

Inventory of the

Metcalf Family
Riley Township, McHenry County

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 246

INTRODUCTION

Suesi Metcalf donated the Metcalf Family Records to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on July 25, 2000. Addenda were added to the collection on various dates.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 3
Number of containers: 5
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 246

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Metcalf Family records date from 1832 to 1916 and include three cashbooks and forty-three volumes of weather diaries kept by John W. James. Two of the cashbooks were kept by Ralph Metcalf. The weather diaries, while not a complete run, are of interest to researchers doing research in crop cycles, climatological history, and daily life. Researchers interested in other diaries and family histories should consult the Regional Collections Guide.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

McKendree Bishop (M.B.) Metcalf was born June 16, 1829, in Geauga County, Ohio to Joseph and Hannah Stevens Metcalf. He moved to Riley Township, McHenry County in 1845 with his parents. His father died in 1846 and his mother moved to Iowa and spent the rest of her life with another son. In 1852, M.B. went to California for six years where he engaged in mining and ran a cattle ranch. Metcalf returned to Illinois and in 1867 he bought a 200-acre farm in Section 12 of Riley Township, McHenry County. Metcalf married Susan West Rockwood on June 8, 1859. Rockwood was born in New York in 1838 to William Horton and Susan Goldsmith West Rockwood. M.B. and Susan had eight children, R. Winthrop, George A., Charles E., Walter Bradford, Ralph West, Edith M. and two infant sons deceased. M.B. died April 15, 1900 and Susan died in 1906. Both are buried in Marengo Cemetery.

Also living with M.B. and Susan as a farm laborer was her cousin, John W. James from New York. He never married but worked as a volunteer astronomer keeping weather diaries from 1860 till his death on October 31, 1917. James was part of the second oldest weather stations in Illinois. O.P. Rogers started keeping records in 1855. James continued from 1860 to about 1917. Other Marengoans responsible for keeping records include N.V. Woleben, Frank Mack, Ernest Woolley, Miss Claire Loofbourrow and Harold Hyde.

R. Winthrop was born in 1860 and died in 1869. George A. was born in 1861 and died in 1888. He set up a hardware business in Janesville, WI. Charles E. was born in 1864 and died in 1881 from typhoid fever. Walter Bradford was born March 1, 1867. He discovered the barium cocktail, did other early research with x-rays, and authored a book on the lymphatic system. Edith M. was born in 1875 and died about six years later of scarlet fever.

M.B. and Susan's son, Ralph West, took over the family farm. He was born in 1869 and married Hildegarde Sandström. Hildegarde was born in 1883. They had a son named Ralph West Metcalf, Jr. Ralph, Sr. became acting postmaster of Marengo on December 31, 1933 and permanent postmaster on May 3, 1934. Ralph died October 8, 1948 and Hildegarde died March 18, 1935. Both are buried in Marengo Cemetery.

Ralph Jr. married Dorothy Lois on September 10, 1950. They had two children, Susan Lynn and Marcia Alison. Susan married Gail Lawrence Bethard on August 12, 1972 and divorced on May 17, 1984. They had two children, Christine Elizabeth and Karen Lynn. Christine has a son, Alexander Metcalf Glen. On July 28, 1990, Susan married Daniel Max Hart and had one son, West Abraham. Marcia married David Charles Cox on May 21, 1977 and had two children, Alison Melissa and Amy Elizabeth.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Climate
Marengo
James, John W.
Metcalf Family
Meteorology
Riley Township, McHenry County

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Cashbook, 1832-1858
	2	Journal, Ralph Metcalf, 1891-1892
	3	Ledger, Ralph Metcalf, 1891-1892
	4	Correspondence, from Signal Office, War Department to John W. James, June 1888
	5	Justice of the Peace Certification, R.W. Metcalf, April 29, 1921
	6	Weather Diary, Waterford, New York, November 30, 1858-December 31, 1859
	7	Weather Diaries, Riley Township, McHenry County: January 1, 1861-December 31, 1861
2	1	January 13, 1862-July 20, 1863
	2	January 1, 1864-December 31, 1864
	3	January 1, 1866-January 23, 1867
	4	January 1, 1868-December 31, 1868
	5	January 1, 1869-December 31, 1869
	6	January 1, 1871-December 31, 1871
	7	January 1, 1872-December 31, 1872
	8	January 1, 1873-December 31, 1873
	9	January 1, 1874-December 31, 1874
	10	January 1, 1876-December 31, 1876
	11	January 1, 1877-January 2, 1878
	12	January 1, 1879-December 31, 1879
	13	January 1, 1880-December 31, 1880
	14	January 1, 1881-February 12, 1882
	15	January 1, 1882-December 31, 1882
3	1	January 1, 1883-December 31, 1883
	2	January 1, 1884-December 31, 1884
	3	January 1, 1885-January 1, 1886
	3a	January 1, 1886-January 1, 1887
	4	January 1, 1887-December 31, 1887
	5	January 1, 1888-December 31, 1888
	6	January 1-April 2, April 7-September 13, October 16-November 20, December 23-December 31, 1889
	7	January 1, 1890-December 31, 1890
	8	January 1, 1892-January 20, 1893

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	4
3	9	January 1, 1893-January 1, 1894	
	10	January 1, 1894-January 5, 1895	
	11	January 1, 1895-January 8, 1896	
	12	January 1, 1896-January 7, 1897	
	13	January 1, 1897-December 31, 1897	
	14	January 1, 1898-January 3, 1899	
	4	1	January 1, 1899-December 31, 1899
2		January 1, 1900-January 13, 1901	
3		January 1, 1901-December 31, 1901	
4		January 1, 1902-December 31, 1902	
5		January 1, 1904-December 31, 1904	
6		January 1, 1905-December 31, 1905	
7		January 1, 1906-January 10, 1907	
8		April 12, [1907]-December 31, [1907]	
9		January 1, 1909-December 31, 1909	
10		January 1, 1910-December 31, 1910	
11		January 1, 1912- December 31, 1912	
12		January 1, 1913-December 31, 1913	
13		January 1, 1916-December 31, 1916	

ADDENDUM

5	1	Sum Book Containing Difficult Sums from Greenleaf's Common School Arithmetic. John W. James, March 1 st 1856. Also Sums from Davies' Elementary Algebra	
	2	Family and Farm Expense Ledger, 1855-1878	
	3	Income Tax, R.W. Metcalf, March 14, 1923	
	4	Notice to Pay Poll Tax, Riley, McHenry County, July 1879	