

The Victorian Queensland Mining Connection

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Many Victorian miners and their families migrated to the Gympie goldfields in Queensland in the 1860s. Gympie is situated 106 miles north of Brisbane and James Nash discovered alluvial gold there near the site of the City Hall in September 1867. It was first reported on 17 October that year having been gazetted on 10 October 1867. In November 1867 the first reef, named the Lady Mary, was found in Sailor's Gully while Gympie was known as the Currie diggings. The news of the discovery of gold attracted thousands of men to the area.

My own mining family made the move from Victoria to Queensland in stages. It appears that Georgiana Bullen's half brother George Alfred Potter was the first to move to Gympie about 1874. George married Sophie Touzeau in Gympie on 12 September 1874. The Potter family was originally from Sydney and it appears that George was the first to head north. His bride Sophie was originally from Guernsey in the Channel Islands and interestingly, when I obtained the marriage certificate it gave her usual place of residence as Sebastopol in Victoria. If I had not purchased the full certificate I would not have been aware of yet another Victorian connection.

After the death of her husband Henry Bullen in 1873, in Ararat Asylum, and the sale of property in Sebastopol in 1876, Georgiana moved to Gympie. Her daughter Elizabeth Bullen married David Loudon in Gympie in September 1877.

Georgiana's other half brother Robert Potter was still living at Sandhurst in Victoria in 1876 when he married his wife Mary Ann Dobson. They made the move to Gympie shortly after their first child Elizabeth Jane was born at Sandhurst in 1877.

Georgiana and Henry Bullen's eldest son William Henry Bullen married Annie White in Gympie on 11 December 1878. Annie was born in Geelong in 1855 and her family moved to the Gympie goldfield, as did many other Victorian mining families. In keeping with that mining spirit the family eventually moved to the Western Australian goldfields in the 1890s, with Annie Bullen dying in Perth in 1910 and William Henry Bullen in Perth in 1916.

William Henry's brother George Bullen married Annie Goody whose parents were George Goody and Ann and again there is a Victorian connection. In March 1880 George Goody went back to England to pursue a lawsuit against his stepfather James Newbold for money left to George by an uncle. In June 1881 George wrote to his wife that the case had been lost and he was penniless working for his uncle Samuel Ibbotson to get his passage home. Two years later in 1883 Ann Goody wrote to George's other uncle Charles Ibbotson in Geelong, Victoria and learnt that George had only made it as far as Port Elizabeth in South Africa. Charles forwarded a passage warrant to George but it was

returned from the Dead Letter Office six months later. Nothing was ever heard from George Goody again.

Looking For Mining Ancestors In Queensland

Queensland State Archives is the obvious place for researchers to go and there are a number of finding aids that can point researchers in the right direction. *Brief Guide No 13 – Mining Records* (5 pages), available for downloading from the QSA website at <http://www.archives.qld.gov.au> is a quick and easy to read summary of the records available. This guide gives an introduction to the topic followed by a brief historical overview and summary of mining legislation. The next section of the guide looks at the type of mining records including general correspondence, mining leases, Inspectors of Mines records, Local Mining Wardens Office records and mineral selection registers 1868-1883. The final part of the guide looks at residential tenures on the gold and mineral fields

Other brief guides of particular interest to those with mining ancestors include:

Brief Guide No 1 Maps for genealogical and local history research (3 pages)

The main types of maps and plans are cadastral maps, topographical maps, thematic maps, railway maps and plans, admiralty and hydrographic charts, Department of Harbours and Marine charts and plans, Irrigation and Water Supply Commission plans and drawings, Co-ordinator General's Department and Department of Mines maps.

The latter is a small collection of recent Department of Mines maps mainly in the 1:100,000 grid series, showing gold and mineral leases (with lease numbers) and the type of mineral obtained. These maps also have topographical and cadastral information.

Brief Guide No 18 School records (5 pages)

This guide lists references to the Education Department including the school card index, the index to Teachers 1860-1904, the alphabetical list of school admission registers, the listing of EDU/Q series of records – ledgers and paycards for teachers and card index to closed schools.

- Information on schools includes – school files; annual statistical returns; registers of schools 1860-1878.
- Information on teachers includes – registers of teachers employed 1860-1904; registers of pupil teachers 1875-1886; ledgers and paycards 1877-1929; registers of teachers salaries and allowances 1882-1896; and teachers staff cards 1928-1991.
- Information on pupils includes – admission registers.
- Miscellaneous Information includes – general correspondence (education various).
- Information on school buildings includes – Public Works Department batch files schools and batch files A series high schools and technical colleges.

Brief Guide No 22 Court records (6 pages)

The Supreme Court in Queensland is divided into three districts:

Southern District established 1859 in Brisbane but records date from 1856

Central District established in 1896 in Rockhampton

Northern District established 1875 in Bowen and moved to Townsville 1889

Records include ecclesiastical files (wills) and orders and elections (intestacies), naturalizations, criminal depositions, writs, including matrimonial writs (divorces), insolvency and liquidation files, equity files, change of name by deed poll, judges' notebooks, calendars of court sittings and Justice of the Peace Oaths and Allegiances.

The District Court was established in 1858 and was disbanded in 1922. Records include summonses, calendars of court sittings and depositions for civil and criminal cases.

The Court of Petty Sessions was established in 1844 and disbanded in 1965. Records include lease of crown land, issuing of licenses (hotels, clubs, billiards, tobacconists, slaughterhouses, timber felling, auctioneers), registration of firms, unemployment benefits, Aborigines – records of the Protector of Aborigines, electoral rolls, registration of aliens, magisterial inquiries (inquests), writs, bills of sale, maintenance case files, minutes of proceedings in various Courts held in the CPS, and depositions in criminal and civil matters.

The Small Debts Courts were established in 1867 and disbanded in 1921. Other courts include the Children's Court established in 1907, the Industrial Magistrates Court set up in 1915, the Coroners Court and the Licensing Court established in 1912 for the issuing of licenses of various kinds.

For a more detailed look at mining records the QSA has also published *Pathways – Mines* and this publication is for sale on their website for \$17.00 plus \$2.30 postage. This 147 page research guide has a general introduction, tips on using the guide, an administrative history of the Mines Department, an historical summary of mining in Queensland then lists the following types of records held:

Mines Department records

Mines and Works Office records

Mining Warden records

Inspectors of Mines' records

Mineral Lands Commissioners records

Gold Commissioner records

Assistant Mining Registrar records

Records from other Government Departments

Not surprisingly there are lots of records to research for mining ancestors.

To simplify it for people only looking in one or two geographical area there is the QSA's *Signpost* series of guides on specific towns. For those with gold mining ancestors the two most popular guides are Gympie and Charters Towers. *Signposts* bring together records from agencies that operated in a specific area eg Court of Petty Sessions, Land Agent, Police Station and Local Authority. It also includes records from local schools and maps. It does not include records from other Departments that covered the whole state eg

Colonial Secretary, Lands, Works and Treasury. Also included are entries from the items of interest catalogue.

Also available on the QSA website is the index to mineral leases 1871-1940 and the sources indexed include:

Mines Department Gold mining leases 1871-1919

Mines Department Mineral leases 1884-1940

Mining Warden Cloncurry Mineral and Water Race Leases 1910-1933

Mines Department Index to Coal Mining Licence Register under the Act of 1886, not dated

If you do find an entry that interests you, copies can be obtained for \$11.80 for each reference requested with a \$15.00 minimum charge for credit cards.

Other Useful Sources

For anyone with Queensland ancestors then a visit to Judy Webster's website *Genealogy Advice for Australia, Especially Queensland* is a must. Judy is a long time acquaintance and I admire the tremendous amount of indexing work that she has done on Queensland records held at the State Archives and elsewhere. In this paper I will highlight just some of the indexes which are known to have lots of reference to Victorian miners in them.

Of particular interest are hospital admission registers which give the following information:

Name, date admitted, age, birthplace, occupation, religion, ship or arrival, how long in colony, place of residence, marital status, name and occupation, father's present residence if living, mother's maiden name, disease or reason for admission, date of discharge or death and remarks.

Croydon was declared a gold field in 1886 and by 1887 its population was over 6,000 and about 15% of people admitted to the Croydon hospital were from southern states with significant number from mining areas, especially the Victorian goldfields. Another hospital that may be of interest is Cooktown which was the port for the north Queensland goldfields. Surviving registers between 1884 and 1901 have been indexed. The indexed names are all online making it very easy for interstate researchers to look themselves. Admissions for Croydon have been indexed from 1888-1919 which is on one microfiche which sells for \$5.00. This index (and others published by Judy) may be available for research at State Library of Victoria or your local family history society library.

Other series of records and indexes that might be worth checking include mental asylum records (includes those suffering from epilepsy, depression and alcoholism), police station watchhouse records and prison records. Full details can be found on Judy's website at <http://www.judywebster.gil.com.au> . Again some of these indexes are available online for people to search themselves while other indexes are available for purchase. Don't forget to check if it is available at State Library or your local family history library.

Judy's publication *Tips For Queensland Research* (2002 edition) is also quite useful with articles about sources and problem solving techniques for research in Queensland

including helpful hints and money-saving tips. It is a 30 page, spiral bound paperback publication that sells for \$10.00. Some of you may also be aware of Judy's more well known publication *Specialist Indexes in Australia: a Genealogist's Guide* (1998) which is a 119 page, spiral bound paperback that sells for \$26.00. This is a finding aid that describes over 1,000 indexes and explains where to find them or how to request searches.

Reference should also be made to the two Brisbane societies as they have both done substantial indexing and publishing of Queensland sources. The Queensland Family History Society website is <http://www.qfhs.org.au> and the Genealogical Society of Queensland website is <http://www.gsq.org.au> .

Conclusion

It is never easy trying to research interstate but in recent times it has been made easier by the publication of indexes and guides and the ever-increasing Internet. By using the finding aids listed in this paper it is possible to identify records which might be useful in tracing your Queensland mining ancestors. In some instances you will be able to directly search indexes online but in others you will need to plan that holiday to Queensland or engage a research agent to obtain copies for you. Good luck in finding your mining ancestors in whichever goldfield!

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