

ISSUE

25-1

Jan-Feb 2025

Newsletter of
THE
METCALFE
SOCIETY

MECCA NEWS

Surname Variants

Metcalf

Metcalf

Medcalf

Medcalf

Metcalf

Midcalf

Medecalf

Metecalf

Metkalf

Mydcalf

Mitcalf

Mitkalf

Meytecalfe

Metcalf

Modcalf

Metcalf

Midcalf

Meatcalf

Midcalph

Me'cca' is phonetic
dialect for Metcalfe

Can you add to this
list from records you
have come across?

Please email

editor@metcalfe.org.uk



THE METCALFE SOCIETY
Established 1980

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New Year message from the Chair

May we be amongst the earliest to wish you welcome to 2025, and every best wish for an excellent and productive family history year. We hope that you have had a peaceful and happy seasonal holiday. In a world with so many natural and man-made disasters, it is difficult to find as much joy as the seasonal greetings would wish for us, but hopefully 2025 will be a more settled year.

As you will remember, 2025 will be the 45th Anniversary year of the founding of the Society. In those early days, the first members included Vera Adams and Mary Metcalfe (who died in 2024). In the first *Mecca News* published, Vera and Mary pointed out that the name could be seen on many properties and vehicles in the North Yorkshire area, along with 6.35 cms of names in the telephone directory of Wensleydale. I wonder if they were aware of how the Society would take off and spread across the world, with information coming in from members who have joined since then. Membership has fluctuated up and down over the years, but we hope that we are still giving you plenty to interest you on the family. In their words *Most of us will not be direct descendants of the Nappa Hall Metcalfes, but many of us must be descendants of those who fought at Agincourt, or of the 300 who rode with the High Sherrif to York. The difficulty is proving it.* Unfortunately, the sentiment still holds true but, surely being able to claim that we come from such an ancient family, especially with some members who held very prestigious positions in the society of their day, is well worth investigating. Good luck with your own research, but please do remember to send in your information.

The new website is now up and running, although parts are still being updated and added to. Those of you who have already renewed your

Cont'

Subscription will have received an email with a rather cryptic password and details on changing it. For those still to renew, as you do so, you will be sent a new login and password, which has been created by computer. This allows us to remain safely within the data protection legislation. You are more than welcome to change your password to something you can remember more easily by going through the 'forgotten password' process. Now, because of data protection regulations, the Society has no input on this. You can amend your record with us and change your password entirely independently, but we are here to help if you do have problems. There are many suggestions for creating something specifically connected to you, preferably not a family name. So how about the title of your favourite song or book with a mixture of a mixture of letters and numbers – just so long as it is memorable.

As far as the Wills section, once again producing some very interesting tidbits:

Fenwick Henry Metcalfe is concerned (1840-1870), Record No. 31750, died in October 1870, leaving his wife with three very young children, one born in 1878, one in 1879 and the youngest, Sydney Fortescue, was only born in April of that year. Sydney (1870->) Record No. 89992, went on to serve in the Boer War and WW1 - being mentioned in dispatches, and retiring in 1923 as Brigadier General. His older brother, Fenwick Henry (1869-1944) Record No. 31749, served in the Royal Artillery and also retired as a Brigadier General. From our records, this Fenwick Henry had two sons, John Fenwick and Peter Fenwick Metcalfe, who both died in the 1970's.

Hope Cranstouns Metcalfe (1866-1939), Record No. 41643, translated all of Jules Vernes' books from the original French into English.

James Metcalfe left only 1 shilling to one of his sons – obviously a very disappointed father.

No doubt even more interesting stories will emerge as we get through the rest of the 1600+ wills. If you search on the database, you may still find that some of the wills are mismatched or the transcription is missing. Please bear with us until we get through the whole process. If you have a copy of a will from a member of your family who is not included in the list, please feel free to send it in so we can include it, or if the transcription is missing from those already listed, we can still access the original wills and add the details in for you.

Jo Heron

chairman@metcalfe.org.uk

It's Up To Me by James J. Metcalfe

I get discouraged now and then
When there are clouds of gray,
Until I think about the things
That happened yesterday.

I do not mean the day before
Or those of months ago,
But all the yesterdays in which
I had the chance to grow.

I think of opportunities
That I allowed to die,
And those I took advantage of

Before they passed me by.

And I remember that the past
Presented quite a plight,
But somehow I endured it and
The future seemed all right.

And I remind myself that I
Am capable and free,
And my success and happiness
Are really up to me.

Copyright ©: [James J. Metcalfe](#)

Crew List Index Project

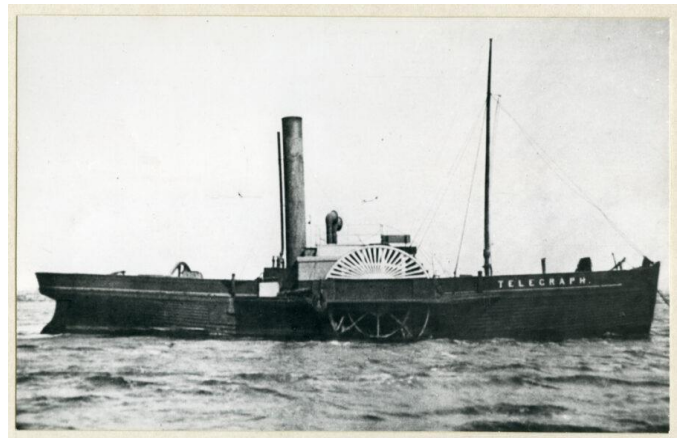
“[CLIP is a not-for-profit volunteer project](#), set up to assist research into the records of British merchant seafarers of the late 19th and early 20th century.”

At this site you can search a number of ways including:

- Records of masters and mates in BT 124 at The National Archives [24 Mt(e)s]
- Search for seafarers names from crew lists [3 Md(e)s/46 Mt(e)s]

There is an interesting section called [Case Studies](#) which will “illustrate how to use CLIP and other resources to assist research into British ships and seafarers.”

One of the 46 Metcalfs found on the above site was Ephraim who was 26, (born approx. 1851 in Liverpool) when he was listed as crew aboard the Shon Quilt (Official #67626)ⁱ as an Able Seaman between 1877 and 1878. Ancestry has him indentured in the Merchant Navy in Sept 1868 ,at 16 years old, on the Gipsy Queenⁱⁱ a wooden paddle tug used to ferry men from North and South Shields to their dredging jobs (pictured at right.). In 1870 he was aboard the barque Matilda Hilyard (ON 59198)ⁱⁱⁱ as Ordinary Seaman. In 1876 he was aboard the one-year-old barque: Battle Abbey (Official #70941)^{iv}. Aug 1878-Jun 1879 (FMP) he was Able Seaman aboard the Northern Crown (ON 47023)^v. From Jul 1889 to Dec 1889 he was Able Seaman aboard the Camargo *ON 79170)^{vi}. In 1913 at age 59 he was aboard the Paragon^{vii} as Able Seaman.



Is Ephraim in your tree? He is in the Mte Soc index, Record ID 103667, source M46n. Notes have his enumeration in the 1861 census in Liverpool. It was the only census he was enumerated in as he was likely at sea on most census days.

Further research found that his father was John E. Metcalfe, a butcher, b1823 in Yockenthwaite, Yorkshire, and his mother was Eden, b1829 in Kettlewell, Yorkshire. John Ellis Metcalfe (Mte Soc. Record ID 57894) Eden Wiseman were married in Kettlewell in 1849. John's father was also John, a cattle driver.

Ancestry has an image of the baptism of John Ellis, April 1823, son of John and Mary Anne Metcalfe and another of the marriage of John (of Aysgarth) and Mary Ann Ellis in 1821 at Hubberholme.

Ephraim had siblings: Mary Ann b 1849, Isabella b 1854-d1855, John William b 1856, Thomas b 1858-d1861, Archer b 1861-d1865, Jane b 1863-d1864, Hanna Jessie b1865-d1865. It seems that only Mary Ann, Ephraim and John William lived to have families of their own.

Sadly, mother Eden died of cholera at 36 in 1866 and father John Ellis died of typhus in 1870 at 47.

Ephraim married Ellen Jane Jones in Newport Monmouthshire in 1882. They had three children: David Ephraim b 1884, Mabel b 1890 and John Ellis b 1894.

[cont']

Ephraim died in Newport, Monmouthshire in 1924, having survived a life at sea where so many lives were lost in shipwrecks. All the known ships he worked on were eventually sunk. It is not known whether or not he was a survivor from any of them.

Links to: M46n M1218 M1265 M1393 M1964

ⁱ The barque Shon Quilt sprung a leak in the Atlantic and was abandoned on 18 May 1878. All crew were saved by the Innisfail. (Newspaper.com story [Liverpool Daily Post](#))

ⁱⁱ The Gypsy Queen ran onto the wreck of a hopper and sank in the River Tyne with the loss of eighteen of the 46 people on board. 27 Dec 1873. (Newspaper.com story: [The Leeds Mercury Sat, Dec 27, 1873 ·Page 7](#)) Also, [Every Man for Himself – the Story of the Gipsy Queen](#).

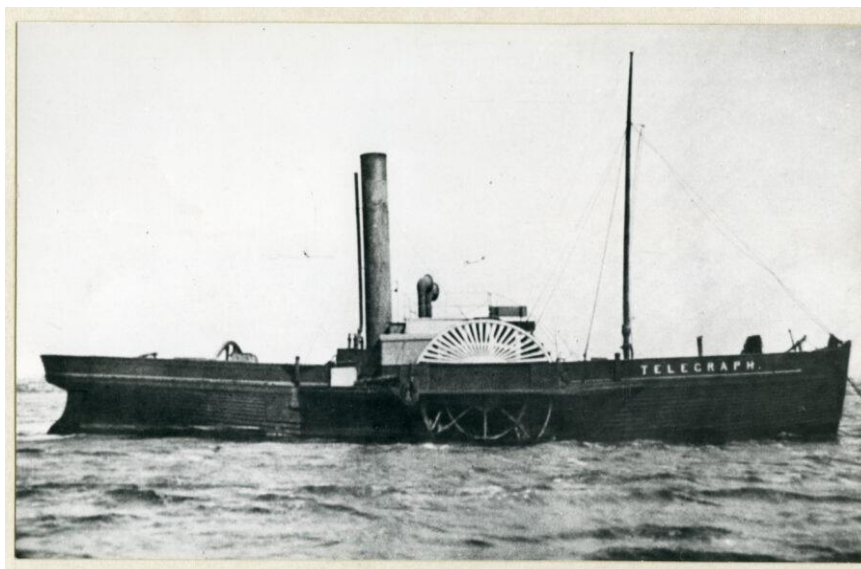
ⁱⁱⁱ The barque Matilda Hilyard was wrecked on Horse Isle, in the Firth of Clyde 1 Mar 1880 Her crew was rescued by the Ardrossan Lifeboat however a mishap resulted in 3 crew and 2 rescuers drowning. (Newspaper.com [The Leeds Mercury](#) Tue, Mar 02, 1880 ·Page 4

^{iv} the British iron barque BATTLE ABBEY, on voyage from Newcastle, N.S.W. to Vancouver, B.C. with a cargo of coal that caught fire and was abandoned on 28 Dec 1913 300 miles from the Oregon Coast. The Captain, his family and crew, 20 in all, were rescued from life boat after 3 days by the German barque Eilbek. (Newspaper.com [Liverpool Daily Post Fri, Jan 30, 1914 ·Page 8](#))

^v 17 December 1879, NORTHERN CROWN, 16 yrs old, of Newport, Mon., wooden brig, 197 tons, 6 crew, Master J. Caldwell, Owner S. Keith, Belfast, departed Newcastle-on-Tyne for Galway, carrying coal, wind NW1, stranded, total loss, near Arnish Lighthouse, Loch Stornoway, Hebrides. ([CANMORE National Records..](#))

^{vi} The Camargo sank 3 Nov 1893 after a collision with S.S. BISCAYA off Scilly on passage from Birkenhead for Newport in ballast. An account of the sinking and crew survival can be found at: Newspaper.com [South Wales Weekly Argus Sat, Nov 11, 1893 ·Page 10](#).

^{vii} HMS Paragon was an Acasta-class destroyer that served in the Royal Navy during the First World War. She was launched in February 1913. On 17 March 1917, fighting alongside HMS Llewellyn in an action in the Dover Strait with eight German torpedo boats, Paragon was sunk by torpedo. ([Wikipedia](#)) Only ten of her 77 crew were rescued by the Llewellyn. ([Heritage Gateway](#))



The Gypsy Queen from [Every Man for Himself – the Story of the Gipsy Queen](#)

Dorothy M. Metcalf-Lindenburger, former astronaut

Dottie was born in 1975 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, daughter of school teachers Joyce and Keith Edward Metcalf. She has a BA in Geology and a Teaching Certificate with which she taught Earth, Science and Astronomy at a Washington high school. In 2004 she was selected by NASA as a Mission Specialist and was crew of STS-131 in 2010, logging 362 hours in space. She retired from NASA in 2014 and lives in the Seattle, Washington area. Read more about her life and achievements [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).



Ancestry has her grandfather as Don Wallace Metcalf born 1919 in Cowley, Kansas. Donald enumerated in 1920 at Grant, Cowley, Kansas, with parents Guy E. (Emmett) Metcalf, b 1885 in Dexter, Kansas, a farmer, and Myrtle L. (Sinclair) born 1885, in Kansas. Guy Emmet Metcalf died in 1964. His father was Aminzo Demetrius Metcalf. Aminzo was born in 1851 in Rushford, Allegany County, NY, son of Zephi Brockett Metcalf. Zephi Metcalf was born in 1821 in New York, son of Elijah Metcalf who was b 1777 in Chersterfield, New Hampshire. Elijah's father was Nathan Metcalf, b in 1741 in Massachusetts. Nathan's father was Joseph Metcalf b 1714 in Medfield, Massachusetts, etc.

And so, Dottie's family seemingly and ultimately traces back to the Dornix weaver whose genealogy is well documented on-line including here: [American Ancestors of Zephi Brockett Metcalf by Artie L. Metcalf](#).

Photo at right: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2010-2105.jpg> Dottie is in centre of group of astronauts, taken 4 March 2010 before the 5 April launch of Discovery, the 33rd shuttle mission to the International Space Station.



2025 Muster and AGM

As mentioned in previous newsletters, and earlier in this one - 2025 is a big celebration year for the Metcalfe Society, and we hope that you will join us for the Muster and AGM in October.

After 45 years, we have grown from a handful of dedicated, interested and meticulous researchers to a sizable Society with nearly 2,500 past and present members. So now is the time to bang the drum and let the family history world know we are here.

We are hoping to hold the Muster on Saturday October 4th - to be confirmed, and somewhere in North Yorkshire, the ancestral home of the Metcalfe family. We would love you to come along and join the celebration with us.

In the meantime, we would be grateful for an indication of interest, so we know how many to expect at the event. This would not be a firm commitment for you to attend, but will give us some idea of how many we can expect to come.

Please let me know by email to chairman@metcalfe.org.uk

I look forward to hearing from you. Jo Heron

PART 5 of Number 11 NOW THEN

In the November/December 2024 newsletter, part 4 of Number 11 of my 'Now Then' articles about **GEORGE METCALFE** of Hawes, the plantation and slave owner, who was the one time acting Governor of the Island of Dominica and President of the Island's council, I concentrated on the siblings of one of **GEORGE METCALFE'S** 3 'remaindermen': his kinsman **ISAAC METCALFE**. **ISAAC** I believe was a first cousin, once removed, of **GEORGE**, whose father was a sibling of **ISAAC'S** grandfather.

I said that I would explore what happened to the other two 'remaindermen'. The 'remaindermen' being the individuals entitled to inherit the capital upon the death of **ELIZABETH** (nee **DAVIS**), **GEORGE'S** widow.

THOMAS DAVIS

First let us consider the **DAVIS** involvement. **THOMAS DAVIS** was the brother-in-law of **GEORGE**. We saw in an earlier article that **GEORGE METCALFE'S** wife, **ELIZABETH**, was a daughter of **WILLIAM DAVIS** and **MARGARET ROUTH**, who married in 1783 and were living in Hardraw, near Rigg House.

THOMAS DAVIS was baptised in 1789. It appears that father **WILLIAM** moved to Gargrave between 1798 and his death in 1815. We can ascertain where he lived by checking the Land Tax registers for West Yorkshire, which Ancestry have copied and added to their webpage.

WILLIAM DAVIS was entitled to vote as a freeholder in Hawes. At that time there was no secret ballot and the candidate for whom one voted was publicly known. Poll books were published showing who voted for whom. The poll book for the parliamentary election in 1807 shows **WILLIAM** to be a yeoman owning freehold land in Hawes. He voted for Wilberforce and Lascelles. The former was the author of the Act to abolish slavery, which was passed by Parliament in 1807. Ironical given his son's subsequent involvement with the plantations in Dominica.

From 1798 until his death, according to the annual Land Tax Return for Gargrave, **WILLIAM** rented land there from a Mr Mason and the Alcock family of Skipton. He also occupied land which was owned by Mathew Wilson of Eshton Hall, in Eshton too. His son **THOMAS DAVIS** seems to have joined his parents there. After his father died he was shown to be a grazier in 1822 in White's directory of that year. (see GENUKI entry at [GENUKI: Gargrave Directory of Trades and Professions for 1822, Yorkshire \(West Riding\)](#))

WILLIAM DAVIS died in 1815 and was buried, in October, at Hawes Chapelry, despite living, at his death, in Gargrave. **WILLIAM DAVIS** left a will, which in 1817, his son **THOMAS DAVIS**, proved in the Exchequer Court of York, according to the Death Duties Index.

To make a search of the Death Duty records at The National Archives (TNA) you need to check the Death Duty indexes, in series IR 27 and then follow up an entry found in the Death Duty Registers, in series IR 26. All Death Duty registers (country courts and PCC) 1796-1903 have an index, a copy of which is available on Findmypast. To see the original register entries it would be necessary to visit the National Archives at Kew (TNA) or order a copy from them.

There are online copies of the Country Court Registers covering the short period 1796-1811 and downloaded country court Death Duty registers 1796-1811 online, from The National Archives' website. You should note that not all of the country court registers survive. This period is too soon for **WILLIAM DAVIS'** death unfortunately.

WILLIAM DAVIS lived, as did his son **THOMAS**, grandson **WILLIAM DAVIS** and great grandson **WILLIAM HENRY DAVIS** at Holme Bridge House, on the edge of Gargrave's boundary at Stirton

with Thorlby beside the turnpike road from Skipton to Settle. The house was in 1822, in the parish of Skipton not Gargrave. The ever useful GENUKI site says of the property: "HOLME BRIDGE, a single house in the township of Stirton with Thorlby, and parish of Skipton; 3¼ miles NW. of Skipton."

A map showing its location adjacent to the Leeds Liverpool canal is kindly supplied by creative commons licence and reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland. [see [Map images - National Library of Scotland View map: Ordnance Survey, Yorkshire CL.15 \(Eshton; Flasby With Winterburn; Gargrave; Stirton With Thorlby\) - Ordnance Survey 25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952](#)]

To [View the map click here: Ordnance Survey, Yorkshire CL.15 \(Eshton; Flasby With Winterburn; Gargrave; Stirton With Thorlby\) - Ordnance Survey 25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952](#) in 1893

White's directory for Gargrave of 1822 shows that **THOMAS DAVIS** was a grazier along with a **JAMES MOREHOUSE**- possibly a brother-in-law as he has the same surname as the subsequent wife of **THOMAS DAVIS**? The fact that **THOMAS** shared the same occupation as a member of his wife's the family surely demonstrates that they might have known one another through his business occupation?

WILLIAM DAVIS had in addition to his daughter **ELIZABETH** (the widow of **GEORGE METCALFE**) and her brother **THOMAS DAVIS**, at least three other children: **ANTHONY DAVIS** (who emigrated to Philadelphia in USA about whom I wrote in connection with **GEORGE METCALFE'S** will in an earlier article), **JOHN DAVIS**, who seems to have lived in Liverpool and died before 1845, and **JANE DAVIS**, who married a **ROBERT BENSON** and whose children benefitted from their aunt **ELIZABETH'S** will in 1845.

THOMAS DAVIS possibly married in 1809 in Whitby, by licence, a **MARY ANN HESELTON**. It does seem a long way from Gargrave and Hawes, so possibly it is not him, although the marriage took place by a licence rather than the reading of banns. Certainly a **THOMAS DAVIS**, born the same year as **THOMAS DAVIS** in 1789, had his eldest child baptised in 1816 who was named **WILLIAM DAVIS**, probably after his father. **THOMAS** also baptised his daughter **MARGARET**.

Searching further it seems possible that **THOMAS DAVIS** may have been married twice. **THOMAS**, when 39 years old, married by licence, in 1828, **SARAH ELIZABETH MOORHOUSE** in Gargrave. **THOMAS** stated he was residing in the parish of Skipton, whereas his bride said she was resident in Gargrave. Unfortunately **THOMAS** does not say if he was a widower or bachelor. The couple do not seem to have had any children.

THOMAS was a grazier as we have seen and it looks as if he acquired land using his wealth from the Dominican plantations and compensation. He barely enjoyed his share of **GEORGE METCALFE'S** estate as he died a few weeks after his sister, **ELIZABETH**. He left a will and a codicil which were proved in the Exchequer Court in York in July 1846. In the former, dated 1840, he states he was residing at Skibenden in the township of Skipton, but in a codicil made in December 1845, a short time before his death, he says he was then living at Holme House, Thorlby. These records are held by the Borthwick Institute in York and their indexes have been transcribed by Find My Past vol.214, f.132 Index reference 1845061847060074/1510

Document ordering: <http://www.york.ac.uk/borthwick/remote-services/copying/order-form/>

As stated he also completed a codicil, shortly before his death, altering the bequest to his 'soon to be' widow. Interestingly in his will, he refers to his 'natural son' **WILLIAM** and his 'natural daughter' **MARGARET** and also states they were both living with him. Two rather odd phrases. I had always

assumed that references to a 'natural children' meant that the children were illegitimate children of the testator. SARAH ELIZABETH DAVIS became his widow. Could it be that he called his two children, his 'natural children' because they were not the children of his widow? Or were they really illegitimate or possibly the children of a first marriage as I postulate above. I suspect he used the phrase since they were children from another marriage, being therefore step children of **SARAH ELIZABETH DAVIS**, the widow but obviously do not know!

Legal definitions help a little. The Concise English Law Dictionary by P G Osborn [5th edition] published by Sweet and Maxwell defines 'a natural child' as: 'the child of one's body; or an illegitimate child.'

Anne Sherman of 'Leaves Family History Research Services' states:

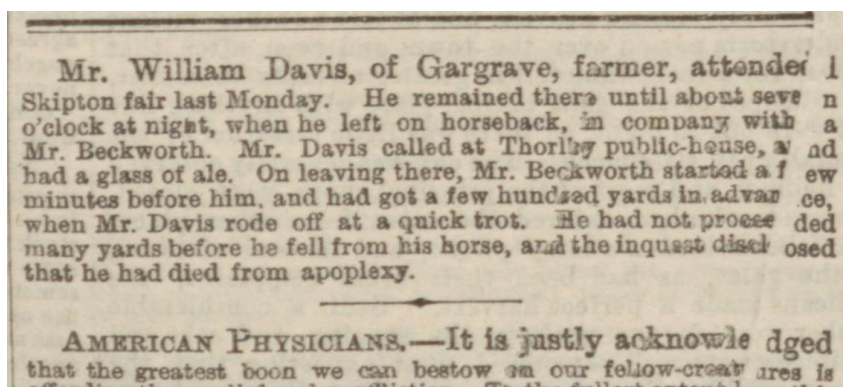
'.....In general if the term "natural" is used to describe a child, then that child will be illegitimate, especially in parish registers. If a man talks about his natural son/daughter the child may still be illegitimate but accepted and acknowledge by the father. In Wills, however, the term "Natural and Lawful" will always mean legitimate, and not adopted, 'in law' or a step child. Not all Wills use these terms, so if it does it may suggest the presence of other children....' [referred to in an article entitled 'Illegitimacy in England' itself adapted from an article "Records of illegitimate children" by Anthony Camp in Family Tree Magazine (UK), vol. 17, no. 7 (May 2001), pages 7-9].

[Accessed: https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Illegitimacy_in_England on 14 Feb 2022. The above comments are expressed to be available for copying under Creative Commons licence.]

The ecclesiastical court on their note, passing the will and codicil of **THOMAS** for probate, deleted the word 'natural' so, I consider the description, was to indicate that the children were the legitimate issue of another marriage and not illegitimate.

WILLIAM DAVIS Junior survived his father, married Sarah, and had at least three children. He was a successful farmer and the two censuses of 1851 and 1861 refer to the growth in size of his farm at Holme House. He farmed 386 acres in 1851, employing nine men. In 1861 he farmed 420 acres but employed two men; one a shepherd and the other a carter. At the Craven Agricultural Society show reported on 2nd September 1862, by the Lancaster Guardian, he won best pair of fat cows or heifers.

Unfortunately **WILLIAM DAVIS** Junior, died in May 1869, aged fifty three years and is buried at Gargrave. A newspaper report from the Leeds Times explains the circumstances of his death. Apoplexy was in effect I believe a stroke.



[copied from Findmypast extracts of newspapers digitised by the British Library whose copyright is acknowledged]

He left a will and the Probate court calendar for 1869, shows he had a personal estate stated to be initially under £1,500 but later re-sworn at the Stamp Office (Somerset House) at the higher figure

of under £2,000 in 1872. Sight of the Death Duty Register would explain why there was an increase in the estate, with no doubt an increase in death duties. His will was proved by his cousin **DAVIS BENSON** and a local farmer.

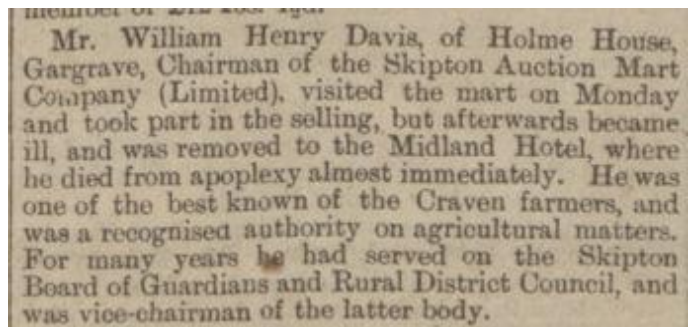
The son of **WILLIAM DAVIS** called **WILLIAM HENRY DAVIS** took up the farm, aged 20, after his father's death and continued to live at Holme House. In August 1869 at the Keighley show, he won a prize of £1 for the second best sheep dog, according to the Bradford Observer, courtesy British Library and Find My Past.

In the 1871 census for Holme House, he retained the 400 acres and employed two employees. He was unmarried and lived there with his unmarried sister, **JANE WADDINGTON** his aunt was their housekeeper.

During the ensuing ten years before the next census, he married **ANNIE JOHNSON** of Chapel Allerton in March 1878. In 1881 he continued to live at Holme House with a large number of servants. He must have sold some of the farm as he stated he farmed 380 acres with 3 employees. He had an apprenticed 16 year farmer. One of his domestic servants was an unmarried **EDITH METCALF** aged 18 years born in Hawes.

In 1891 he had diversified and not only was a farmer but also an auctioneer. He continued to live at Holme House. He had two sons **WILLIAM** and **JOHN**. He, like his father, died relatively young in 1898 on 10th January, 'very suddenly'.

[With an acknowledgment to the British Library and Find my Past: 15th January Leeds Times]



Mr. William Henry Davis, of Holme House, Gargrave, Chairman of the Skipton Auction Mart Company (Limited), visited the mart on Monday and took part in the selling, but afterwards became ill, and was removed to the Midland Hotel, where he died from apoplexy almost immediately. He was one of the best known of the Craven farmers, and was a recognised authority on agricultural matters. For many years he had served on the Skipton Board of Guardians and Rural District Council, and was vice-chairman of the latter body.

ROBERT METCALFE ATKINSON

I turn next to the third and final 'remainderman' entitled to **GEORGE METCALFE'S ESTATE**,

ROBERT METCALFE ATKINSON was baptised on 26th December 1802 at Hawes and died aged 84 in 1886. He was the son of **EDMUND ATKINSON** and **AGNES** (sometimes '**NANNY**') **METCALFE**. The inclusion of the maternal surname as his second forename clearly derives from his mother and explains why **GEORGE** benefitted him.

His parents married on 20 Jun 1775, so were elderly when he was born in 1802. He seems to have had an elder brother, **ISAAC ATKINSON**, who was born in 1778. Could he be the **ISAAC ATKINSON** who was managing a plantation in Dominica for **GEORGE METCALFE** and his estate when the claim for compensation was made? It is I suggest possible.

There is no record of **ROBERT** changing his name to Metcalfe as required by **GEORGE** and maybe he regarded the inclusion of his baptismal maternal surname as adequate. Like **THOMAS DAVIS** both inherited on **ELIZABETH'S** death in 1846, without changing their names to **METCALFE**.

He soon seems to have moved to the London area and married twice. His first wife was **MARY CLARE** of Clerkenwell, the marriage, by licence, taking place at St John Clerkenwell in September 1829, as per Pallots Marriage index as reproduced on Ancestry. **ROBERT ATKINSON** was living in Newington, Surrey according to the marriage licence.

In 1829 **ROBERT'S** house was burgled by Henry Brown, James Bird and James Johnson. The case went to the summer assizes where the three were convicted, although Henry Brown

protested his innocence and petitioned for clemency, due to the fact that the nightwatchman was unable to swear he was present at the time of the offence. The goalers said he was of 'bad character'. [TNA record HO/17/50/7].

In 1830 and 1836 **ROBERT** insured premises at 25 Blackburn Road Borough according to SUN insurance records held by London Archives. He was described, in both, as a linen draper. [London Archives MS 11936/546/1228444].

A search on Discovery at TNA against the name **ROBERT METCALFE ATKINSON**, revealed about 22 entries although some were not actually against his full name and irrelevant. The references to the SUN insurance papers and the burglary were included and it is well worthwhile carrying out a search on the TNA site to see if it or any other archives have records relating to the person of interest.

In 1841, **ROBERT** was back living with his parents in Gayle at West End, together with his wife Mary and described himself as living on independent means, as did his father. His father was said to be 90 and his mother 85, on the census return of that year. His aunt **PEGGY COATES** was living with them aged 65. She was probably the **MARGARET COATES** referred to in **GEORGE'S** will of 1819; Peggy is another name for Margaret. Maybe due to the ages of his parents he came to help look after them, although it appears that he did not need to be running his business, due no doubt to the slavery compensation received in 1836.

He developed his linen draper's business and became a floor cloth manufacturer.

Floor cloths were a type of oilcloth used for covering floors, impregnated with linseed oil. which had the effect of making the covering waterproof. They came in many designs. For more details see the explanation on Wikipedia at [Floorcloth - Wikipedia](#)

He prospered and in 1853 was made a freeman of the City of London.

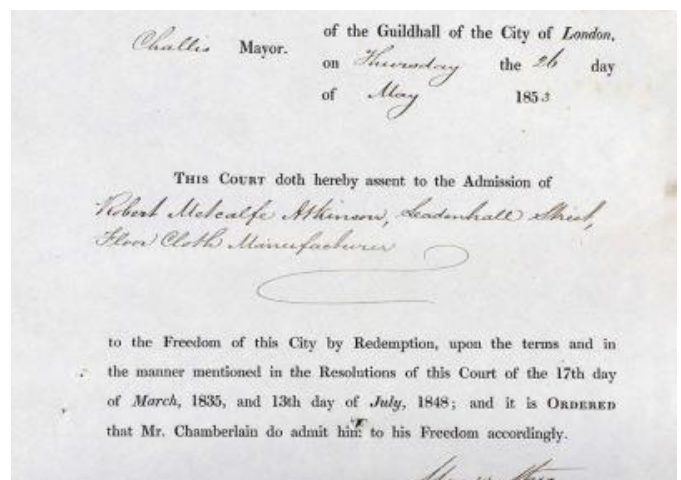
No doubt some of the money from **GEORGE'S** estate was used to set up the manufacturing base.

Using the censuses for 1851 to 1881 one can trace his house moves from 26 Crompton Street Islington to Chislehurst Road Streatham; he had retired by 1871, and moved after his first wife's death to 6 St Germans Place Blackheath, where he lived with **ANN** [nee **DAY**], his second wife. He took a licence out for his second wedding on which he stated that he was living in 1879 at Grenville Park, Lewisham Kent.

The entries referred to above on TNA Discovery show that he was involved in several court cases. In 1854 one involved an action by Mr Robert Main, **ROBERT METCALFE ATKINSON** and Mr George Brown of Great Dover Road Surrey, floor cloth manufacturers against Mr Henry Hopwood of Scarborough. [C17/2/64]

Another case in 1861 involved the family of William Gamuel Edwards and his sister Mary Jane Edwards (both infants) Charles Wilson Steel, **ROBERT METCALFE ATKINSON** and Henry S Maine. Cause papers 1861 M109 [C16/37/M109].

In 1872 he sued a Mr John Jones [16/764/A46].



In 1873 he brought a case against a Mr Oddy in chancery. [C16/841/A85.]

In 1884 he conveyed 4 freehold premises numbered 27 29 31 and 33 Lomax Road Tollington to trustees of the new London Congregational Church Carey Street for the New Court Mission Hall. [London Archives Deeds ACC/3618]

Unfortunately it is not possible to ascertain what the cases related to but a visit to Kew or the London Archives would reveal more.

He died on 31 December 1886 at 6 St Germans Place Blackheath leaving a Will made on 30th September 1886, which was proved on 14th February 1887 by **ANNA DAY ATKINSON**, his second wife and widow and Rev Albert Brook Webb of Sevenoaks, two of the executors named in his will. His personal estate amounted to £27,863 17s 5d. which is equivalent to £4,529,657 [[Inflation Calculator UK historic change in value of sterling](#)]

He was interred five days after his death at the then South Metropolitan Cemetery (now known as West Norwood Cemetery).

He had no children and his wealth was bequeathed to various legatees.

His widow survived until 1922. She was given his horses, carriages and furniture and effects plus £300. A further £6,000 was left in trust for her life and thereafter as she decided.

He left £1,500 to Hawes for the provision of a covered market hall. He specified that there should also be a reading room, a library, a coffee and refreshment room and accommodation for a caretaker. He hoped that the indoor accommodation would enable local farmers and producers to sell their wares more commodiously than out of doors where the stalls were open to the weather. He provided that if the site was not acquired within three years or if any intoxicating liquors were sold, the legacy would be left for the benefit of his widow instead.

As it said in the South London Observer several religious societies 'came in for a slice'.

He gave a legacy of £200 to the ministers and churchwardens of the town to provide blankets and warm clothing to be distributed annually on December 2nd to the poor aged 60 years and upwards.

Further legacies of £200 were given to the Bible Society, the Church Pastoral Aid Society, the Church Missionary Society, the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, the Irish Church Missions for the South of Ireland and the London City Mission.

The construction of the Hawes Market hall was not without issues and indeed litigation in 1893! The result was that the available funds were depleted. Whether the various recipients of ROBERT'S largesse including the residents of Hawes are aware of the origins of a large proportion of his wealth is perhaps a moot point. In 1983 a cy-près scheme was approved by the charity commission to modernise the charity trusts created by his will.

CONCLUSION

I hope that I have demonstrated how using wills and inheritance records can help to put flesh on the bones. Coupled with searches of Land Tax, Electoral Rolls, Tithe Awards, Poll Books, Censuses, Parish Registers, Marriage Licences, Title Deeds and local newspapers, a large amount of information can be gathered. They could be followed up in record offices when the records themselves are not digitised and available online.

Why not try yourselves AND tell the society of what you find, so we can add to the Metcalfe story.

David Lambert

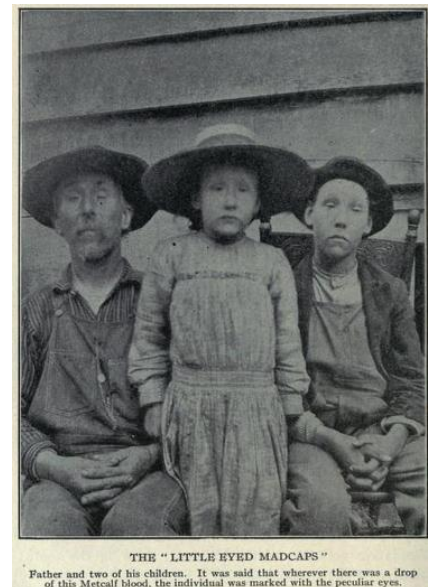
A Metcalfe "Quirk" – the "little eyed Madcaps"

From Lesley Longworth: "...an Andrew Metcalfe facebook messaged me on [The Metcalfe Society page](#) with an item he had come across on a facebook page called Lennox Reels." It was about a photographer/author Thomas R. Dawley, a former Special Agent for Bureau of Labour, who spent two years photographing and interviewing people about labor conditions, the cotton mill people and the mountain people in The Great Smoky Mountains of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, 1908-1909. In his travels, he came across a Metcalf family with "small eyes" and that it was common to others of that name locally. He made no judgement on the "quirk", merely reported the curiosity.

At the time the US Congress was debating the issue of child labour and wanted Dawley to find examples of the evils of cotton mills. He resigned his position after his report was rejected because he concluded that without child labour the poor families would be even poorer and more destitute. He wrote his book to shine light on his "suppressed" conclusions.

Thomas Robinson Dawley, Jr.'s book ["The Child That Toileth Not, the Story of a Government Investigation that was Suppressed"](#) 2nd Edition, ipublished in 1913, is on-line. The Metcalfe story appeared in chapter: XXVI *Some Incidents of Mountain Travel*, on page 331. As this is public domain I have copied some of the Metcalf part below.

I selected this district to be worked out in detail with the schedules. One of its striking developments was a family known as " little eyed Madcaps," the name Madcap being a corruption of the family name Metcalf. It was said that wherever there was a drop of this Metcalf blood, the individual possessing it was marked by a drooping of the eyelids, in extreme cases the person afflicted being scarcely able to raise his eyelids at all. With that sense for the humorous so characteristic of the people, it was said that some of these Metcalfs, in order to see at all, were obliged to lie on their backs and look up.



A schedule was obtained from one of these Metcalf families that had been to the cotton-mills. The family consisted of father, mother and nine children. A photograph was obtained of the father and two of the children, showing the marked peculiarity of the eyelids, as also a group of four other children, one of whom was a Metcalf boy so badly afflicted that he could scarcely raise his eyelids at all. The family was living in a poorly-built house of one-inch, upright boards, divided into

three rooms, without windows. The furniture was described as fair, being distinguished by " five very nice oak beds bought while at the cotton-mill, one table and a few chairs." Shoes and clothing — "Poor. All very dirty and ragged. All the children under twelve have been barefooted all winter. Father very ragged and nearly barefooted." The only one in the family claiming to be able to read and write was the eldest daughter Cora, aged



twenty-one. A postal photograph was obtained of her taken while at the mill, showing her improved appearance, and while a photograph of the entire family or any of the other numbers at the mill, was unobtainable, the mother said they all dressed as well as Cora, "but here they are all dirty and ragged, and haven't anything fit to wear. They don't go to church because they are ashamed of their clothes."

There were a few clues given as to who this family was. A search on Ancestry found that there was only one family in the area with 9 children and a 22-year-old daughter named Cora in the [1910 census](#). They were enumerated in Upper Laurel, Madison. It is likely, then, that the parents were Enos Henry Metcalf (b1860 d1927 in NC) and Susan nee Clendenon (b1859 in Tennessee d1940 in NC) who [married](#) in 1887 in Greene, Tennessee. According to [Find a Grave](#), Enos Henry's father was also Enos Henry. Also from [Find a Grave](#): Enos Henry Metcalf (1837-1863) drowned in the Alabama River during the Civil War on May 16, 1863. His wife was Catherine Norton (1841-1883). They were from Yancey County, North Carolina.

[Find a Grave has Hyrum Metcalf](#) b1807 in Buncombe County, North Carolina, and Mary Jane Hensley as parents of Enos Henry Sr. Hyrum was the son of Absalom Metcalf born in Virginia (1775-1868) and Nancy Sarah Maney (1783-1860) daughter of Martin Maney of Ireland ([Find a Grave](#)).

A note on [Find a Grave](#) says that Nancy Maney suffered from **ptosis**, an eye disorder, and passed this condition on to future generations. (Ptosis is a condition where the upper eyelids droop and the eyes look small. It is a congenital/inheritable condition.)

So, it seems that, though many generations of Metcalfs in this area were afflicted, it was not originally a Metcalfe "quirk". [A thesis was written](#) about the genetics of the regional condition using the descendants of Martin Maney as case studies....including many Metcalfs.



[Attribution: By User:Nyttend - Modified from this United States Census Bureau file, based on the following Census definitions lists:Metropolitan Statistical AreasMicropolitan Statistical AreasCombined Statistical Areas, Public Domain,](#)

Map of North Carolina, USA. Asheville Metropolitan Statistical Area: red; Brevard Micropolitan Statistical Area: yellow. Asheville includes Counties of Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania. Directly north of Madison County (red upper right) is Greene County, Tennessee. Yancy is the county right of Madison, Buncombe is south, Haywood is east.

Researched by Susan Harper, M266

Metcalf Family Sampler 1838

I inherited a sampler from my grandmother, Jane Agness Davies nee Harper. It was stitched by her grandmother Jane Burton nee Metcalfe when she was thirteen in 1838.

Jane was baptised on August 1st 1824 in Northallerton. She was the daughter of William Metcalfe a stonemason of Northallerton and his wife Margaret nee Lockey. William and Margaret were married by banns in Northallerton on 29th November 1815. William wrote his name. Margaret signed with a cross. Their children were John, William, Mary, Jane, Ann, Henry. Jane married Thomas Burton on 18th December 1845 in Northallerton. The marriage was witnessed by John Metcalfe and Ann Metcalfe. Thomas was a gentleman's servant and Jane had no occupation. Thomas' father, Robert, was a labourer and Jane's father, William, was a stone mason. Thomas was from Yafforth and Jane was from Northallerton. Thomas and Jane's children were Margaret born 1848, Sunderland, Mary Metcalfe born 23rd June 1850, Sunderland and Frances. Jane inherited £25 in her father Williams' will. Thomas became a police sergeant in Sunderland. They lived at Low Row, Bishopwearmouth, Sunderland. Mary married Joseph Harper on August 18th 1875 in Millfield, Durham. They were my great grandparents. Joseph was a shoemaker son of John also a shoemaker. He was born in Scotland. Their children were Jane Agnes and Frances Ann.



Helen Bendon, M2244

From our records, William (96560) was born c. 1796 and died in 1851. Margaret (65388) was born c. 1788. They were married in Northallerton (both of this parish) on 27 November 1815 and their marriage certificate is listed in the Borthwick Archive at York. He is listed as a stonemason in the 1841 census. They had seven children but no Henry is listed. Also, from the list above, a Francis and a Mary Ann are missing – presumably early losses or working elsewhere in the town or county.

The information we have is:

William b. c.1796 and Margaret nee Lockey b c 1788

Their children - John b. 1816, Mary Ann b. 1818, Frances b. 1819, William b.1822, Jane b.1824, Mary b.1826 and Ann b. 1829. We have no a record for Henry.

Both Williams are listed as stonemasons. Jane is not listed in the family address in 1841, although there are two Jane Metcalfes, aged 15, living in other households in Danby Wiske – was she already working as a servant working there? Was the age/birth record correct, or is this another Jane Metcalfe?

Ahhhhh - The pitfalls of family history research.

Jo Heron

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