

## **George Wallace McDONALD** 20-6-1894 to 5-8-1961 & Eileen Agnes McDONALD, nee JOHNSON

Biography as published in 1985 & 1995

George Wallace was the third child and second son of Alexander John and Jessie McDonald and was born at West Wail. One cousin, Gordon Lloyd McDonald, was born that year, eleven days later at Nurrabiel. An old family story tells of these two babies being placed together on a rug when Flora and Joseph visited *Wyn Wyn*. Uncle Bill Raggatt always maintained the babies had been mixed and claimed by the wrong mothers. In later life George and Gordon's brother Bill would joke about it and say they weren't sure whether they were cousins or brothers. In either case they were always the best of friends.

His grandparents were Rachel and Ewen McDonald and great-grandparents were Christina and Donald McLean.

World events in 1894 included the accession of Nicholas II to the Russian throne; he was to become the last Czar. Uganda was declared a British protectorate, and Robert Louis Stevenson died. In Australia, Robert Gordon Menzies and Herbert Vere Evatt were born.

George attended the West Wail State School with his brothers and sisters and helped on the family farm. He played football with the local team when the family moved to St Helens Plains. On November 11, 1914 George, aged 20 years, enlisted in the 5th Victorian Scottish Regiment, Second Brigade, First Division, 1st AIF, three months after war was declared. Part of his training was at Mena military camp with its backdrop of the Pyramids and Sphinx, just outside Cairo. He was an original Anzac, having served on Gallipoli for two weeks before being wounded in a leg and hospitalised in Egypt and England. The doctor recommended amputation but George refused permission and carried a bullet for the rest of his life. He was repatriated to Australia in the ship *Clan McGillvray* and discharged medically unfit on February 9, 1916. George joined his family at *Nerrin Nerrin* and it was there that he met Aggie Johnson. In 1917, at Smythesdale, George was married to Eileen Agnes Johnson. Agnes was the daughter of Philip and Harriet Johnson, nee McConville, farmers of Westmere and was born on April 9, 1895, one of triplet children. A boy died at birth and the girls grew up as twins. Agnes attended schools at Westmere and Lake Bolac.

After his army discharge George undertook a rehabilitation course in wool-classing at the Gordon Institute of Technology, Geelong. He was appointed an instructor there in 1921, and head of the wool department in 1930. Under his guidance this department developed into one of the most important wool schools in Australia. George was an early member of Geelong Legacy, a director of the RSL Woollen Mill which marketed products under the trade name *Retsol*, a member of the Corio Club, and also did reclassing at Strachan's wool store in Geelong. He travelled widely in Victoria, lecturing on wool-classing and sorting at the agricultural science faculty at Melbourne, University, the Ballarat School of Mines and many country centres. His wool department also conducted classes at Dookie and Longerenong agricultural colleges. In 1933 the Horsham Agricultural Society, with the Gordon Institute, established a wool instruction class to teach young farmers to class their own and other clips. George was sent to conduct these classes at Horsham, also at Hamilton and Echuca. In 1967 the Horsham classes were taken over by Horsham Technical School.

George was always a welcome visitor at the homes of his many relatives in the Wimmera. In later years he and his cousins Bill McDonald of Mockinya and Charlie McDonald of Noradjuha made it a point of honour to wear ties only of McDonald tartan.

George and Aggie had a family of four daughters and one son and lived at 65 Skene Street, Geelong, where hospitality was dispensed freely over the years to friends and relatives. Aggie died on May 13, 1960 and George fifteen months later on August 5, 1961. Both are buried in the Eastern Cemetery, Geelong.

Children of George and Agnes :-

- |    |                                 |                 |                |
|----|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. | <i>Ina</i> Frances McDonald     | Born 14-6-1918  |                |
| 2. | <i>John</i> McGillvray McDonald | Born 10-8-1920  |                |
| 3. | <i>Mary</i> Inverriess McDonald | Born 21-11-1923 |                |
| 4. | <i>Jean</i> Margaret McDonald   | Born 14-2-1927  | Died 26-5-1978 |
| 5. | <i>Patricia</i> Marina McDonald | Born 4-11-1934  |                |

- SOURCE : This biography was from page 202 of "History of Ewen & Rachel McDonald & Descendants" by Jill McDonald which was originally published in 1985. It was republished as part of "The History of Donald & Christina McLean and Their Descendants" in 1995.
- COLONIALISTS : Christina and Donald McLean and their ten children migrated from Argyllshire to South Australia in 1837. This was in the earliest years of the colony. The McLeans initially settled near Adelaide where they grew the first wheat crop in SA. Then in about 1840 they pioneered the Strathalbyn area. There are now well over 20,000 descendants spread across Australia and elsewhere.
- CHANGES : Please contact us with additions, corrections or suggestions about any part of this family tree.
- CONTACT : Visit our website [www.christinaanddonaldmclean.com](http://www.christinaanddonaldmclean.com) or Strathalbyn Museum phone 08 8536 2656 to discover more about your family – and about privacy and copyright.