

Request to Roots Chat for assistance to locate the birth place of my 2nd great grandfather David WATKINS

Background:

My paternal grandmother was Annie Watkins, born in Box Hill Victoria in 1887. She married my paternal grandfather John McFarlane at Albury, NSW in 1904 and subsequently emigrated to Dunedin, NZ around 1910.

Her father Samuel Watkins had also emigrated to NZ and died there in 1915. According to his death certificate it states his parents were David Watkins and a Mary Ann Hutchinson. and that he was born in Victoria. However, there are no Victorian BDM records for this birth. David Watkins is thought to have been a miner who emigrated to Australia from Wales to take part in the gold rush in the 1850s at Buninyong near Ballarat, Victoria. However, there is no conclusive evidence to verify this.

The outcome of research undertaken in 2016:

As records for the State of Victoria were still kept in NSW for some time after the formation of the new state, particularly around the 1850's. Because of this situation NSW records were searched along with Victorian records.

Notes on David Watkins

Outcome of BDM Vic searches as at 2016 for David Watkins

Death: 1850-1900 No Record

Marriage: 1850-1900 No record

Birth: 1800-1850 No Record

Shipping: Unassisted 1839-1923 Possibility is a David 32yrs arrived on the Star of the East in 1854

Shipping Assisted 1839-1871 Possibility is a David age 22 arrived on the Almora Dec 1857

Search of NSW BDM (1840-1860) gave no records for birth or marriage. However, there were three deaths listed for a David Watkins as follows: 4796/1854, 7740/1879, 3219/1895

Search of NSW assisted immigration records (1839-1896) show no record for a David Watkins.

Search of NSW unassisted (1842-1855) have one possibility that David, Mary and

son Samuel arrived together from the UK. The entry reads as follows:
"Watkins, Mr, Mrs and son arrived 25 Feb 1848 pm the "Christina" at Port Phillip, Reel No 1275.

Mary Ann Hutchinson:

Checked VIC BDM and PRO for following as at 2016:

Birth: 1800-1850 No Record

Marriage: 1800-1860 No Record

Death: 1800-1910 No Record

Shipping Assisted Immigration 1839-1856 No Record but a possible :Mary aged 22 arrived on the Thames in March 1853.

Shipping Un-assisted Immigration 1852-1856 No Record

Search of NSW BDM (1840-1860) births gave one possible:
1844/1851 V18511844 39A Mary A Hutchinson, Father William, Mother Sarah.

Search of NSW BDM (1840-1860) marriages provided no record.

Search of NSW BDM (1840-1900) deaths provided the following possibilities for a Mary Ann Watkins. References are: 1161/1843 V1843 1161 27B, 1885/1848 V1848 1885 116, 12159/1864 V1864 12159 122C.

Search of NSW immigration records (1839-1896) for assisted immigrants recorded one possibility if Mary Ann arrived as a married woman to David. The details are:

"Mary Ann Watkins" no age given arrived on the "Alexander" in 1841 at Port Phillip. Reel No 2144 (4/4814) page 33".

The outcome of research undertaken in 2018:

I was able to locate a marriage certificate (Victorian BDM ref 4216/1877) for Samuel which states that he married an Annie Smith in Maryborough in December 1877. Samuel gave his age as 22 at the time and his birth place as Buninyong Victoria. He listed his parents as David Watkness and Mary Ann Hutchinson. His location and occupation at the time of the marriage was Chinamans Flat, Farmer. This is the only record found using this spelling for "Watkins". It is likely that Samuel was illiterate as there were no schools

available to children of miners in the early 1850's in Buninyong. See the next section.

As Buninyong is close to Ballarat I wrote to the Ballarat and District Genealogical Society for assistance:

Their research report is summarised as follows:

Buninyong School Register 1850: No Watkins listed. This school focused on the needs of pastoralists and their agricultural workers.

Ballarat Hospital records for 1886 list a David Watkins who died on 30/12/86 and was buried in the Ballarat New Cemetery in an unmarked grave on 1/1/87. The hospital records had his marital status as single, his birth place Myrther Tydfil South Wales, and the years he had lived in Victoria was 35 years.

Vic BDM records 1850-1870 show a female Mary Watkins ref 531/1863 whose place of birth was listed as Wales. There were two other females with the same name but they were children aged 8 months and 3 years.

I subsequently obtained a full copy of Mary's death certificate and it showed Mary had been married twice. There were no children of the second marriage but three from a first marriage. The children all had the surname Ashby.

Buninyong Petty Sessions: no results for David or Samuel.

Trove: no results.

Checked Parish Land Records: no listing for Samuel having owned land at Chinaman's Flat.

The result of research undertaken in 2018 following the receipt of the report from the Ballarat Genealogy Society:

A search of the Victorian Death records for the period 1830 to 1937 came up with 5 records for men with the name David Watkins, including the man listed in the Ballarat Hospital records mentioned above.

This listed was culled down to three with the following references once checks were made on their age at the time of Samuel's birth:

11633/1886

4501/1896

15435/1894 Only this person had children, none of whom were named Samuel.

This David was born in Brecon South Wales and was married to a Letetia Jones.

A search of the UK BDM records for marriages registered for the Jan/Feb/March quarter for 1845 list a David Watkins, born in Merthyr Tydfil, Wales at Vol. 26 Page 471. Tracing the females who were listed at Vol 26 Page 471 came up with the following list:

Ann David
Mary John
Gwendillan Jones and;
Gwendillan Lewis

None of these appear to be Samuel's mother unless David married a widow.