

ISSUE

25-3

May-Jun 2025

Newsletter of
THE
METCALFE
SOCIETY

MECCA NEWS

Surname Variants

Metcalf

Metcalf

Medcalf

Medcalf

Metcalf

Midcalf

Medecalf

Metecalf

Metkalf

Mydcalf

Mitcalf

Mitkalf

Meytecalfe

Matcalve

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

Message from the Chair

Well, what a change in the world since the last newsletter. 2025 has certainly started off with a massive bang. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those of you who are affected. I'm sure we are all feeling the effects of the global situation, wherever we are. Perhaps the least is the financial crisis in the face of the extreme weather conditions attacking us on all sides, from flooding to wildfires, volcano's erupting and earthquakes shaking our world. Here in the UK, thankfully we do tend to have a more mild climate, although not without our own flooding and fires, but not as vicious as some of you may be experiencing. It is a frightening world we live in today, with all the physical problems the planet is suffering from as well as the wars that are going on. Keep safe.

On the Metcalfe front, I'm afraid that I have not progressed as well as intended with adding the wills to the new website, but now as things quieten down, I hope to be able to steam ahead with checking and inserting those that are incorrect or missing.

We are starting to work on the arrangements for the AGM and Muster, so we are asking for an expression of interest in attending the Meeting. We would like to hold it live this year and obviously hiring premises can be expensive, so if there is insufficient interest in a live meeting, we will think again. Please do let me know by return email, so we have an idea of whether it will be worth going ahead with the arrangements. Speakers will include an archivist from the Borthwick Institute which houses the Bishops Transcripts for Yorkshire, so of particular interest to us. We also hope to have something on the ending of WW2 and names (see the article later in this issue). Last year, members found the Brickwall session very useful and we will be repeating it again – so if you have hit a dead stop, do please let us know and hopefully we can find an answer for you.

I look forward to hearing from you. Take care of yourselves and your families.

Jo Heron

chair@metcalfe.org.uk

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What's in a name?

Obviously, communication and naming had to start somewhere

All animals communicate in some way, whether by facial expression, grunts and other noises, as well as physical movements. So, I think it is a fairly safe bet that those very early gestures of our ancestors in Africa eventually developed into something that was recognisable by other individuals in that group as having a special meaning – and from there to identifying individuals and situations - and so along comes speech and the ability to recognise each other by a simple noise.

It would have been extremely important to our early ancestors to be able to share information on where to find food, where the nearest water was, if there was another group in the area or where danger was likely to come from. And so down to the elements we know today as speech.

So, when did humans start to record names?

As early as the late prehistory, we do have individuals recorded but usually on stone monuments and the ancient papyrus documents and fragments found mainly around the Mediterranean and the Middle East – which has been called the Cradle of Civilisation. We know about the early Mesopotamian and Egyptian rulers for instance, and some of their more important servants, but not good old Ahmed the baker on Nile Street. Later, we have the Greek and Roman leaders, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, then Atilla the Hun, and so on, but again - only the most important leaders and kings, and in some cases the most world renowned academics, like Cicero and Plato, or very important businessmen were ever recorded. The earliest names in the UK are only really known from the records left by traders and invaders such as the Romans. We know about Boudicca, Cartamandua, Cogidubnus because they were names in use at the times to distinguish between those who fought or traded with the powers that be, and a few more are only known through coinage. How do we know about Boudicca? – because the Roman writer Tacitus tells us about her valiant battle against Roman oppression, otherwise we would never have known there was a woman called Boudicca. And how many other women may have carried the same name, or something similar.

From the post-Roman period, the clergy were often the only ones who would, or could, deal with recording what was going on in the world because generally they were the only ones who could read and write – but again, it was only the most important people in the country who would warrant recording, even though most of the ordinary citizens would have had something about them to help distinguish one from the other. For the post Roman period, the monks in the abbeys kept records of the doings of the wealthy, and landed classes, and as they were the main target for the raiding Vikings, so they obviously had a lot to say about these marauding villains – and that is what we think we know about them.

Most people would have had a first name, in this predominantly Christian western Europe they were often based on biblical characters – John, Thomas, Peter, Mary, Ruth and so on.

But eventually we would have needed to be able to distinguish which John or Thomas or Peter we were referring to, and so an additional name or phrase came into being to help distinguish one from another. Initially, we probably developed nicknames as a quick identifier – just as we do today with our friends and relations. Then it seems that it was probably easier to pick on some feature of the person, something like hair colour, complexion, occupation, dwelling place that made them unique in the community. Then as life became more complicated and dangerous, it would have been vital to be able to identify friends and foes.

We all still follow the same pattern that was developing from the post-Roman period onwards, we all have a forename and a surname, sometimes more than one, the latter of which we take from

our parent usually. Now although we are primarily interested in the Metcalfe name, without or without the 'e' (or any of the other variants of the name) we will all have connections to other names which possibly include any one of a massive variety.

So we have names like Edward the Confessor, William the Conqueror, Richard the Lionheart and so on being passed down to us. The following surnames are just examples of the names given to some people based on some aspect of their appearance or personality, or where they came from – or something else that made them individual and different from every other John or Peter or William – and they developed during the Anglo-Saxon period (5th to 11th centuries). The nicknames were probably the first to develop as a quick way to identify someone, similar names became a proper name associated with that individual, so we have names such as:

Black – someone with black hair or dark complexion

Brown – someone with brown hair or complexion

Fox – someone with red hair, or very crafty

Goodman – a kind person

Read – usually someone with red hair or ruddy complexion

Small – a small person

Turnbull – someone thought to be strong enough to turn a bull?

White – someone with a white hair or pale complexion

Wild – untamed, uncontrollable

We still use this way of identifying an individual Vlad the Impaler, Ivan the Terrible, and so on, even though 'the Impaler' or 'the Terrible' were certainly not their proper surname. If you have followed 'The Vikings' you will have seen 'Ivor the Boneless' – we don't know why, but an interesting name nevertheless.

A person's occupation might be an easier way to identify them so we might have had John the Baker, William the Miller and so on which developed into John Baker or William Miller as time went on. The occupations may have changed but we have the development of names like:

Arkwright – a chest maker, craftsman

Bird – one who hunted birds

Chapman – a merchant or trader

Cook – might have had an eating house or prepared and sold cooked food

Dyer – someone who dyes cloth

Glazier – a glassworker

Howard – a herdsman – usually of ewes

Jackman – servant of Jack

Ryder – a mounted warrior, as opposed to a foot soldier

Sawyer – a woodcutter

Smith – a metalworker, like a blacksmith

Snyder – tailor who cuts and stitches clothing

Walker – someone who walked on wet fabric to raise the fibres and thicken it

Wayne – a wagon maker or cartwright

Webster – someone who weaves fabric

Some are very obvious, what else would a Brewer do, or a Hunter, or a Miller or Thatcher – so some names were already very descriptive.

Where someone lived could also be used to identify an individual. Local landmarks and features were often a useful way to identify an individual:

Atwater or Bywater – dweller by the water
Beech – someone who lived near a beech tree
Bridges – someone who lived or worked as a bridge keeper
Bush – someone living near a dominant bush/tree
Heywood – one who lived in or near a fenced-in woodland
Heath – one who lived on a heathland or open land
Oakley – someone who lived in or near an oak clearing
Underhill – dweller at the foot of a hill
Underwood – someone who lived at the edge of a wood

Water obviously contributes to a lot of names, Atwater, Brook, Bywater,

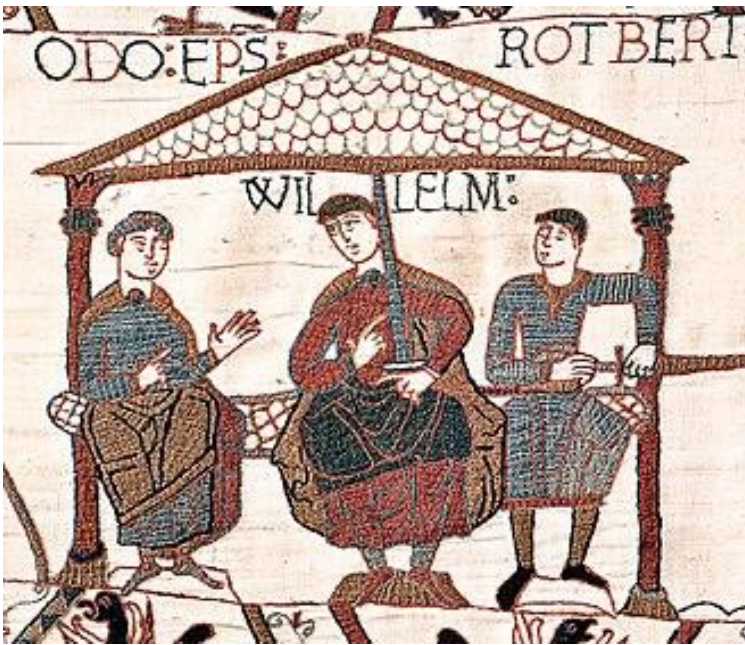
More land-based dwellings also contributed to the name, Bridges, Heath, Hill, North, Oakley, Radcliff (red cliff), Underwood or Underhill, and so on.

And then, obviously, placenames were adopted as towns and villages and grew into flourishing establishments. Where someone came from would also have been a very important descriptor for those who were in business, so John of Hawes, William of Ripon and so on. It might be that John of Hawes was a better or worse businessman than John of Leyburn, so those dealing with them needed to know who the best was. Those knights who came over with William the Conqueror often have 'de' somewhere, like de Lacey and de Vescy in Yorkshire, probably indicating that they originated from somewhere called Lassy or Vecchio in France. German names include 'von' as 'from', such as the von Richenburgs, and other nations had similar ways to identify places.

The final big development was the adding of a descriptor to a name. I'm sure we all know someone with the 'son' ending to their name. This was probably done to make it easier to deal with than adding 'the younger' or 'the older' to someone's name especially if there was a large family with several sons. In many cases, when a child died, subsequent children were often given the same name. This system was also used in many other countries, so we have Scandinavian children identified as 'son' or 'daughter' after their father's name, so Bjorn Ingorsson or Anya Ingordottir. Names in the Arabic world include 'Al' and 'Bin' signifying of the family of...whoever, and again, this also happens elsewhere.

William I, the Conqueror, was a very able administrator, and taking over this new land of England, he wanted to know exactly what he had taken on. He sent men around the whole of England, listing everything in the country, who owned what, how many freemen and slaves lived on the land, how large each holding was and all other information like the number of ploughs and what livestock they had. This became known as the Domesday Survey and was compiled in 1068. A few decades later, he repeated the exercise, and the new survey shows how the land holdings had changed hands from the Anglo-Saxons to the Norman conquerors. It also shows how the country was being fortified – obviously still very dangerous times. To such an extent, that when the people across the country refused to be listed, he set about destroying them and their homes, reducing the population to starvation. This was particularly noticeable here in the north of England, and became known as the Harrying of the North, where people were disinherited and driven from their land forcibly, animals were taken or destroyed, and the people left to starve. It took many years for the land to recover.

Obviously, there are no photographs of William, but here, in the Bayeux Tapestry, he is seated with his stepbrothers, Bishop Odo of Bayeux (who, we believe, had the tapestry created) and Robert, Duke of Mortain



As mentioned, the Domesday census listed all the individuals in the country – **but only the men**. Women and children were not included, except in very exceptional cases, where the female was a landowner or an heiress. Also, for several centuries, most of the baptismal records only show the males name – John son of John, and so on. The only women who were recorded in those early days were those born into the landed classes where it was dynastically very important to be able to ‘prove’ one’s lineage, so in the more important households, women might be recorded. They were useful for creating alliances with other families, between nobles or with business connections. I’m sure we have all

heard about the princesses who were traded on the marriage market, very much like cattle, across Europe and further afield, including many of our early queens– but their antecedents all had to be provable to ensure their ‘value’ in the marriage market was as high as possible. So, Domesday brought in a lot of the civil registration that we have today – in all its myriad forms.

As he settled in, William introduced several other means of listing and recording the population, and then other rulers added their favourite means of checking on the population of the country as the years went on – so we have Hearth Taxes, Bishops Transcripts, Window taxes and so on until we reach the later censuses.

In addition, the feudal system had taken hold of the country, both pre- and post-Conquest. The lords and nobles wanted to know exactly what they held, not just in the land-holdings and what they could earn or take from them, how many able bodied men they could call to service their lands and farms, and what type of soldiers they could muster if and when they were called provide troops for the lord or the king.

The peasants were tied to their Lord both physically and spiritually. Basically, every aspect of their lives was tied to the place where they were born and the Lord who owned the land and where they lived for good or ill. Anyone who ran away, faced serious punishments, death or maiming if/when they were caught, and when death was the penalty for what we would consider a very minor crime, their lives were considered of little or no consequence. The Lord could dispose of the peasants as he felt fit. Obviously, there were good overlords, but I guess it is human nature that we hear more of the bad and/or evil ones.

So back to the records. The early ones are not so easy to read. From the Roman period, Latin was the main language in most with the written documents – the writers were usually clergy, as mentioned above, and Latin was the language of the Catholic Church. The Anglo-Saxons did introduce what we call early English, but most documents were still written in Latin. William introduced French as the court language, and for any official documents. Assuming you had learned Latin or French in school you may be able to read some of these documents as most of the texts would have been written in these languages. Gradually English was introduced but even so, the scribes used abbreviations and letters, and what is called ‘Secretary Hand’ that we may find difficult to read.

Thankfully, many early documents have been transcribed and most of the archive centres have trained and qualified staff who can help, so it might be worth paying a visit to your local archive centre if there is something you particularly want to see. Also, depending on the age of the document and the material it has been written on, they may be extremely fragile and very easily damaged, so you may find that you are not allowed to handle them, even if you can read Latin, French or Secretary Hand. Some of the early transcriptions may be accessible by computer – either as the original document from somewhere like the National Archives in Kew, or your local Archive centre – but being online, making it easier to find and read them – and they may be well worth looking at. Later documents may be easier to read once you have started to look at them.

Assuming a generation is normally taken as c. 20 years, it does not take long to reach massive numbers of names even in the recent past. The census records from 20th century can give us information of our Great-Great Grandparents, and from the attached chart, those GGgrandparents number 16 individuals within 5 generations – so 16 family names within approximately 100 years – a very good start. This chart highlights the changes of name.

Person 1															
Father 1								Mother 2							
Father 1				Mother 3				Father 2				Mother 4			
Father 1		Mother 5		Father 3		Mother 6		Father 2		Mother 7		Father 4		Mother 8	
F1	M9	F5	M10		M11	F6	M12	F2	M13	M7	M14	F4	M15	F8	M16

In the UK, we have 1901, 1911, 1921, and then a registration pre WWII in 1939. Working back from whatever documents we have, and any links we can prove, 1939 does potentially give us a lot of information, and the earlier census will also help to trace surnames, but we might have a long way to go. Many of the early censuses only have the names of the men of the family, and no women or children. But even so, a name will only give us so much information. Using the surname to find occupations or some feature of our ancestors might prove a much more interesting way to find out about our families. After, following a name is not the be all and end all of family history. We would like to know about the people who made us who we are.

References:

Burdess N, 2016, *The Remarkable Story of Personal Names*

Hutchinson, R, 2017, *The Butcher, The Baker, The Candlestick maker*

Rye, E. 2024, *pers com*

Cook, A, 2025, *pers com*

Jo Heron

Birth Briefs

We have had a number of new members in recent months but have yet to receive new Birth Briefs. Please do let us have your family's details so we can add them to our data and see where you fit in.

Mariner and Author W.C. Metcalfe

came across a book entitled *Pigtails and Pirates - Tale of the Sea* by W. C. Metcalfe and then discovered a long list of books written by him between 1887 and 1912. I decided to learn more about this author. At first, I was unable to find any information about him, even his names or location, although it seemed certain he was in the UK, judging by the publishers used. I even asked AI and got this: "There isn't much readily available information about the author himself, as he doesn't appear to be a widely known figure in literary history." I then came across [a biography sketch of William John Metcalfe](#), a teacher, short story writer and novelist born in 1891 in Heacham, Norfolk. The bio mentioned: "His father, William Charles Metcalfe, wrote sea stories for boys and during John Metcalfe's childhood served as a superintendent of orphanages in Canada, England, and Scotland. That bit of information opened the door to a lot more.

W. C. METCALFE'S NEW BOOK FOR BOYS.
ON THE OTHER TACK: a Story of the Sea. By
 W. C. METCALFE, Author of "The Boy Skipper," "Nailing the Colours," &c. Illustrated by S. H. VEDDER.

The Westminster Budget Fri, Dec 10, 1897 · Page 12

The [1911 census of Cavendish Cottage](#), Cliff Road, Sheringham, Norfolk enumerated William Charles Metcalfe, born about 1848 in Sydney, NSW, Australia, an author, his wife Maria Jessie, born about 1856 in Rajkot, India, and son William John, born abt 1892 in Heacham, an assistant school master.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	William Charles Metcalfe	Head	62	Married					Author	451			Sydney (Australia) / Rajkot (India) / Heacham (Norfolk) / Bath (Somerset)
2	Maria Jessie Metcalfe	Wife	55	Married	21	1	1						
3	William John Metcalfe	Son	19	Single					Assistant Schoolmaster	1114			
4	Jessie Good	Servant	29	Single					Granddaughter (Dorothy)	010			
5													

William Charles Metcalfe and Maria Jessie Clay [married in April 1889 in Saint Paul, Brixton](#). The record gave William Charles' occupation as a mariner and his father as John Bell Metcalfe, an underwriter, deceased. John Bell Metcalfe, a brother, was a witness and they were married by another brother Rev. Reginald Metcalfe.

William Charles Metcalfe got his Merchant Shipping mates certificates starting around 1876 and worked on ships until he got married. He used his experience at sea to earn a good living writing books but in 1901 he was enumerated as an Assistant Master at the District Boys Home in Stepney, East London. His wife was enumerated as a Matron and his son a scholar. His son moved to the U.S.A. in 1928, married there but the couple did not have children, and in the end he died in England in 1965 after a fall.

The mention of William Charles Metcalfe as an author seems to be only in the 1911 census in Norfolk and in his son's biography! Even his obituary in the *The Times*, London, 16 January 1912 did not mention his writing.

DEATHS (continued).
METCALFE.—On the 13th inst., at Sheringham, Norfolk, WILLIAM CHARLES METCALFE, fourth son of the late John Bell Metcalfe, of Lloyds, London, E.C., and Hampstead, N.W. Australian papers, please copy.

John Bell Metcalfe was born abt 1817 in Hull, Humberside, England and went to Australia around 1838 working as a merchant and later as an insurance broker 1838. He married Charlotte Williams Brindley on 21 Jan 1842 at St. Lawrence Church of England, Sydney, NSW. The couple had 10 children in Sydney before sailing to London in March 1857 where a few more children were born. Sadly, only seven of twelve children survived childhood. In England he became an Underwriter for Lloyd's. He died in London England in 1884 and is buried in Hamstead Cemetery. His oldest son Michael became a lawyer and stayed in Sydney. His son Reginald became a Church of England priest. John Bell Metcalfe was [baptized at Hessle](#), the son of Michael Metcalfe, a merchant, and his wife Ann. Michael and Ann Bell married in Leconfield, Yorkshire in 1809. Michael was of St. Mary in Kingston upon Hull and Ann was of Leconfield. The [image at FMP](#) shows his name written by curate as Michael Metcalf Junr.

[The Metcalfe Society database has William Charles Metcalfe in record ID 96940 sourced from M0052, M0054 and List #2204 donor M0046. Also, John Bell Metcalfe is in Record ID 57693 sourced from: L1466 Donor M0368, L1535 Donor M0244, L1739 Donor M0244, L2093 Donor M0046. The latter record has William C. listed as one of his children.]

Submitted by Susan Harper, M0266

[Have you read any of W.C. Metcalfe's books as a youngster? Is this your family? Please let the editor know or to correct this article if you think it is in error.](#)

Enquiry

We recently had an enquiry from a non-member:

I'm researching the above Edward Metcalfe, especially his role in the Franco-Prussian War, and wonder if you can help? He was one of the 15 sons (four died in childhood) and two daughters of a Wisbech solicitor and Justice of the Peace. He joined the 7th (Queens Own) Hussars in November 1858 (see Barrett, C.R.B. _The 7th (Queen's Own) Hussars, Volume 4, p.238) After serving in India, he later volunteered on the French side in The Franco-Prussian War and was "highly commended" for his part in the belated but pointless French victory at Villersexel in January 1871, for which he was awarded the Military Cross of the Legion d' Honneur.

Having explained that although we do as full as history as possible for members, we are limited in the amount of time we can spend on random enquiries from non-members. Even so, I was able to find this gentleman in our database and was able to let him know that Edward had been born in 1837, who his parents were, although his details came from a list taken down in Cambridgeshire in the early days of the Society. He is listed in the 1881 and 1891 censuses in London as a retired army officer. I was able to find details of his parents Charles and Mary (Skrimshaw) and Charles 'father George and Rebecca (Moorhouse), all of Wisbech in Cambridgeshire, but could go no further.

Charles and Elizabeth are connected to M923 and M1785. If you have any further information for the enquirer about this family, or would like to get in contact with him, do let me know and I'll pass on your contact details (Society policy is not to give out members details without permission of that member)

Jo Heron

Travels around Australia & Metcalf/es I have come across

And down more rabbit holes

Over the New Year period I was back in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia and went on a lunch cruise on Sydney harbour. I had taken photos previously of the Metcalfe Bond Store for the Metcalfe Family Histories book in 2019. Those photos were taken from the street.



But these photos are from the ferry coming in to dock at Circular Quay.



I believe the bond store was named for Michael Metcalfe who had died in 1890 the bond store northern section was built in 1912 and the southern section in 1916 and used up until about 1970. And in 1972 work began to convert the buildings to offices, shops and restaurants.

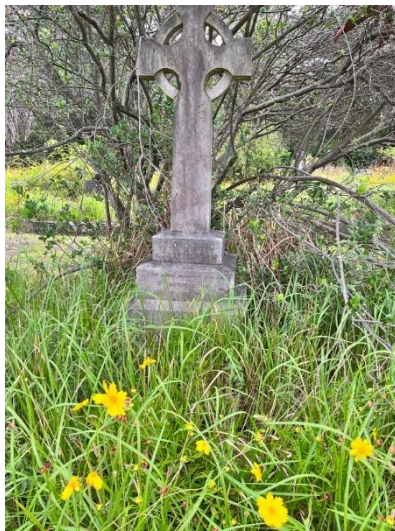
Michael Metcalfe was born 1813 in Tranby, Yorkshire the son of Michael Metcalfe and Ann nee Bell.

We were also staying opposite the **Gore Street Cemetery in Greenwich** a suburb of Sydney, New South Wales so off I trotted to find the Metcalfe's buried in the cemetery. The cemetery is one of the oldest and largest in the metropolitan area.

Unfortunately, I did not find any headstones for the people listed.

Last name	Middle name	First name	date of birth	date of death	date of service
METCALFE	Royes	Algernon -	29-01-1918	-	
METCALFE		Elizabeth -	22-06-1916	-	

Algernon Royes Metcalfe was buried in the Church of England 9, 28



The photos above are where I think the graves are located but I was unable to find any monumental inscriptions.

His death notice in the Sydney Morning Herald:

METCALFE.—January 21, at Oomrah, Bancroft-ave
Roseville, Algernon Royes Metcalfe, aged 28 yea

(1918, February 1). *The Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW : 1842 - 1954), p. 6. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page1261339> METCALFE ALGERNON R

NSW Birth Death & Marriage index records the following information for his Death:-

Registration number 1665/1918
Father's Given Name(s) ALGERNON J
Mother's Given Name(s) MARY J
District CHATSWOOD

His parents were Algernon J and Mary J Metcalfe and he was one of six children born to his parents. Algernon R born 1889 and registered at Glebe, then Viara F 1891 and Gladys 1892 both register in the Central Cumberland, then Beryl C 1894, Malcolm V 1896 and Minnie L 1897 all registered in Ryde.

Algernon J Metcalfe had married Mary J Whiteside in 1889 in the district of Ashfield.

Notice of Marriage in the Sydney Morning Herald for his parents:

METCALFE—WHITESIDE.—January 21, at St. Andrew's,
Summer Hill, by the Rev. John Vaughan, Algernon James
Metcalfe, Enfield House, Forest Lodge, second son of
Michael Metcalfe, Esq., Potts Point, to Mary Josephine,
youngest daughter of Thomas Whiteside, Esq., late of
Parramatta.

(1889, February 11). *The Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW : 1842 - 1954), p. 1. Retrieved April 26, 2025, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page1386948>

Interestingly Algernon James Metcalfe was the second son of Michael Metcalfe Esq of Potts Point. Is this the same Michael Metcalfe who is referred to in photos of the bond store.

NSW Birth Deaths and Marriages has him Death listed as follows:

He died in 1932, and his parents are listed as Michael and Agnes J Metcalfe on the BDM but no listing for his birth. He was in his 76th year in 1932 so born about 1857. This information from his death notice in the Sydney Morning Herald below.

METCALFE.—November 16, 1932, at his residence, No. 1 Bulkara-road, Bellevue Hill. Algernon James, in his 76th year. By request, no flowers.

Family Notices (1932, November 17). *The Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW : 1842 - 1954), p. 10. Retrieved April 26, 2025, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article16931575>

Interestingly his birth was registered in England.

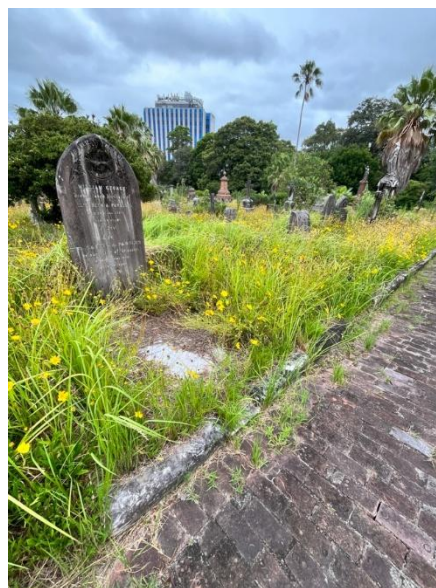
Name:	Mother's Maiden Surname:
METCALFE, ALGERNON JAMES	ROBINSON
GRO Reference: 1856 S Quarter in KENSINGTON Volume 01A Page 14	

The children either side of 1856 were Edward M baptised in 1854 in NSW and born Florence A 1858 NSW. Did the family take a journey back to England.

NSW BDM lists a marriage for Michael Metcalfe and Agnes G Robinson in 1845 in NSW

Yes family information I can locate does record a voyage back to England before Algernon James's birth and the return to NSW afterward.

Elizabeth Metcalfe was also buried in the C of E F, 37



The photos above are where I think the graves are located but I was unable to find any monumental inscriptions.

METCALFE.—21st June, 1916, at her residence, 38 Bellevue Street, North Sydney, Elizabeth Metcalfe, in her 92nd year, daughter of the late Sir William Macartney, Baronet, rector of the parish of Desertegny, County Donegal, Ireland. Inserted by her son, William Tennent Moss.

Family Notices (1916, June 22). *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, NSW : 1883 - 1930), p. 4. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article238678885>

NSW BDM – Death index for Elizabeth:

METCALFE ELIZABETH

Registration number 8713/1916

Father's Given Name(s) WILLIAM I

Mother's Given Name(s) GEORGINA

District ST LEONARDS

Further research located the following information: -

Elizabeth Rees was a widow when she married Robert Metcalfe in Donegal, Ireland in 1860. They had no children, but I was able to do some further searching on Robert as his father is named on his marriage certificate as Thomas Levet Metcalfe a gentleman.

Thomas Levett Metcalfe was born 13 June 1777 and baptised 24 July 1777 at St Marylebone, Middlesex, England to parents Thomas and Maria Metcalfe.

He had 2 sisters who both died as infants Louisa Appolonia Metcalfe [1776-1777] and Maria Theresa Metcalfe [1780-1780].

Further research will be required to find who Thomas and Maria were and where they married.

Dianne Fox MN113

Do you have a story to tell about your family?

Do you have a story to tell about your family?

In this year of commemoration of the end of the second World War, most of the current generation of members will have had someone, a father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, who was alive and working during those dark days – so what stories have you heard from them? Did they join the armed forces that were directly involved in the fighting? Were they working on the Home Front, protecting their homes and livelihood? Remember the Air Force was still only very new and raw compared to the Navy and Army, both here in the UK and the Commonwealth countries who all contributed to the defence of the Western world.

You must have heard something from them, so why not let our Editor know – however long or short, serious or amusing.

Don't forget, this is YOUR Mecca News and can only continue with YOUR input. So far, we have done well to get some stories and articles from a small group of members, but we do need YOUR input too – even if it is only a few lines long.

Jo Heron

The Metcalfe Society's 45th Anniversary AGM and Muster

Saturday 4th October 2025 – have you booked that date in?

What's on? Only the Metcalfe Society's 45th Anniversary celebration.

The Metcalfe Society Annual General Meeting and Family Muster

The meeting will be held in The Cloisters at Tennants Auction House in Leyburn. North Yorkshire, DL8 5SG

Starting at 10.00, the AGM will be followed by a series of presentations of interest to members and a Question & Answer session to hopefully assist you with your research. A member of staff from the Borthwick Institute will be available to answer questions on their holdings and Bishops Transcripts for the Diocese of York. Other presenters will be announced when confirmed.

Refreshments will be available throughout the day both in the Cloisters and in the café or restaurant in the main building. We will have a stall of Metcalfe merchandise and some of the records we hold will be available, as well as the computer database.

Leyburn is very convenient for access to the North Yorkshire Moors and the Metcalfe Heritage area – our ancestral home – so why not come along for the weekend and enjoy a sightseeing tour of the Dales and places that will be familiar to you from the many stories and articles about the family over the 45 years we have been researching?

Help Needed/Help Offered

Do you need help with something in your research? Can you offer help to others researching in your locale or offer look-ups for subscriptions you hold? Please send requests or offers to editor@metcalfe.org.uk or chair@metcalfe.org.uk and they will be posted in this section along with any responses/solutions.

- My paternal grandmother was Laura Richmond, daughter of Thomas and Susannah (Metcalfe) and was brought up in Hartlepool, County Durham. We were told that she was a actress or something similar prior to her marriage to my grandfather which was frowned on by the family but this does not seem to have been the case.

She did have a wonderful singing voice, which she passed on to her son and then down the family, and several of the local newspapers report that she took part in local church choirs, singing such pieces as Handel's Messiah and other major works. I also have five studio portraits of her in costume from shows which obviously fall within the Gilbert and Sullivan corpus. I have tried the D'Oyly Carte archive without success, and even tried the local newspapers and only found a single reference to a local company playing at one theatre in Hartlepool. The costumes suggest that she was in The Mikado, Puritan Maid, Pirates of Penzance and others not yet identified.

I would love to have some information on the company she was with, and where and when they performed but have difficulties getting to the archives in Hartlepool. Any suggestions would be appreciated. Jo Heron (email: chair@metcalfe.org.uk or editor@metcalfe.org.uk)

- I currently have a subscription to Newspapers.com. Please visit and explore the newspapers that they hold around the world. I am offering to do look-ups for members, if they can supply at least a full name, country (county, state, province, city if possible, too) and a date range. Susan Harper (email: editor@metcalfe.org.uk or agentcdn@metcalfe.org.uk)

"Gentleman Jim" James Metcalfe (1855 – 1903)

Stationmaster at Morecambe

(Relative of members 351, 316 & 604)

A journey of discovery into the past

When I was a teenager I took a lot of interest in my family tree, and got my mother to fill me in with as much information as she could remember on both sides. With that information I constructed as much as I could and drew out the tree as far as I was able. On the Metcalfe side the story stopped at the information that my Great Grandfather was the Stationmaster at Morecambe, and that he had the nickname "Gentleman Jim". I gathered later on after joining the Metcalfe Society that these sort of appellations were not uncommon in the Metcalfes, and that James was a very common Christian name too.

All I knew at that stage was that James had had two sons, George (1884 – 1922) and Samuel Brown Metcalfe (1887 – 1949). Samuel was my Grandfather, and both brothers served in the first World War.

Samuel married Elinor Eggar, and amongst our archives we have a postcard which he sent to her, very formally, asking her for a date, or specifically to "walk out" with him! I need to find it again, but it was in about 1911. They had three children, Gwendolin, (1913 – 1917) who only lived until she was about 4 years old, my father, Edward Leslie Metcalfe (1914 – 1961), and Norman Brown Metcalfe. (1917 – unsure of when he died as we lost touch).

Back to James Metcalfe. Our information that we collected about him came from various sources including relevant census's, births, marriages and deaths registers, and from a researcher who looked through the L&NWR files for us to get an idea of his work record with the railways. The most human elements of his story I obtained from a distant relative from his first wife's family.

When I was about 12 years old I remember my mother taking me to visit a lady called Great Aunt Ella. (Full name Agnes Ellen Swires nee Brown) She was about 90 years old at the time I believe, and lived with her daughter Freda Sullivan, and Freda's husband in Morecambe. Freda was a correspondent with my mother until my mother died in 1988. I wrote to Freda at that time and asked if she knew much about James and his family and what had happened all those years ago. At that time my sisters and I had already become involved with the Metcalfe Society and we were trying to accumulate as much information as we could. I am glad to say she responded with a very informative letter which filled in a lot of gaps.

One of the other things that had been passed down to us from that era was a tapestry sewn by Susannah Brown, aged 13, dated February 19th, 1866. This had been stuffed into a drawer for many years, as a lot of keepsakes probably were, and was not in brilliant condition, but we knew she became our great Grandmother, James' first wife. After our mum died my sister had the tapestry framed, but it is quite faded now, though still precious to us.

Susannah's family were in the fishing industry and all hailed from Morecambe. Her Brother, William, was Great aunt Ella's father says Freda, but looking at the census of the time a brother William is not mentioned, but there is a William Brown, which looks like Freda's family, and mentions the baby Agnes Ellen (10 months) and the age would make William to be more likely to be the paternal uncle of Susannah. This all becomes relevant to the story later. At the time of the 1871 census, Susannah's father is recorded as a fisherman, and her mother a grocer. Her brother, Samuel, was by that time also a fisherman at the age of 16 years. Susannah was 18 and her occupation was recorded as shop assistant.



James's father, George Metcalfe, had been born in Garsdale, but with the coming of the Railways he had migrated to Cumbria where James was born (25.8.1855) at Newlands Terrace, Penrith. Maybe more of George another day.

Anyway, James was born into a railway family in Penrith, and he may even have been educated under their auspices. Many railway companies of the time either established companies' schools for their workers children, or made donations or subscriptions to schools attended by "companies children" and James was employed as a railway clerk by the time he was 15 years old.

The 1861 census has the family living still at Newlands Terrace, but the 5 year old James on that night seems to have been visiting family at Ash-hining (writing may have been indistinct on the census) farm near Sedburgh, with a maternal aunt and uncle, Thomas and Elizabeth Ewan. James was aged 5 at this time.

In 1871, James had begun his career with the Railway, likely to be the London and North Western Railway, (taken over from the Lancaster and Carlisle Railway shortly after 1860) and the family now were living in Cockermouth, at 14 New Street. He appears to have done well in his early years, and by the time of his marriage to Susannah Brown he gave his profession as Railway Station Master living at Lancaster Road, Morecambe. He was 23 years old at the time, and Susannah was 24 years old. They married at the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel at Green Street, Morecambe, by certificate, on the 5th November 1878.

The next things we know from the Railways search, is that he entered the employment of the Furness Railway in 1881, as a clerk at 27/6d per week. This is not necessarily a downgrading as it might seem, as there were many different gradings and divisions of clerks, some being on a par with Station Master, or in charge themselves at some of the minor stations in the earlier decades of the railway. This meant that James and Susannah were now found to be living in Ulverston where their children were born.

From the records their first son, George Albert Metcalfe was born at 37 Sun Street, Ulverston (photo at right), on the 2nd of June 1884. He was registered by his mother, Susannah with the father's occupation registered as Clerk for a Railway Company.



Samuel Brown Metcalfe (my grandfather) was born on the 6th March 1887 at 6 Sun Street, Ulverston (photo at left), father's occupation given as Railway Clerk. So they had moved, but only a few houses away on the same street. Myself and some of my family did go for a visit to all these places in 1992 and Sun Street is a small street of terraced houses in Ulverston. It would be interesting to know why they moved, but it was unclear that there would be much difference between the two houses when we visited from the front.

On the 7th March 1890 though, Susannah died. They were still living at 6 Sun Street at the time, and the cause of death was given as Double Pneumonia. James registered the death, and was reported to have been present as she died. That left him with two small boys. Sam would just have been 3 years old, and George nearly 6 years. Susannah was only 37 years old. It seems that James started to go to pieces from that time on. Although he did receive a pay rise in May 1890 up to 30s per week, but on the 13th July 1891 this had been reduced to 27/6d for drunkenness, and on the 7th November 1891 he was discharged from the service for drunkenness.

Freda tells us that "Gentleman Jim" proved to be a very bad husband and liked the whiskey. When Susannah died aged 37 years of "Pleurisy" Freda says he refused to provide for his two boys and they would have had to be brought up in the poor law institution which was called the

Workhouse. (note: this was the Brown's version of events, and James may have been grieving and unable to cope, but there seems no doubt that he took to drinking) This meant that William Brown took them both in and they grew up with the Brown family until they were adults. They were reported to be like brothers to Great Aunt Ella. (Freda's mother) and were very much loved. Samuel was known as Sammie in the family as there was already an older Samuel in the home.

Freda couldn't tell us much more about Sammie as he left home to get married in 1912, in Manchester, the year she was born, but she was always taught to call them Uncle George and Uncle Sammie because of the other Samuel and Georges in the family. Freda had more contact with George growing up, as he only lived in Lancaster.



James did eventually get married again on the 16th January 1897. He married Mary Agnes Hogg, widow, aged 46 years at Holy Trinity Church, Poulton le Sands, and he gave his profession as clerk. James died on the 5th November 1903 at 23 Peddar Street, Morecambe, (photo at left) aged 48 years, Cause of death was recorded as Hepatic Cirrhosis; Gastric Catarrh 14 days; Exhaustion.

His brother George got married twice in Lancaster I understand, his first wife dying after a year leaving a young baby Eva, who was adopted (but her new family kept in touch with George). He then worked at the Grand Theatre in Lancaster and married an usherette called Belle Simner. They had a son Jack (?John) S. Metcalfe known as Mickey. George was in the Coldstream Guards and was wounded very badly in his leg. He became the manager of the Grand Theatre in Lancaster, and then the family moved to Whitehaven where he became the manager of the Empire Cinema there. He died in 1924 and is buried at Whitehaven.

So finding out about my Great Grandfather was quite the journey, and we visited these places, like Ulverston Railway Station, and walked along the Platform there. And we went to the addresses they lived, including where James died in Peddar Street, which is now a shop. We also visited Susannah's grave and that of her Brown relatives. Samuel is buried in Manchester, along with his wife, my father, my mother and one of my brothers that died as a young child.

Its amazing how by this sort of research you can piece together some sort of idea as to what that life could have been like. It does make me feel quite sad for him losing his wife at such a young age, and the way he seemed to have gone to pieces, but perhaps he found some happiness again with Mary. I have no idea whether he had any more contact with the boys, but I'm also not sure whether he would have been welcomed much by the Brown family as they seemed to be very unhappy with the way he gave up on them. But I think it must have been very difficult to lose your young wife like that and be left with two very young boys.

Ella Burton (M351)
27th April 2025

[Ed.: Photo at right, Ulverston Train Station taken by Ella in April 1992.]

Sources

"Was your Grandfather a railwayman?" Tom Richards

"Victorian Railwaymen. The Emergence and Growth of Railway Labour 1830 – 1870" P.W.Kingsford

Staff records of the Furness Railway at the PRO (Poece refs. RIAL 214/100, 101. & 102)

L&NW files at the PRO (RAIL 410/1862

Census material

Births, marriages & deaths registers

Known family History.



Genealogy Events in the USA – May June

[National Genealogical Society \(NGS\) Annual Family History Conference](#)



When: 23–26 May 2025

Type of Event: In-Person

Where: Louisville, Kentucky, United States

Price: Paid Event

Languages: English

"Tales and Trails" is the 2025 Family History Conference hosted by the National Genealogical Society. This 4-day conference will take place at the Galt House Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky. Family and genealogy researchers will enjoy a variety of classes, preconference tours, workshops, and an expo hall with new innovations in the genealogy world. Special events and other networking opportunities turn

this educational opportunity into a one-of-a-kind experience. Stay a little longer, and enjoy a special Memorial Day event on May 26. Early registration with lower pricing is available only through 31 January 2025. Regular-priced registration begins on 1 February 2025.



[The Ramapo Investigative Genetic Genealogy Conference \(RIGG\)](#)

When: 27–29 June 2025

Type of Event: In-Person

Where: Mahwah, New Jersey, United States

Price: Paid Event

Language: English

Genetic genealogy is at the forefront of the field of investigation today. Join RIGG, and learn more about the ins and outs of investigative genetic genealogy. This conference is usually attended by investigative genetic genealogists, but

attendees also include law enforcement officers, forensic scientists, attorneys, and hobby genealogists.

Now Then 12 Using catalogues to enlarge your research

INTRODUCTION

One of the phrases that we often use when facing problems or challenges in researching our ancestors is that we have come up against 'a brick wall' and do not know how to overcome it.

As a consequence many articles have been written and suggestions made as to how we might break down our brick walls. This is another!

New datasets are being made available online weekly giving us new records and information to further our research. However, it remains the case that only a minority of archive material is currently available to see online. Most documents are held in archives unscanned, in a non-digital form.

Accessing the catalogues, formerly sometimes called Guides, prepared by the archives can obviously be the first way of seeing what is available generally, so that a visit can be organised at one's leisure to see the original documents.

Whilst one may not be able to travel to all of the repositories where the archives are held, I would strongly urge you to look at their catalogues (guides) in hardback form or online regardless.

A catalogue may list not only what material has been preserved in general terms but also give valuable, specific, mentions to members of your family, giving you information without actually visiting the archive in the first instance.

I accept that in order to make a search on the internet one needs access to that facility, which is not easy if one does not have a computer with access to the internet at home. However, most public libraries give internet access and in many cases have licences from the primary research sites, such as Ancestry, FindmyPast, the Genealogist, MyHeritage, as well as free web sites such as Family Search.

When one looks at the catalogues you begin to appreciate the sheer variety of the documents and, in some cases, books which refer to a family name. Several archives hold estate and family records, which can be particularly helpful if one's ancestors were tenants or indeed employees there.

Furthermore several wills are held in archives, which might not be the first port of call. Several of the catalogue entries do give interesting and detailed summaries of what the documents contain which adds to your knowledge without physically visiting the repository. Clearly sight of the original should always be done to check the accuracy of the summary. Indeed below in one of my examples there is an oddity which needs to be verified by looking at the original document and its date.

HOW TO START.

Starting as it were, at the top, The National Archives (TNA) 'Discovery' search facility on their website covers not just its own collection but also collections held by other archivists. Some of you might recall the old search site A2A which was the forerunner of Discovery. TNA refers under 'other locations' to three thousand five hundred thousand archives mainly in the UK but including too some repositories abroad too.

The catalogue includes thirty seven million references to documents held in all archives including TNA. Approximately one quarter of the documents are available to view online ; nine million or so altogether.

There must surely be something there of interest to you! Search it!

Use the link to TNA discovery below and insert, say the family name or a place you are interested in. You can include years to narrow down the search but possibly its better to start broadly then refine the results?

Here is the link. [Discovery | The National Archives](#)

A search against the name METCALFE and METCALF in records at TNA **only**, resulted in over ten thousand two hundred records being found.

If one searches against 'other archives' the number of entries there is four thousand six hundred records containing a reference to the name. A total of fourteen thousand references in all repositories.

Some admittedly are of individuals who have the METCALFE(E) name as a second forename rather than surname but this possibly reflects the fact that a party to a marriage involved a Metcalfe.

The records in the Discovery catalogue have been categorised under the following headings by the TNA: organisation; business; manor; person; diary and family. The TNA says that the heading 'diary' ".....[is used] for individuals whom we may not know a lot about, sometimes not even their lifetime dates."

Many of the documents at the TNA relate to wills, naval and army records, court proceedings, manorial records, title deeds, censuses, government papers over many centuries, including taxation archives.

Here are two examples taken from the catalogue purely at random.

1. A chancery court case involving land

C 2/Eliz/P7/26 [*this is the TNA reference –C relates to chancery records, **Eliz** to records of the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1, P to plaintiff number and 26 item number*]. It relates to a dispute following the transfer (assignment) of a lease of an inn called The White Hart in Holborn London. A further search on Discovery refers to other proceedings involving an inn with this name during much of the 17th century.

Description:

Short title: Parke v Metcalfe. [*This is the name of the case*]

Plaintiffs: Thomas Parke. **Defendants:** Raphe Metcalfe and Peter Metcalfe.

Subject: Claim under an assignment of lease. A messuage [*premises*] called The White Hart in High Holbourn [High Holborn], Middlesex held under a lease granted by John Metcalfe. Document type: [Pleadings][*i.e. court proceedings*]

Date: Between 1558 and 1603 [*i.e. the years of Elizabeth's reign sometimes called the regnal years*]

2. Criminal proceedings from Assize court records

ASSI 45/14/2/91 [*this ASSI is the TNA reference to ASSIZE court records.*]

The records under this reference are for the year 1685. They contain depositions and case papers. [*a Deposition was a sworn statement given by a witness before a trial*]. These cases were trials held at York castle in 1685. This case was a trial of one Robert Thompson, for murder. The trial papers have not been digitised and are unavailable to download.

Nevertheless if you look at the first reference in the Discovery search results to ASSI 45 [use the link below]

[Assizes: Northern and North-Eastern Circuits: Criminal Depositions and Case Papers | The National Archives](#)

it refers under the heading “related material”, in the penultimate paragraph of this section, to the fact that the Surtees Society published depositions from 1640 and 1690 in the York Castle assizes trial bundles

“Various depositions, dated between 1640 and 1690, and now in ASSI 45/1/2 – ASSI 45/15/4, were published in Depositions from the castle of York, relating to offences committed in the Northern counties in the seventeenth century, ed James Raine (Surtees Society, XL, 1861).

Many good reference libraries hold records of this Society.

The Victorians got there before TNA and the internet!

I have seen a copy of this edition and been able to discover in the index at the back of the volume a reference to John Metcalfe. The index for this year includes other Metcalf(e)s too.

By way of a slight digression, The Surtees Society in their website say that the Society was established in 1834 in honour of the late Robert Surtees of Mainsforth (1779-1834), the author of *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* (1816-40). It is the oldest English Society of its kind. As originally stated its purpose was:

“To have for its object the Publication of inedited Manuscripts, illustrative of the intellectual, the moral, the religious, and the social condition of those parts of England and Scotland, included on the East between the Humber and the Firth of Forth, and on the West between the Mersey and the Clyde, a region which constituted the Ancient Kingdom of Northumberland.”

Volume 150 comprises an account of the first century of the Society’s history, with a full description of each volume published, and a list of members during the period 1834-1938. A list of Volumes 1-200 is to be found in Volume 200.

Well worthwhile looking for them and checking the indexes at the back of the volumes for references to Metcalf(e).

Back to Volume XL of the Surtees Society, page 217 a footnote on the murder trial of one Robert Thompson stated that:

“ From the evidence it seems probable the culprit had some strong reason for getting the lad out of the way in his defence Thompson asserted that on the day and night in question he was staying with his brother-in-law JOHN METCALFE at Thoraby and that he knew nothing of the affair. Metcalfe however denies that he was at his house, and three witnesses speak to the fact of their seeing Thompson at or near Bewerley on the day of the murder. Thompson was probably executed.”

So one can see that by using the Discovery catalogue, it is possible to see other details of those records which have yet to be digitised, particularly where Victorian antiquarians prepared indexes to the records they were able to view. As I say this Society’s volumes are very helpful.

Another local history society with connections to Leeds and surrounding environs is the Thoresby Society. As their website says, its object:

“from its foundation in 1889 has been to collect and preserve records relating to the history of Leeds and its surrounding areas. Over more than a century, the Society has built up a number of special collections, notably its archive, map and image collections, which have recently been re-catalogued to make them more accessible. These collections are housed in the Society’s library, based at the Leeds Library, 18 Commercial Street, Leeds LS1 6AL. They are listed below, with information on the catalogues now available for consultation and search online.”

They explain that the revised catalogue is more up to date than that on the TNA Discovery site. I found 9 references to the family surname.

Here is the link: [Manuscript Catalogue - Thoresby Society](#)

On the TNA Discovery homepage, as I say at the start of this article, one can seek all references in non-TNA or other archives. This is done by using the 'Find an Archive' button which opens details of archives of all types, including their location and allows a search for archive offices in the UK and overseas.

It can lead to 'a voyage of discovery' as you will find archives many of whom will be new to you!

The list of 'Metcalf(e)' entries is large as I state at the beginning of this article-four thousand plus references.

With so many references it is impossible in a short article like this to list everything and I would urge you to look at the TNA Discovery Page and the listing of 'other records only' for the name against which you make the search e.g. Metcalfe.

The list (not complete) includes the following archive centres the number of METCALF(E) entries being shown in brackets

The British Library (726). Most of these relate to the British in India Archives. You will also need to be aware that following a cyber-attack approximately 18 months ago, the site is not fully functioning.

Nottingham University library (540)

London City archives (523)

Lancashire archives (248)

East Riding of Yorkshire Archives and Local Studies (235)

Explore York Library and archives (227)

Suffolk Archives (Ipswich) (170)

National Maritime Museum (134)

Cumbria Archive Centre (127)

The above are those with over 100 entries. There is an eclectic mix of other equally interesting archives which may be of interest. Here are a handful:

Vickers MG Collection and Research Association (79) This archive relates to the Vicker's machine gun regiment in the First World War. You should read the explanatory notes on the website before using it.

National Gas Archive (2). This is based in Warrington and its web site is www.archive@nationalgrid.com

Historic England Archives (2) This includes according to the catalogue the following Sales Particulars (reference SC01331)

"Title: PARTICULARS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE WITH PLAN OF THE SIMONSTONE ESTATE, IN THE TOWNSHIP OF HIGH AND LOW ABBOTSDALE INCLUDING MANSION HOUSE AND GROUSE MOOR, GRASS FARMS, SMALL HOLDINGS, A FULLY LICENCED INN, VILLAGE PROPERTIES, ADVOWSON AND TWO MANORS."

The Simonstone Estate was sold in 1913. From previous 'Now Then' articles you may recollect that the family of George Metcalfe, the slave owner in Dominica, had land in the High Abbotside area of Hawes and the sales particulars refer to a Metcalfe farm, namely 'Metcalfes Farm, Cotterdale, High Abbotside, North Yorkshire'. The fully licenced inn was the Green Dragon at Hardraw.

Lambeth Palace Library (72)

Lambeth Archives (11)

Eton College (7)

In addition I need hardly add that most of the record offices in England and Wales have references which I have not itemised above, as there are so many of them, usually county based.

Yorkshire as might be imagined has several county local archive references and I list them below.

North Yorkshire County record office (56)

West Yorkshire Archive Service Leeds (35)

A closer study of the **West Yorkshire Archive service own catalogue** revealed 1,458 references to documents containing Metcalfe entries not just the 35 in Leeds.

It is always prudent, therefore, to look at the actual archives' own website or catalogue, as many of them will have been updated since the TNA Discovery link was created.

Use the following link to see the West Yorkshire Archive Service own catalogue entries for our family name:

[CalmView: Overview](#) West of Yorkshire Archive Service

For example see the reference 69D82/13/ 6 which is a summary of the will of Anthony Metcalfe dated 10th April 1849. He resided at Bingley, where at the date of his will he was a 'provisionary' teacher.

The summary of the contents of this deposit states:

"inventory of his household effects room by room and value of items. Probate copy of Will. Main beneficiary of the will is his wife. Reference made to his children and brothers Edward and Thomas. Leaves piano to his daughter Sarah, 'which was bought expressly for her', to his son Samuel Edward a bible and his desk, also leaves items to other children Alice, John. He died 14 August 1855".

I query the date of death stated in the catalogue. A search for his burial on Ancestry reveals an entry for an Anthony but the burial record is in January 1855 not August! I think the burial in the parish register for Bingley on Ancestry is correct, especially as the person who took the burial service according to the register was a T Dixon who is described as headmaster. Anthony was a teacher.

[West Yks CoE Burials - Anthony Metcalfe](#)

He carried out the ceremony for the next deceased too, a 3 weeks old baby John Bennett. Seems unusual to me for a headmaster to be taking the burial service.

We do not have an entry for Anthony on our society database or a copy of his will so this catalogue entry is helpful.

I carried out a further search against Antony Metcalf, which revealed a will proved at York in 1855 in the transcript of the index of the death duty registers online; follow the link here [Record Transcription: Index To Death Duty Registers 1796-1903 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

PAGE				
BURIALS in the Parish of Bingley, in the County of York				
in the Year 1855				
Name.	Abode.	When Buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
Mary Preston No. 2003	West-Wharfedale	Jan 21 st	34	T. Dixon Head Master
Anthony Metcalfe No. 2004	Bingley	Jan 25 th	58	T. Dixon Head Master
John Bennett No. 2005	Bingley	Jan 26 th	3	T. Dixon Head Master
Richard Shackleton No. 2006	Bingley	Jan 28 th	Inf.	W. Heade Vicar
Charles Kilvington No. 2007	Wetherby	Jan 28 th	4	W. Heade Vicar

A search of the Probate courts in York, whose records are held by the Borthwick Institute can be found here:

[Prerogative & Exchequer Courts of York Probate Index, 1688-1858 Image | findmypast.co.uk](#)

It would be necessary to pay the appropriate fee in order to obtain a copy of the will to check that it is the correct one. However, the entry revealed by the West of Yorkshire Archive Service catalogue, does name the children of Anthony and some of the legacies, without your obtaining a copy of the original will. It will not be hard to search for Anthony's marriage and the baptisms of his children, together with census entries Thus showing the value of checking catalogues.

A similar search of the **North Yorkshire record office** catalogue with entries against the surname METCALF(E) reveals a total of 1,458 entries!

Use this link to find whats available [Search Results](#).

The East Riding of Yorkshire archives website includes a search facility and there are 461 entries against METCALFE. See the listing here [CalmView: Overview](#)

So as you can see there are scores, if not hundreds, of archives to search in!

For a full list of all the archive repositories use this link on the TNA site.

[Browse all repositories | The National Archives](#)

Follow them up by seeking the archives' website addresses using, say Google, and open the websites where you ought to be able to view their full catalogue.

CONCLUSION

I am sure it will be useful to follow my suggestions and hopefully you might resolve some of your brick walls! If you do have success in locating family entries PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR RESULTS so we can add relevant information to our records to benefit everyone!

David Lambert.

Interesting Links

[Voices of the Victorian Poor](#)

An open database of letters from paupers, the wider poor and their advocates written between 1834 – 1900

[Three Metcalf(e)s in index]

[Immigrants at Grosse Île Quarantine Station, 1832-1937](#)

The database contains 33,036 references to immigrants who stayed, were born, married or buried at the Grosse Île Quarantine Station between 1832 and 1937. Searchable.

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Trustees

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Extended Team

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