calculate the volume, though now unable to climb, he would have to ask the height to use in his calculations. He would then offer a price, and resell for profit.

He could still walk great distances, and visited the great houses where he was still made welcome, and playing for them. Colonel Thornton's family at Thornville Royal, and Squire Barlow of Middlethorpe, son of the squire who had invited him to hunt in his young days, were always pleased for him to call. He would walk from Spofforth to Bishopthorpe and on to Middlethorpe, and sometimes to Cowthorpe, where there was a giant Oak, around which Jack would walk, touching the branches which had fallen, and pointing with his stick to the exact spot from which they had dropped. An old bloodhound kept near the tree would snarl at every stranger, but always had a welcome for Jack, licking his hand.

Even at the age of 80 years he walked to York, staying for a few days, and on January 10th 1797 he set off for Green Hammerton on foot, to visit friends, a walk of 10 miles in 3 hours, and later to Thornville Royal.

He lived until April 26th 1810 in his 93rd year, and on his death had four children, 20 grandchildren, and 90 great-grandchildren. In Spofforth, a hamlet, with a triangular village green with sycamore trees, you can look down to the site of the smallholding, now a small joinery works, and in the opposite direction can be seen the tower of the church of All Saints where he lies. His grave can be found, marked with a large headstone, midway along the north wall, in local stone, and erected to his memory by Lord Dundas, on which is carved:

"Here lies John Metcalf, one whose infant sight
Felt the dark pressure of and endless night.
Yet such the fervour of his dauntless mind,
His limbs full strength, his spirits unconfined
That long ere yet life's bolder years began,
His sightless efforts marked the aspiring man,
Nor marked in vain, high deeds his manhood dared,
And commerce, travel, both his ardour shared.
'Twas his, a guides unerring aid to lend
O'er trackless wastes to bid new roads extend,
And when Rebellion reared he giant size
'Twas his to burn with patriot enterprize;
For parting wife and babes one pang to feel
The welcome danger for his country's weal.
Reader! like him exert thy utmost talent given.
Reader! like him, adore the bounteous Hand of Heaven!"

Jack's life size effigy can be seen in Knaresborough Castle Museum, and his Viameter, it's handle worn smooth by his hand as he trundled it over hundreds of miles of moorland roads, and many a staff he wore out on his travels.

In his long life he undertook more than most sighted folk, conquering his handicap to the benefit of others. What an example to those who followed this truly wonderful man!

Lucy Rowlands

(member 45)

NEW MEMBERS and their birth briefs.

Mrs. Leonie E. Hiller. Flat 1. 2 Milnthorpe Rd. Eastbourne. Sussex. Member no: 72.

Mother's maiden name Elsie Metcalfe, b 1880 Aberystwyth, Wales, dau James Mte who was b 1847 Oswestry, Salop; son of Richard who was born 1824, ?Yks, son of Joseph, a collier, and his wife. Joseph had two other sons, John and James and two dau: Betty & Margaret. Richard, John and James all left Yorkshire and found work on the railway being constructed between Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth. Richard mar Harriet Davies & had issue James 1847, Sarah 1850 d inf. and Emma 1851 who mar Knight and went to Canada. Harriet died whilst still young and Richard remarried Sarah ? and their son Joseph lived in Tenby and was father of Clement and Dorothy Mte. John m Christianna ? and had issue Eliza 1840, Thomas 1842, Christopher 1844 and William 1846, all bpt at Uffington, Salop. James m Elizabeth Such and became head of the railway workshops in Tenby. The James Mte born 1847 at Oswestry became a well known engineer, inventing the Metcalfe Exhaust Steam Injector and founding Messrs Davies and Metcalfe, Engineers, in Romiley, Cheshire in 1878. This firm is now run by a grandson, Richard O.B.E. James died in 1920.

Mrs. Joan Teale. 442 Papanui Road, Christchurch 5. New Zealand. Member no: 73.

Gr Gr Gr Grandparents were Christopher Kearton and Eleanor/Nelly Metcalfe who married at Muker, Swaledale, 5 Oct 1782. Eleanor bpt 26 May 1764 Muker d.o Michael + Eleanor (Coates) Mte, who mar 27 May 1755 at Muker. Michael was born circa 1728/30, was a miner of Thwaite in Swaledale and his other children were Elizabeth b 1756 d 1792. Dorothy b 1762. (Eleanor as above b 1764) Robert b 1767, Edward b 1769 and Sarah b 1772 bpt in 1775.

Miss June Metcalf. 1 The Park, Highgate, London, N6. Member no: 74

Nothing known as yet.

Mr & Mrs. L. Metcalf. 5 Kilkenny Rd. Floreat Park, Western Australia 6014.

Member no: 75. Nothing known as yet.

Mrs. Helena Metcalfe Rae Cooper. M.B.E. 24 The Albany, 240 London Rd. Leicester, LE2 1RH. Member no: 76. Cousin to Mrs Hiller, member no: 72.

Mrs. Cooper is dau of Harriette Helena Rae-Smith nee Metcalfe, who was second dau of James Mte 1848 - 1920.

Mr. Basil E. Kearton. 40 Hospital Rd, Te Kuiti, North Island, New Zealand.

Member no: 77. Related to and with same Metcalfe descent as Mrs J. Teale, no.73.

Mrs. Sheila Metcalf. 107 Cadogan Gardens, London, SW3 2RG. Member no: 78

Nothing known as yet.

Mrs. P. A. Wiggins. 7 Egerton Court, Paradise Rd, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 1LN.

Member no: 79. Gt Grandmother Elizabeth Mte b 1855 at Piper Hill, Colburn, nr. Catterick, Yks, who m William Bailes, a widower, in Richmond, Yks. Elizabeth was d o Bartholomew and Mary (Robinson) Mte who m at Hipswell nr Catterick, Yks in 1854. Bartholomew bpt 1828 Catterick, was son of Thomas and Elizabeth (Blenkiron) Mte, who were m 1825 at Marske by Richmond. Thomas was b at Crakehall nr Bedale, Yks. in 1799 and was s o Thomas and Margaret (Carter) Mte who m 1798 at Bedale.

Mr. James Joshua Metcalf. 449 Rednal Rd. West Heath, Birmingham, B38 8HP.

Member no: 80. Born in Birmingham son of John & Elizabeth (Nicholls) Mt who m 1919 Birmingham. John b 1896 Birm: son of Joshua and Mary Ann (Woodhall) Mt who m 1891. Joshua b 1865 Aston, Birm: son of Joshua and his second wife Elizabeth (Morris) Mt who m 1859. Joshua b 1826 Fenny Compton nr Birm: was son of Joseph and Ann (Hanns) Mt who m 1810 at Wolston. Joseph was a highway labourer and primitive preacher and was born 1790 at Fenny Compton, son of Edward and Ursula (?Ell) Mt.

Mrs. Alison Hutton. 197 Highsted Rd. Christchurch 5, New Zealand. Member no: 81.

Father Tom Mt, went to New Zealand in 1912 with his parents, Henry & Patience and about 14 brothers and sisters. Henry was a tailor, although he had also owned a tavern in Woodhouse Road (town not yet confirmed, possibly Leeds). Henry was born in 1863 and had brothers George 1860, Harry 1861 d inf and Christopher 1868 and sisters Margaret 1866 and Sarah 1869. His father's christian name is unknown as yet, Mother's maiden name was Gatenby. Henry had a cousin, William who emigrated to Boston, U.S.A. approx: 1912.

Mrs. Carole Topham. "Bramblewick", 15 Crestholme Close, Knaresborough, North

Yorkshire. Member no: 82. nee Metcalfe b Northallerton, Yks. dau of John Horace Mte b 1917 Harby, Yks, son of John William & Anne (Carroll) Mte who m 1910 Richmond Yks. John William b 1876 Richmond, son of Thomas and Sarah (Tomlin) Mte who m 1876 Richmond Yks. Thomas was son of William & Anne (Featham) Mte who mar 1834 at Gilling, Yks. William b 1806 Richmond Yks.

Mr. Philip Holland. 85 Farndale Drive, Pine Hills, Guisborough, Cleveland.

TS14 8JX. Member no: 83. Descendant of Mary Metcalf(e) born c 1806 in Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, married William Phillips 17.11.1829 at St. Thomas, Dudley, Worcs: Mary is known to have had a sister, HANNAH, born c 1815 in Walsall, Staffs.

Mr. Derek Metcalfe. 7 Laund Gate, Fence, Nr. Burnley, Lancs: BB12 9PL.

Member no: 84. Son of Arthur Mte (who was b Barrowford 1914) and his wife Norah (Watson) who m 1935 at Nelson, Lancs. Arthur was son of Owen Dinsdale and Alice Ann (Farum) Mte. Owen Dinsdale Mte was son of Thomas and Mary (Dinsdale) Mte. Thomas was born 1855 in Bainbridge, Wensleydale and was son of John and Mary (Hutchinson) Mte who were mar at Stallingbusk, Wensleydale in 1844.

Mrs. Dorothy Nash. 55 Tibland Rd. Acocks Green, Birmingham. B27 7EE.

Member no: 85. Grandmother's maiden name was Frances Metcalfe who m 1895 to Wade Walker. Frances born 1876 at Brigg, Lincs: dau of George and Ann (Storr) Mte who mar 1.5.1855 at Broughton, Brigg. George born 1829 in Brocklesbury, Lincs: son of Joseph and Elizabeth (Raby) Mte. Joseph was born 1805 at Limber, Lincs: son of William & Mary (Button) Mt who mar 1783. William born 1757 Great Limber, Lincs:

Mrs. Carol Arkwright. School House Farm, 1 Middleton Rd. Overton, Morecambe,

Lancs: LA3 3HB. Member no: 86. Maiden name Metcalfe, dau of Nathan Raw MTE who was born 1910 at Carperby, North Yks. son of Richard Lawson & Margaret Tomlinson (Raw) MTE, who m 1895 at Aysgarth, Wensleydale. Richard Lawson MTE born 1870 at Bainbridge, Wensleydale, son of William Lawson & Alice (Batty) MTE who mar 1867 at Redmire, Wensleydale. William Lawson MTE born c 1842 at Bainbridge, son of Richard Lawson & Elizabeth (Cockbone) MTE, who mar 1829 at Aysgarth. Richard Lawson MTE bpt 12. 5. 1803 Askrigg, son of James.

Mr. Dave Tunstall. 19 Cotswold Drive, Redcar. Cleveland. TS10 4AF.

Member no: 87. Maternal Gt Grandmother was Eleanor Mte who mar John Binks Constantine. Eleanor was born 1847 in Tunstall nr Catterick, Yks: dau of Thomas and Elizabeth (Blenkiron) Mte, who mar 1825 at Marske by Richmond, Yks. Thomas was born 1799 at Crakehall nr Bedale, Yks. son of Thomas & Margaret (Carter) Mte who mar 1798 at Bedale.

Another success in uniting distant relatives ! We were able to put Mr. Tunstall in touch with Mrs Wiggins, member no: 79.

New Address: Mr. David Galloway member no: 8. from South Wonston to 79, Priors Dean Road, Harestock, Winchester. Hants. SO22 6JY.

Secretary's Notes.

All work is now geared towards our September meeting when we hope to meet as many of you as possible. Remember, it is only by making such an effort that your band of workers know they have your support. Having heard just recently of the demise of The Richmond Society, we know only too well what the lack of active interest can do.

Our printing situation has completely changed. Formerly arranged by Mary Metcalfe for a purely nominal fee, we have been forced to find alternative methods. Happily we have found a new home with the Yorkshire Association for the Disabled at Harrogate, who have proved very helpful at such short notice. This is our first issue "by their hands" and we trust it is the beginning of a long and successful partnership. It may mean an increase in subscription rates and this will be debated at our Mecca Muster. If you are unable to attend, would you let us know your views ?

The number of new members this issue is a very healthy increase though there are still many thousands of us out there somewhere ! Perhaps in the new year, time and funds will allow a trial run at the mail shot method of approach. I hope so.

Nina E. Benson.

HELP..... HELP.....

Could anyone please assist with information regarding the family of Thomas KEARTON and Mary Medcalf who married in 1868. Details from their marriage cert: as follows:

9th November 1868. Registration District of Chorlton, in County of Lancs: Marriage solemnized at The Independent Chapel - Longsight - Gordon.

Thomas Kearton, aged 31, widower, Commission Agent, father Christopher Kearton (Deceased), farmer.

Mary MEDCALF, aged 20, spinster, dau of William MEDCALF (Deceased) Architectural Carver.

Witnesses...James MEDCALF, Annie MEDCALF & Sarah Marshall.

Thomas's address is given as 17 Howard Avenue, Stockport Road, Ardwick. Mary's is given as 95 Cottenham Street, Chorlton upon Medlock.

If any reader knows or has information regarding either of the above, would they kindly contact BASIL KEARTON, 40 HOSPITAL RD. TE KUITI, NORTH ISLAND, NEW ZEALAND, as this information is required urgently for family records. All expenses will be refunded in full.

MECCA MUSTER '84

Saturday, 1st September 1984

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Claremont, 23 Clarendon Road, Leeds 2, which is the home of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society and the Yorkshire Family History Section. Morning Coffee, Lunch, Afternoon Tea and Biscuits, £4 per head.

New members may like to know that "Claremont" holds a wealth of Yorkshire records with a smattering from further afield. All our own records will be there. Mrs. Helen Offer will be bringing the eleven shoe boxes of the General Index - all the way from Sussex - and has a special request that car parking space near the front door to be left clear for her!

Emphasis at the meeting will be on informality, with a short business session at the beginning. If you would like any special subject on the agenda, please let your Secretary know. Otherwise you will be completely free to study and search and exchange news and views. We look forward to Alison and Jim Rogers joining us from Queensland, Australia.

As we have been able to reserve the larger meeting room we can extend our welcome to include other members of your family. BUT HURRY - TIME IS SHORT replies must be in by August 10th. The return slip is elsewhere in this newsletter. We look forward to meeting you all.

HELP WANTED

Mr. N. Metcalfe (Member No. 56) 400, Holcombe Road, Greenmount, Bury, Lancs. BL8 4HF asks for information on his Great Grandfather Stephen Metcalfe, born 1817, son of Stephen Metcalfe, Shoemaker of Starbotton. He has traced a Stephen Metcalfe who married Eleanor Hebden in 1804 at Stalling Busk, where 6 of their children were baptised, the last one being Thomas, son of Stephen, Shoemaker of Starbotton. Further information required on both Stephens, particularly between 1815 and 1841 (Telephone Bury 18414)

Mrs. Valerie Metcalfe (Member No. 61) 4, Roseberry Avenue, Stokesley, North Yorkshire requested information about Harold Metcalfe, born 8th May 1878. She thought, wrongly, that he was the illegitimate son of Elizabeth Ann Metcalfe (dtr of Wm & Eliz Metcalfe of Bilsdale or Helmsley) and now finds he was the natural son of Lily Metcalfe of Pottergate, Helmsley and was brought up by her parents there. Apologies proffered to anyone who may have tried to help the first request in Newsletter No. 12.

ODDITIES

I find the name Metcalfe pops up in the most unexpected places and on a recent visit to Beningborough Hall in the National Portrait Gallery there I came across a painting by Pompeo Batoni of a Philip Metcalfe (1733-1818). It was painted in Rome c1768.

Another 'stray' Metcalfe, Lucas Metcalfe, a working miller, was the tenant of Thomas Ley, owner of Carkehall Water Mill in 1538.

These Metcalfes must be the ancestors of some of us. Maybe they are yours!

Mrs. Marian Collins, of Walsall has sent us the following booklist which she has found useful as background reading to her research.

Richard III by Caroline Halstead, Vol. 1, published 1844
Accounts of servants at Middleham Castle in the 15th century

History of Masham by Fisher published 1865
Metcalf schoolmaster and a native artist (Richard)
Mathew schoolmaster of Masham

Nooks and Corners of Yorkshire by J.S. Fletcher (Ballantyne & Co.)
Nappa Hall etc.

Wensleydale by Ella Pontefract published 1936
Nappa Hall etc.

British Castles by Paul Johnson
Nappa Hall etc.

Richard III published Clements and Markham 1906
Accession of Richard III
Appointments to Metcalfes of Nappa Hall

A History of Nidderdale by the Tutorial Class at Pateley Bridge edited by
Bernard Jennings 1967
Accounts of the Metcalfe Flax Spinners at Shaw Mills, Low Mill

Yorkshire Village by Marie Hartley and Joan Ingleby, first published 1953 by Dent
A story of Askrigg and Askrigg people.

Gunnerside Chapel and Gunnerside Folk by Margaret Batty, 1967
Nonconformist Metcalfes

West Witton by Jones Barker
James of Nappa Hall, Tithes

Northern Catholics by Hugh Aveling O.S.B. 1580
Metcalfes of Bear Park. Catholic tendency

Catholic record Society
1742. Medcaff of Hutton hung at Leyburn. Last rites.
1776 Jane Mecalf died suddenly East Witton no notice of illness, died without help

Mrs. Shirley Walls has sent the following extract from "Wensleydale in the Valley of Yore" by W.G. James Barker, 1856

"In Coverham was born in 1785 James Metcalf who followed the occupation of a carpenter. He sailed in Lord Amherst's celebrated Embassy, to China in 1814. He subsequently settled in St. Helena and, being employed at Longwood, had, on the death of Napoleon the Great the honour of making the coffin which received the remains of the exiled Emperor, in which they still repose, in Paris. James Metcalf is still living at Saint Helena"

Mrs. Walls asks if anyone knows of any Metcalfes living at St. Helena today.

Mrs. Shirley Walls, of North Wales has sent us the following information.

RETURNS OF PAPISTS IN THE DIOCESE OF CHESTER 1767 FROM THE CATHOLIC RECORD SOCIETY.

For several centuries after the formation of the Church of England the government made periodic lists of people who refused to conform to the established religion of the country. Early in 1767 the House of Lords instituted an enquiry into the number of papists (catholics) in each parish. The parish clergy were directed to obtain a correct complete list of all papists or reputed papists, distinguishing their parishes, sexes, ages, occupations and the length of time they had been in residence. The diocese of Chester sent in the original returns from the parishes which have been preserved in the House of Lords. There was some variation in the returns but generally all the required information was given, along with some interesting comments from the clergy. The number of papists in each area varied considerably and was not just a percentage of each parish. These have been published and printed by the Catholic Record Society.

The Diocese of Chester in 1767 covered part of Flintshire, all Cheshire, Lancashire, part of Cumberland and in Yorkshire the deaneries of Richmond, Catterick and Boroughbridge which covered the Dales, home of the Metcalfes.

Below are all the Metcalfe entries for the whole of the Diocese of Chester which Mrs. Walls hopes may help someone find a missing ancestor.

Denery of Catterick, East Witton

Jane Metcalf, female, 38 years lived in the parish 11 years
Jane Metcalf, junior, daughter to above aged 11 years, servant, born in parish

Grinton

Richard Metcalfe of Wintering Garths, miner aged 42 years
Monnica, wife aged 49 years
Children - Mary, dtr, aged 23 years, Thomas, son, aged 22 years
Ann, dtr, aged 16 years, Ruth, dtr, aged 15 years
Anthony, son, aged 12 years, Richard, son, aged 10 years
Leonard, son, aged 6 years, Isaiah, son, aged 4 years

Gunnerside

Ann Metcalf, aged 70
Thomas, son, miner, aged 37 years
Wharton, son of Thomas, aged 2 years
Anthony Metcalf, miner aged 40 years
Children - Ann aged 18 years, Mary, dtr, aged 15 years
Elizabeth, dtr, 10 years, Jane, dtr, aged 5 years

Bedale Burrill township

Christopher Metcalfe, farmer aged 45 years, lived in parish 10 years
Deaneries of Boroughbridge and Richmond - nil

Blackburn parish

Ellen Medcalf, aged 30 years, lived in parish 7 years

Preston parish

Bartholem Medcalf, labourer aged 18, lived in parish 3 weeks.

Non-appearance in Parish Registers

The following are some interesting items culled from an article in the August 1983 issue of the Y. A. S. Family History Section Newsletter (in case not all our members are members also of that Society) which is itself composed of extracts from an Appendix to "A History of Withernsea" by Miles and Richardson and "Ensuring the future of Parish Records" an article by Duncan Harrington in "The Times" May 7th, 1983

Churchwardens were ordered to send to the Bishop of the Diocese once every year a copy of the registers for the past year (which then ended on March 25th (sic)). As, however, no fees were prescribed for the transcriptions, the order was not generally obeyed.

In 1653 an Act was passed for the appointment of Parish Registrars, and marriages were to be performed before a Magistrate. Registers from 1653 to 1660 are often missing, probably owing to the failure of the Clergy to get possession of them on returning to their livings at the Restoration.

In 1666 an Act was passed for "burying in woollen" which required an entry in the Register of Burials certifying that the Act had been complied with. The Act was frequently disobeyed and a more stringent Act was passed in 1678 which obliged the clergy to indicate in the Register that an affidavit had been brought certifying that the requirements of the law had been fulfilled. It is not surprising that in some remote parishes the Act was evaded. It gradually fell into disuse but was not repealed until 1814.

The Stamp Act of 1783 placed a duty of 3d on every entry in a Parish Register and was only repealed in 1794. This accounts for many defects in the Registers of that period arising probably from the anxiety of the clergy to avoid payment of a tax which must have been very difficult to collect from their poorer parishioners.

In view of these laws is it surprising that Parish Registers did not necessarily include all burials that took place in a parish. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was not uncommon for persons to be buried in their own fields and the Parish Registers would not usually include these cases.

Heavens! Now we know!

Helen Offer