A History of Landford in Wiltshire

Appendix 5 - Further information on the Jeffreys and Matcham families

The genealogical details of the various families connected with the Jeffreys and Matcham families have been compiled from various sources using information taken from the Internet. Not all sources are 100% reliable and there are conflicting dates for births, marriages and deaths, particularly for the earlier generations. Subsequently the details given in this account may also perpetuate some of those errors. The information contained in this document is therefore for general information purposes only and whilst I have tried to ensure that the information given is correct, I cannot guaranty the accuracy or reliability of the sources used or the information contained in this document. Anyone using this website for family reasons needs to be aware of this.

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Appendix 5 - Further information on the Jeffreys and Matcham families

Introduction

Whilst researching the historical background regarding the development of Landford and the ownership of the larger estates, it soon became apparent that members of the Jeffreys and Matcham families played an important role in the social and political life of this part of Wiltshire. Having researched the history of the local area and its subsequent development, it created an interest in the families who resided in Landford. The Jeffreys were associated with Landford Manor and Landford Lodge, and the Mitcham’s with Newhouse (see elsewhere). The purpose of this document is to provide further details of the backgrounds of these two families who were finally linked through marriage.

The Jeffreys Family


Hurlstone Park, in the City of Canterbury, was part of a 673-acre (272.3-hectare) estate, inherited by Sophia Ives Campbell in 1846 from her father, the Sydney merchant Robert Campbell. In 1874, Sophia Campbell subdivided her estate into smaller farms. Dairy farmers, brick makers and land speculators bought some of the allotments, but many remained unsold until after the route of the branch railway from Marrickville to Belmore, which crossed this land, was approved. A railway station called Fernhill was named after Sophia Campbell’s home near Bournemouth in Hampshire (England), where she died in 1891.

Some development occurred near the railway station at the time the line was opened, but the real building boom took place at the height of the Federation period, between the turn of the century and the end of World War I, when the small farms were subdivided into housing estates. Many of these new subdivisions were made by Sophia Campbell’s nephew John Jeffreys of Canterton (England), and her great-nephew George Darell Jeffreys, who inherited her estate.


Robert Campbell was one of the considerable pastoralists, merchants and land-owners in the early colony of NSW with significant land holdings in Kirribilli, Duntroon on the Limestone Plains, and the Canterbury Estate near Sydney, among others. By way of marriage into the Campbells, Arthur Jeffreys, became a prominent land-owner in Kirribilli.

There is no known record that Arthur and Sarah Jeffreys ever lived in the area. When Robert Campbell died in 1846, Arthur Jeffreys inherited a proportion of the estate in Kirribilli and also a large estate in what became the residential Sydney suburb of Canterbury.[78] By this time Jeffreys was a wealthy man. A son was born on 30 Dec 1845, possibly John Jeffreys. In about 1850 Jeffreys built a “palatial colonial mansion”, called Canterbury House in the modern day suburb of Canterbury. This was a large dwelling set at the end of a wide avenue of trees of sufficient importance and interest to have been painted by Conrad Martens. He subsequently became a member of the New South Wales Legislative Council (1851–54).[78] He was the Elective Member of the first Legislative Council 1843 - 1856 for the Pastoral District of Maneroo. Jeffreys died in England 1861 and his family also returned there to live.

The son of Jeffreys Senior, Arthur Frederick Jeffreys (who was born in Kirribilli in 1848), continued to visit Australia from England. He reportedly sold the land occupied by the modern-day site of the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre at the top of Jeffrey Street in 1873. Later in life he became a British Conservative
A politician. A grandson became a prominent military commander and was elevated to the peerage as Baron Jeffreys in 1952.

From: Heritage and Conservation Register – Avery Terrace

Arthur Jeffreys died in England in 1861 leaving his interests in the Campbell Estate to his son, John Jeffreys. Primary sources of this period confirm that Lots 9 and 10 remained vacant until the early 1880s. In 1873 a conveyance was made between John and George Campbell and John Jeffreys of Fernhill, England, in accordance with Arthur's will.

From: CANTERTON MANOR AND THE JEFFREYS FAMILY

John Jeffreys bought the Canterton Estate of over 736 acres in 1887/8. It was being sold as part of the estates of the late Admiral Lord Henry Paulet and his son, the late Sir Henry Charles Paulet. Mainly in the Parishes of Minstead and Bramshaw the Canterton Estate consisted of “Choice Sites for the erection of one or more Mansions”, several small farms, The Bell Inn and The Green Dragon public-house at Brook and numerous cottages. After the Compton Estate, this made him the second largest landowner in the area.

The present Canterton Manor was completed in 1888 (carved over the door) for the Jeffreys family of 9 children. By the time it was completed the eldest son, Arthur, had immigrated to Australia. The youngest child, Edmund Valentine, was born at Canterton in 1891. Previously the family had lived at Landlord Lodge in Wiltshire, although John Jeffreys and his wife, Florence, had started their married life in Bournemouth at the house of John’s Australian Aunt, Sophia Campbell.

John Jeffreys (1845-1922)

John was born in 1845, the eldest of 3 sons of Arthur Jeffreys and Sarah Campbell, whom Arthur had met whilst living in Australia. Sadly, both parents died while he and his brothers were young and Aunt Sophia Campbell took the boys, John, Arthur and Robert under her wing.

They returned to England for their studies. John matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford in March 1865 and graduated BA in 1869. Whilst at university he became engaged to Florence Hall Atherton (1847-). He rowed for Christ Church and was involved in volunteeer military activities, firstly as a member of the University Rifle Corps and later the 19th Hants Rifle Volunteers where he was commissioned at the rank of Ensign. He also became a Freemason.

In 1870 he travelled to Sydney aboard the La Hogue arriving in September. Amongst other things he no doubt discussed the property he expected to inherit from his father’s estate with the trustees, John and George Campbell. He returned to England on hearing of the death of his younger brother Robert.

John married Florence Hall Atherton on 28 Nov 1871 in the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Paddington. They lived with Sophia Cambell until moving to Landford Lodge in 1874. They had a new home Canterton Manore built at Brook and moved there in 1889. They had 10 children and one stillborn child. They were namely:

John Jeffreys (1845-1922)
  m. 28 Nov 1871, Florence Hall Atherton, at St Mary Magdalene, Paddington
  s. Arthur Henry (1872-1956)
Educated at Radley College but failed his studies at Oxford. Taken to Australia in September 1893 to manage family estate “Delagate Station” in 1896.

d. Florence Sophia (1873-1939)
Her father’s favourite who ran Canterton Manor after his death. She did not marry and dedicated her life to the local church at Minstead and the surrounding community.

s. Robert (1875-1915)
Known as Bob. Started naval training when 13 yrs of age at Dartmouth, rising to the rank of Commander by 1912. Killed in action during WW1, he was Captain of the Clan MacNaughton which was lost at sea on 3 Feb 1915.

s. John William (1876-1962)
Known at Jack. Educated at Radley College and entered the army in 1898, rising to the rank of Lt-Colonel in 1923 and retiring in 1927 when in command of the 2nd Battalion, Durham Light Infantry. His main interests were sport and became President of Bramshaw Golf Club, 1935-1951.

s. Walter Marmaduke (1878-1950)
Educated at Radley College then studied Zoology and Biology at Trinity College, Cambridge. He then studied Medicine and was placed on the Medical Register in 1907. He was a physician at the Royal South Hants and Southampton Hospital and worked as a Medical Practitioner.

d. Gwendolen Agnes (1879-1977)
Known as Gwen. Attended Royal School of Needlework. Gwen’s contribution to Minstead is one of the beautifully embroidered altar cloths used by Minstead Church.

s. Darell Richard (1881-1915)
Pronounced “Dorell”. Educated at Radley College. Joined the army and rose to the rank of Captain with the 1st Battalion, Devonshire Regiment. Killed in action in Flanders on 11th July, 1915 aged 33 years.

d. Ethel Mildred (1884-1964)
Known as Mildred, a nurse in the Voluntary Aid Detachment during WW1 and listed in 1919 as an Assistant Nurse at Queen Mary’s Hospital, Whalley in the Ribble Valley. Returned to Canterton in 1939 on the death of her sister Florence in order to look after mother. When she died, Mildred first moved to Matley, Lyndhurst and later to Burton Bradstock, Dorset.

d. Geraldine Helen (1885-1934)
Became deaf in her teens and never married. In WWI she was a nurse with the Voluntary Aid Detachment in the area. Geraldine was deeply involved in the Downton Lacemaking Industry. She had learnt lacemaking while the Jeffreys family was living at Landford.

s. Edmund Valentine (1893-1988)
Edmund, the youngest son of the family, was always known as “Val”. Val joined the Royal Navy in 1911. He served through WW1 and retired in 1928 with the rank of Commander. Mrs. Jeffreys had been friendly with Mrs. Eyre-Matcham of Bramble Hill and they had both chosen to include the name “Valentine” for their respective children.

m. 7 Jul 1923, Constance Valentine Eyre Matcham (1897-1984)
   s. George William Eyre Jeffreys b. 1931 (See below)
   d. Catherine Elizabeth Eyre Jeffreys b. 1933
      m. 1953, Anthony William Lane, son of Eric William Lane of Midhurst, Sussex.
         d. Harriet Elizabeth b. 1954
         m. 1974, David Geoffrey Crusher
         d. Caroline Mary b. 1956
         m. 1986, Gordon Smith
         d. Georgina Margret b. 1959
         m. 1981, David Owen Bowe
         d. Victoria Anne Michel b. 1962
         d. Florence Sophia b. 1967

They were known to all their nieces and nephews as Uncle Val and Aunt Tine. They lived at Redlynch and their son George lives at Newhouse, Redlynch, which was the home of the Eyre-Matcham’s for many years.

In their life at Canterton Manor, John Jeffreys was very active in the community. He was a Churchwarden, Chairman of the Hospitals Committee and Registered as a Justice of the Peace in 1891. He also rode with the Hunt from Canterton Manor. He was active as Chairman of Minstead Parish Council (1894-1921) and as a Verderer of the New Forest (1890-1922). He held the latter two posts until prevented by ill-health. He died on the 15 December 1922 aged 77 years.

Florence Hall Jeffreys (nee Atherton) (1847-1942)

Florence was the daughter of Sir William and Lady Agnes Atherton. Sir William had been an MP in Durham in 1852, Solicitor General for England and Wales 1859-1861 and Attorney General in 1861 before his death in 1864. They had 8 children – Agnes, Florence, Elizabeth, Jessie, William, Walter and Thomas. Lady Agnes died in 1866. So Florence, like her husband, was an orphan when she married.

According to the 1871 Census, Florence, Elizabeth and Jessie were “Lady Attendants” living with Amelia J. Hayward at 25 Leicester Square, Paddington. A note says that Florence was a Lady Attendant to Amelia Hayward’s son’s wife.

Florence was a skillful watercolourist. Florence appears to have been closely involved with her family as well as socially around Minstead but in an unassuming way. In her later years she became blind.

George William Eyre Jeffreys (1931-Present)

George William Eyre Jeffreys was born on 20 Apr 1931, the son of Edmund Valentine Jeffreys and Constance Valentine Eyre-Matcham. He was educated at Radley. Succeeded to the Newhouse estate on the death of his mother.
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m. 18 Jun 1960, June, dau Alexander Bennet of Fordingbridge
   d. Sarah Kezia
   d. Elizabeth Jemina
   d. Rachel Jane
The Matcham family and connection with the Nelsons

George Matcham (1753-1833)

From: The Nelsons of Burnham

At Enfield, near Bath, had lately (about 1786) settled the widow and only son of Simon Matcham, late Superintendent of the Marine of the East India Company, and senior member of the Council of Bombay, who had died in India some ten years previously, leaving a good fortune to his family. Elizabeth, his widow, a daughter of Hugh Bidwell, a merchant of Bombay thereupon returned to England, and made her home at Charlton Place, near Canterbury.

Their son George, born 1753, is named in the "Dictionary of National Biography "as a Traveller," and his claim to this distinction being founded long before he came among the Nelsons. His travels had begun in early childhood, when he was sent away from Bombay to Charterhouse School in London. He was an only surviving child, an elder brother having been killed by some accident in boyish play.

George's guardian was Mr. Henry Savage, a director of the East India Company (E.I.C.). At the end of his schooldays a young George Matcham entered the civil service of the E.I.C. and became their resident at Baroche. The misery of the people, and the waste of fine agricultural land, together with ambitious plans for both country and Company, fill his journals during adventurous expeditions. In 1777, his widowed mother having sailed for England, he took the overland route to join her, not without danger, for he was ill at the time, and two of his friends consulted a doctor as to the wisdom of such a rough expedition. The doctor thought so badly of his state, as to be no matter if he went or not. After many hardships he arrived safely in Europe and at last, reaching England, he found his mother in her country home. Much of his holiday was spent in exploring England and Ireland.

Among the many letters he wrote to old friends in India during this time is one in which there occurs the following passage: "If the bulk of our fortune should come home safe, I mean to buy an estate jointly with my mother. I shall then marry and have three principal sources of amusement; my wife, farming and hunting. If our fortune should not be happily remitted, I must again betake myself to Bombay," and this he was for a time forced to do, a letter to his mother being dated from Brussels in September 1780 on his way back to India. Again he enjoyed a leisurely route through Europe, spending some weeks at Venice before joining a large party with which he once more crossed the desert.

He retired from Baroche when that station was ceded to the Mahrattas about 1783, and a later journal tells of a final and more risky return journey to Europe in 1785. His ideas of an ample fortune, being now quite satisfied, no offers of further employment or prospects of greater wealth could tempt him out again.

The winter of 1786-7 found George settled with his mother at Enfield, near Bath, and here, among the social festivities of that gay neighbourhood, he met Catherine Nelson. Family tradition says that he was desired by mutual friends to attend a Bath ball, in order to meet Miss Scrivener. He went accordingly; only to fall in love at first sight with her cousin and visitor. Kitty proved equally susceptible, and two months later they were married at Bath by her father the Rev. Edmund Nelson.

Their first home in 1787 was Barton Hall, near Norwich, rented from the Preston’s of Beeston St. Lawrence and Barton Hall, Norfolk. George Matcham devoted himself to the pursuits of a country gentleman. Having travelled widely throughout Greece, Egypt and the countries of the Middle East, he was also an adept
landscape gardener. The journals of his wife describe the works carried out at her father’s house at Burnham. In 1790 they decided to leave Barton Hall.

The summer tour of the Matchams covered a wide stretch of country looking for a suitable property. Delayed by the breaking down of their chaise they journeyed to Worcester, past the Malvern Hills and on through Hereford "a delightful country quite a garden, corn sown between the apple trees, quite ripe," they continued to Brecon where the good roads failed. Exploring the show places on the way; they passed by Bath, Stonehenge and Salisbury with the object of seeing a property near Ringwood in Hampshire. The country near Ringwood satisfied them, but there was no house; but what could please them better than building one and planting the grounds with woods still called by their name.

However, before any of this could take place, changed conditions cut short their stay in Hampshire sooner than was anticipated. At the end of September they returned to Norfolk to discuss their plans with Catherine’s father, the Rev Nelson. The building of their new home called "Shepherd's Spring" near Ringwood started in 1791 and was completed the following year and at last was ready for habitation in 1793.

First discussed in the early days of 1797, the abandonment of Ringwood for a house at Bath was regretfully decided upon. The near prospect of the children's education was the cause, for in such a situation the home at Shepherd's Spring did not offer many advantages, yet the first mention of departure was made long before they finally reconciled themselves to parting with their pretty property. The deaths of two of their babies had given a sad impression, which lessened their regret.

The precepts of an Anglo-Indian of that day might amuse, but in many ways George Matcham was ahead of his times. He saw no difference in the education of boys and girls except their being taught Latin and Greek. He wrote “Foreigners observe that the English are the worst tempered people in Europe, and that it is unanswerably evinced by the impossibility of two English families living in concord under the same roof. Persons conversant with our domestic history ascribe this change (for it was not so formerly), to our present neglect of assembling our families to prayers. Many foreigners conceive we are an unclean race from our not having a warm bath in every gentleman’s house. Are they quite wrong in their conjecture? Clean linen alone will not make a person clean … nothing secures us so much from ill effects of cough &c, than warm baths, and yet we see houses built at the expense of tens of thousands of pounds, without the consideration of spending a few pounds for a bath, a defect which excites the ridicule of Foreigners and the regret of travelled Englishmen. ... It is in the power of every person of even confined circumstances to have a useful bath. I should not be surprised if in a few years no gentleman will presume to be without a warm bath in his house, lest his family should be deemed unclean. ... To the honour of the present race of young man, neatness has superseded tawdry finery, and certainly as far as that goes has increased their manliness of character. The mind is withdrawn from the contemplation of the stupid expense of gaudy apparel and a much greater attention paid to actual cleanliness. The display of clean linen is certainly more pleasing than that of dirty point lace ruffles &c. on a shirt perhaps worn a week, but well concealed by a broad laced coat buttoned over it. The frequent change of linen I think is owing to our greater intercourse with India”.

Discussing vegetarianism he questions: "If meat be necessary to the constitution, is it invariably necessary? Should there not be stated Banyan days once a week for instance? Suppers should be rarely indulged in ... All spirits to be avoided, but if the indulgence of wine cannot be forgone; meat should be avoided and bread or batter pudding should be the dinner meal … Is taking snuff ever excusable? Taken very moderately it is certainly some relief to the harassed mind. I would recommend it to any person of too voracious an appetite, which it checks. ... No person ought to carry a snuffbox but have it in a room where he doth not sit, that he
may not be pinching inadvertently. Taken in great quantities it is not only a very filthy custom, but certainly prejudicial to the health. … Smoking tobacco is in England a forbidden indulgence; it is not so now in Germany. Smoking has some advantages; its pauses prevent vehement discussion and dispute; it gives time to think before we speak; it checks quick drinking and so far promotes sobriety. …” He was also an advocate for physical exercises such as were used by the people of India; but of all subjects, nobility of character concerned him most.

In 1798 he noted “Foreigners complain of the incivility of our lower class of people. They are mistaken; the common people of England are civil and even respectful, but when assailed in a high tone and abrupt manner, they feel indignant and return insult for insult. One set of beings are proverbially rude. Hackney Coachmen. … This arises from their daily dealing with various people, some of whom attempt to trick them. . . . But from country labourers you may be assured of civil attention, provided your own conduct merits it. Affected politeness would be absurd . . . but gentle and orderly commands, kind enquiries of their families, of their own health &c. will ensure their respect. …"

In Feb 1798 the family were preparing to leave Shepherd’s Spring and by October of that year, they were living at Kensington Place, Bath where they heard of Nelson’s victory at the Battle of the River Nile. There was much national and family rejoicing at the news. After a delay, in 1800 Lord Nelson returned to England accompanied by the Hamiltons. His relationship with Emma Hamilton led to separation from his wife and this in turn led to family tensions.

In Dec 1800 George joined the party in London to attend a dinner given to Lord Nelson by the East India Directors at the London Tavern. (Catherine was left at home as she was expecting their next child). A keen believer in the future of our colonies, George was then helping some emigrants to Australia, for whom Government grants of land were procured, and through the Admiral's interest, an introduction was also obtained to Mr. King, the Governor of New South Wales. Thanks to this introduction, free passage was obtained for the emigrants to Botany Bay.

George Matcham devoted himself to the pursuits of a country gentleman. In 1802 he patented an apparatus for preserving vessels in danger of shipwreck and made several communications to the government on various public improvements.

On 3rd April 1803, George’s mother Mrs Elizabeth Matcham aged 75 passed away. The peace of Amiens signed in March 1802 having served its turn for Napoleon's convenience, war was once more declared with France in May 1803, and Lord Nelson sent as Commander-in-Chief to the Mediterranean fleet. During the next couple of years, George and Catherine received many letters from the Admiral, describing daily life at sea and his concerns for those at home.

The outbreak of war in 1803 meant that there was no prospect of a migration to France, and the family remained at Bath. They had no wish to move to a proposed establishment near the home of the Hamilton’s at Merton, which Lord Nelson had proposed. George still cherished visions of a foreign education for the children, which led to the purchase of a considerable estate in Schleswig, an unfortunate speculation, for in the end they decided against such exile, while continental wars so depreciated its value that much money was lost over its re-sale a few years later.

In 1804/5 the country was much concerned with a possible invasion of England. On June 18th 1805, the Admiral Nelson had returned to Gibraltar after his fruitless rush to the West Indies in search of the French fleet.
In August 1805, Catherine lost a baby boy named William Alexander. She was pressed to join her brother Lord Nelson at Merton and their eldest son George Nelson Matcham was summoned to join his parents early September. Young George started his journals in 1805 and gives an amusing account of his journey and stay at Merton, where he met other members of the family and influential members of their society. Following on his interview with Prime Minister Pitt, Lord Nelson left Merton for the last time on September 13th and the family party broke up and the Matchams returned home to Bath.

Following the death of Lord Nelson, the family were devastated. Under the terms of Nelson’s Will, George was one of the residuary legatees and Catherine received the ceremonial sword given to Nelson by the City of London. George and his son George attended the funeral on 9th January 1806.

In 1806 the family were still living in Bath. On 6th of August that year after spending time in London on business, they went to see a small estate near Horsham, Sussex, being about 17 miles from Brighton. They concluded the purchase the following morning and returned to London, stopping off at Merton. The early part of 1807 was spent in various entertainments and farewell visits before the whole family left Bath in June to take up residence in their new home at Ashfold Lodge in the village of Slaughan near Horsham. In August they received a party from Merton, including Lady Hamilton and Miss Horatia Nelson.

Another son, the last of Catherine's family, was born in February 1811. Their friend Dr Lawrence from whom they bought Ashfold Lodge, died in 1812. It was this friend that urged George Matcham to claim recognition for the design of the Plymouth breakwater, which was based on work when he was in India. However the credit went elsewhere and he would not have known about it other than through Dr Lawrence. George wrote to the Rt Hon George Rose on the matter, but nothing came of it. However, a garden design for the pleasure grounds of St James’ Park was officially recognised.

Life at Ashfold slipped briskly along, as recorded in George junior's spasmodic journal. All the world joined in the Peace celebrations of 1814, and after having seen 1200 people feasted near home the Ashfold party set off sight-seeing to Brighton on June 25th. The following day they witnesses the procession of various royal personages pass by.

During 1815 a new inmate joined them at Ashfold. It was Horatia Nelson following the death of her mother Lady Hamilton in Calais. George Matcham made the 14 year old Horatia his ward. She came to live at Slaugham for two years until moving to Norfolk to live with another aunt, Susannah, Catherine’s sister.

About this time the estate of Standlynch, near Salisbury, was bought for William, Earl Nelson, and rechristened Trafalgar. "Lord and Lady Nelson are gone to Trafalgar," Lord Bridport wrote to George in September 1816. "The House is not yet furnished, consequently the Earl would not receive us this year. Tom Bolton was at Southampton for a month and accompanied his uncle to and fro every week. . . . The Earl is very tenacious about his game. I went out two days and had five shots."

The establishment at Trafalgar brought further connections with that part of the country; for it was there that their son George met and married early in 1817 a near neighbour of his uncle's, Miss Harriet Eyre of Newhouse, Wilts. So pleased was Lord Nelson at the success of his matchmaking that the young couple spent their first year of married life in his house.

Meanwhile Catherine's country life was once more and finally broken up. The death of their son Frank had cast a gloom over their home, and having now seen her son George fairly settled and Ashfold let, the rest of
the family betook themselves to Paris, from whence they travelled further south in the summer of 1818. In May 1819 Catherine wrote from Marseilles to congratulate her son George on the birth of a son. In 1820 they were still in Paris. Another marriage of 1821 was that of Mr. Thomas Bolton and Miss Frances Eyre, the heiress of estates bordering on Trafalgar and a distant cousin of George's wife.

Catherine, however, even when coming to England, “cannot bear the thoughts of Ashfold.” Alternate plans of letting and selling the place ended finally in its sale, for son George had no need of other property than his wife's Wiltshire home, and her younger children had to be provided for. "Never did I leave England with a heavier heart," George tells his son in the summer of 1822, "but it is necessary we should go. My French and Spanish concerns call for my attention . . . perhaps we may return in the autumn." Their son George was very sore at this desertion of Ashfold and England, and chose to lay all the blame on the women of his family. "I consider them as completely domiciled (at Paris)," he writes to his wife, "and that my mother and sisters have succeeded in finally driving my father from this country. I lament his facility, and they must take upon their own responsibility the consequences, good, bad, and indifferent, which proceed from it. If he had been left alone he would have still been a respectable country gentleman with an income of near £3000 a year and universally beloved and respected by all the neighbourhood." For some years longer, however, the stay-at-home one of the family grumbled in vain. Paris still suited them. Here they had a happy lively time, the daughters making friends and marrying one by one. At last, Paris abandoned and Ashfold sold, a house in Holland Street, Kensington, became their final home.

From thence, long yearly visits were paid to their son George and his wife, each equally devoted to the old couple. By the grandchildren they were adored. Full as ever of his hobbies, George Matcham would potter about on his long-tailed pony, with a stream of little grandsons running or riding after him, to whom he was a perpetual delight and playfellow.

His old age passed without infirmity or depression of spirits and ended peacefully in February 1833. Catherine's widowed years were spent at Kensington with her youngest son. The rest were married and scattered; Charles, her second surviving son, having emigrated to Australia. She died at Kensington in 1842.

There is a grave monument for George Matcham in St Mary church burial ground, Slaugham, Sussex. Close to the east wall of the church is the Matcham Vault.

From: Obituary of George Matcham in Gentleman’s Magazine, dated March 1833

He was the only son of Simon Matcham, Esq., the Superintendent of the Marine of the East India Company, and senior Member in Council of the Presidency of Bombay who married Elizabeth the youngest daughter of Hugh Bidwell Esq., of Exeter in Devon, whose family derived their name from their ancient residence on the manor of Bidwell in that county. Having finished his education at the Charter House, he entered the civil service of the East India Company, and subsequently became their resident at Baroche; but he retired from it when that station was ceded to the Mahratta about the year 1783, having previously succeeded to a competent inheritance.

In his travels he visited Persia, Arabia, Egypt, Asia Minor, Turkey, Greece, the Greek Islands (in the examination of which he passed several months, having hired a vessel for the purpose), Hungary, and almost all the countries and courts included in the usual continental tour. Attended only by an Arab suite, he performed a journey on horseback from Baghdad to Pera, (the Asiatic suburb of Constantinople, now Istanbul), through the countries ancintly known as Mesopotamia, Armenia, Cappudocia, and Bithynia, and in traversing the wild regions of the Kurds (the modern Kurdistan).
Accounts of the greater part of his travels he preserved in journals. One journey from Aleppo across the deserts of Arabia to Baghdad, and down the Tigris to Bassra, which he performed in 1781, has appeared in print in the Travels of Eyles Irwin, Esq. with whom he made this expedition. After a presentation at the Court of the Emperor Joseph II, he had subsequently the honour in a private assembly of giving an outline of his travels to that inquisitive sovereign. With the diplomats of that day he was also well acquainted. Of these, Sir Robert Murray Keith at Vienna, and Sir Joseph Yorke at the Hague, were always mentioned by him with warm expressions of respect and regard. Soon after his final return to England in 1785, he married Catherine the youngest daughter of the Rev. Edmund Nelson and sister to the late Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, K.B. and of the present Earl Nelson, and to whom with her elder sister Mrs. Bolton and their male issue, the remainder of the earldom is extended.

Although peculiarly averse to the occupations of public life, his time was yet usefully employed in those pursuits which distinguish the English private gentleman. In the intervals of those liberal studies to which he was always attached, he improved his property in Hampshire and Sussex by plantations, which at that period might be said to be of considerable extent, covering not less than a thousand acres, and he often indulged in agricultural experiments and in the embellishment of his grounds. In the education of his children he found also a source of permanent interest to himself, whilst he afforded the greatest benefit to them. Nor would his active mind and genuine goodness of heart allow him to be inattentive to the general welfare of others.

In 1802 he obtained a patent for an apparatus applicable to the preservation of vessels in danger of shipwreck, and from time to time he addressed many communications on subjects of general polity and improvement to the higher authorities of the state. It may not be too much to say that the public are indebted to his recommendation for the late beneficial conversion of a portion of St. James's Park into the agreeable pleasure grounds now made near the new palace, which occupy the place of the former marshy meadow.

In the exercise of a decent hospitality, his benevolence, vivacity, ingenuity, and uncommon information, derived from rare opportunities of observation, united with strong native abilities cultivated from his earliest years, will not be easily forgotten by his friends. His conduct on every occasion was marked by a total disregard of self-interest very rarely witnessed, whilst his watchful anxiety for the welfare of his family, which occupied his mind from their earliest connection with him, to his latest hour, must ever be held by them in affectionate remembrance.

George Matcham (1753-1833)

m. 26 Feb 1787, Catherine (b. 19 Mar 1767, d. 28 Mar 1842) second daughter of the Rev Edmund Nelson (1722-1802)

s. George Nelson b.7 Nov 1789, Norwich d. 15 Jan 1877
m. 20 Feb 1817, Harriet Eyre, heiress to Newhouse b. c1792 d. 1873

s. Henry Savage b. 4 Feb 1791 d. 1792

d. Catherine Ann b. Jul 1792 d. 3 Nov 1831
m. 10 Aug 1820, John Bendyshe (b. 10 Apr 1791, d. 1855) at Barrington, Cambs

s. Edmund Nelson b. 28 Nov 1793 d. in infancy

d. Elizabeth b. 6 May 1795, m. 6 May 1821, d. Nov 1851
m. 6 May 1821, Arthur Davies (b. 1786, d. 13 Jul 1853, London)

s. Francis Griffith b. 15 Jul 1796 d. 1808, aged 12

d. Mary Anne b. 20 Sep 1797 emigrated Australia 1801
m. William Pitt

d. Harriet b. 1799 d. Aug 1838, Raleigh House, Plymouth, Devon
m. Capt Edward Blanckley, RN

s. Horatio Nelson b. 1803 d. 11 Oct 1821 in Slaugham, Sussex, aged 18

m. 6 Jul 1826 (Whiteparish), Henry William Mason, Lt RN (b. c1793, d. 1859. Of Beel House, Little Chalfont, Bucks)
d. Horatia b. 1801 Bath d. 31 Dec 1869, Somerset

s. Susannah b. 1805 Bath d. 1885
m. 24 Apr 1832, Alexander Montgomery Moore (1786-1836)
s. General Sir Alexander George Montgomery Moore, KCB (6 Apr 1833 – 17 Jan 1919)
s. Acheson (d. young)

s. William Alexander b. 1805 d. Aug 1805 (of dysentery)

s. Charles Horatio Nelson b. Jul 1806 bur 12 Mar 1844 in Australia


George Matcham (1789-1877)

From: Dictionary of National Biography

George Matcham born in Norwich beginning of Nov 1789, educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he graduated LL.B. in 1814, and LL.D. in 1820. In the same year he was admitted advocate in Doctor's Commons. He became chairman of the Wiltshire quarter sessions in 1836, and contributed accounts of the hundreds of Downton and Frustfield to Hoare's "Modern History of Wilts," London, 1825, &c. ... He died 18th Jan., 1877, leaving a son and two daughters by his wife Harriet, eldest daughter and heiress of William Eyre, of New House, whom he married in 1817.

From: The Nelsons of Burnham

George was a nephew of Admiral Lord Nelson and provided a very graphic description of the family events following the battle of Trafalgar on 21st October 1805 and the news of the death of Nelson. George records that they heard of the death of Nelson on 6th November and the news caused much distress within the family. George and his father attended the funeral of Lord Nelson on 9th January 1806 and wrote a detailed description of the day’s event in his journal.
The records of the Nelson family henceforward are to be derived in the main from the journal of young George Matcham, and from his correspondence. He was evidently, though still only in his teens, fully in the confidence of his father and mother as to family affairs. In the spring of 1806 they were still living in Bath. From his journals, George appears to have spent much of his next few years travelling between home and London or Brighton, spending most of the time in various entertainments.

In 1808 he relates his meeting with Lady Hamilton and the sale of her estate at Merton following her move to Richmond and that she was being harassed by her creditors. In the spring of 1809 Lady Hamilton reports herself too ill to pay visits, and a few weeks later too gay to leave London. Although she had recourse to raising money from pawnbrokers, Lady Hamilton never experienced actual want. It has been calculated that the yearly interest of the money and property left to her was over £2000. Her poverty was the result of sheer extravagance. She moved to a farmhouse 2 miles from Calais and reported that she lived comfortably. On her death, her daughter Horatia returned to live at Ashford near Brighton.

About 1816 the estate of Standlynch, near Salisbury, was bought for William, Earl Nelson, and renamed Trafalgar. The establishment at Trafalgar brought further connections with that part of the country, for there George met and married early in 1817 a near neighbour of his uncle's, Miss Harriet Eyre of Newhouse, Wilts. So pleased was Lord Nelson at the success of his matchmaking that the young couple spent their first year of married life in his house. Another marriage of 1821 was that of Mr. Thomas Bolton and Miss Frances Eyre, the heiress of estates bordering on Trafalgar and a distant cousin of George's wife.