



AITKIN James William Manifold

Parents: James Aitkin and Mary Meacock
Manifold married in Tasmania on 8 January 1835

Siblings:

1. Mary Jane Aitkin b 1837 d 1867
m 1861 Robert Brand Paterson
2. Lucy Hannah Aitkin b 1839 d 1911
m 1860 Ernest Bostock
3. Margaret Aitkin b 1841 d 1919 m 1865 Angus
Bostock
4. Alice Aitkin b 1843 d 1896 m 1875 James
Bostock

Birth: 25 October 1835, at Glenesk South, Esk
River, Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania)

Marriage:

1. 1862 to Ann Young Ware (née McRobie) b 1834 d 1867 (Ann had previously been married to Jeremiah George Ware)
2. 1880 to Louisa Jane Arnold b 1843 d 1921

Immigration: James' father arrived in Van Demons Land in 1823 from Scotland. His mother arrived in Tasmania on the *Brenda* in 1831. James' date of arrival in Victoria not known but he came to Warrnambool in 1852.

Children:

- 1.1 Mary Annie Aitkin b 1863 d 1937 m 1889 Charles Henry Phillips
- 1.2 James William Manifold Aitkin b 1864 d 1941
- 1.3 Antoinette Lempriere Aitkin b 1865 d 1936 m 1889 Geoffrey Ritchie
- 1.4 Marcus Robert Aitkin b 1867
- 2.1 Kathleen Maud Aitkin b 1881 d 1935 did not marry

Place of Residence: In 1858 James was renting a property in Banyan Street from insolvent Philip Young. James bought a residence *Ellerslie* in Koroit Street, Warrnambool, c 1862. This was sold in 1870 when James moved to Melbourne. When he returned to Warrnambool c 1887 he lived at *Carracoorte*, Grassmere.

Education: Not known.

Death and Burial: died 28 March 1905, at *Carracoorte*, aged 70, and buried at Warrnambool Cemetery, Presbyterian Section, Compartment 16, Grave 32. Rev. Charles Burgess officiated and Beattie & Phillips made the arrangements for the funeral which was held at *Carracoorte* at 1.00 pm on Wednesday 29 March.

Obituary:

The Warrnambool Standard, 30 March 1905.

One of the oldest and best known residents of the district, in the person of James William Manifold Aitkin, died suddenly at his residence *Carracoorte*, on Tuesday morning. He was engaged in burning off, and it is supposed he overheated himself. The cause of death was heart failure, and he was found by his groom who was assisting in the work, lying on the ground quite dead. Dr Moreton was immediately sent for and certified that death was due to the above mentioned cause. The deceased gentleman was 70 years of age and was a native of Tasmania. He came to Warrnambool in 1852 and commenced business as a storekeeper with the old firm of Manifold and Co., subsequently known successively as Aitkin and Bostock, and as Aitkin and Paterson. He occupied the position of chairman of the old municipality of Warrnambool, and in 1863-64, when Warrnambool was first declared a borough, he was elected as the first Mayor. He was re-elected Mayor for the 1864-65, and also for the following year 1865-66. Subsequently he left Warrnambool and resided for a time in Melbourne and came back to the Warrnambool district eighteen years ago, when he settled at *Carracoorte*. He was very highly esteemed by a large circle of friends for his most sterling qualities. He leaves to mourn their loss a widow, two sons in Western Australia, and three daughters, two of whom are married.

Life: As noted above, he arrived in the Warrnambool area in 1852, and was involved with relatives in several businesses. An examination of entries in *The Warrnambool Examiner* shows that he was involved with the Merri Mills flour mill, Jetty Starch Mill, Warrnambool Steam Packet Co., Villiers Building Society, and a store in Fairy Street selling drapery, groceries and ironmongery. He was declared insolvent in 1870 with liabilities of £16,000, assets of £11,000, and was forced to sell up to cover debts. His home, *Ellerslie*, was sold and his Fairy Street Store was disposed of in 1871. At some time after this he moved to Melbourne returning in about 1887 and living at *Carracoorte* (Grassmere). Through 1868 to 1870, he was involved in various court proceedings with regard to his first wife's estate and that of her husband.

While in Warrnambool he held many positions. He was on the Racing Committee and Treasurer in 1854, and appointed Secretary/Treasurer of the Warrnambool Race Club in 1856. He was appointed a trustee for the new savings bank in 1859. He was an Election Auditor for Warrnambool in 1858 and 1860, elected to the Warrnambool Municipal Council and Mayor in 1863, on committee of Western Caledonian Society in 1864, on committee of National School in 1864, was reappointed Mayor for Borough of Warrnambool in 1864 and 1865, a Justice of the Peace in 1867. He hosted the Governor of Victoria at his home *Ellerslie* for lunch in 1868.

Aitkins Road was named after James.

In his obituary above, it is claimed that Aitkin was first Mayor of the Borough of Warrnambool and that he was Chairman of the Municipality of Warrnambool which preceded the Borough.

Neither claim is historically correct.

Referring to contemporary copies of *The Warrnambool Examiner*, it is clear that John Grieve was chairman of the Municipal Council of Warrnambool when an Act of Parliament in October 1863 made Warrnambool a Borough and changed to title from Chairman to Mayor. Grieve is therefore, the last Chairman of the Municipality and the first Mayor of the Borough.

Aitkin succeeded Grieve as Mayor, being elected on Wednesday 18 November 1863 as the second Mayor. He was never Chairman of the Municipality, these being Samuel McGregor (1856-1857), John Elliott (1858), John Bromfield (1858-1859), Thomas Denney (1860-1861) and Grieve (1861-1863).

As per the obituary, Aitkin served three consecutive terms, 1863-1866, and was replaced by William Jamieson in 1866.