

Flora McDONALD, nee McDONALD 8-9-1850 to 21-10-1939 & **Joseph McDONALD**

Biography as published in 1985 & 1995

Flora was the second child, second daughter of Ewen and Rachel McDonald and was born at Lower Finnis. Her grandparents were Christina and Donald McLean.

Events that year included the migration of 267,000 people from England and 780,000 from Ireland to the USA. Robert Louis Stevenson was born and poet laureate William Wordsworth died. In Australia the transport of convicts to New South Wales was suspended, and transportation commenced to Western Australia.

Flora was educated at home by a governess and also attended a school conducted by Mrs Bell in Pennington Terrace, North Adelaide. In later years she wrote letters for her illiterate friends and neighbours in her firm copperplate hand. At 23 years she accompanied her family to the Noradjuha area of Victoria. On June 25, 1874 she applied for a licence for allotment 45, Parish of Carchap, County of Lowan, and signed the application at Horsham before John Langlands JP. The price was £320 for 319 acres, 3 roods, 10 perches. Four years later, on August 6, 1878, she signed an application for a lease or Crown grant. By then her block had been improved by 64 chains of post, two-rail and log fencing at 20/- a chain; 25 chains of post, rail and three wires at 20/- a chain; 7 chains of log fence at 8/- a chain; 128 chains of log and brush fence at 8/- a chain. During the first year cultivation was 12 acres of wheat with a yield of six bushels an acre. The second year, excluding the first year, eight acres were sown with a yield of 14 bushels an acre. The third year 13 acres were sown, yielding 14 bushels an acre.

A total 33 acres was cleared in the first three years at an estimated cost of 30/- an acre. Clearing of cultivation paddocks at 40/- an acre was estimated at £90. Clearing of 150 acres of dead timber at 6/- an acre was estimated at £45. Garden improvement was estimated at £2, the whole giving a total of £341 improvements to the land. There was no dwelling on the block because she resided with her father on his adjoining section. A transfer of lease of Flora's land to her brother Donald William took place on November 25, 1879.

On December 17, 1879 unbeknown to their families, Flora and Joseph McDonald slipped away to Horsham where they were quietly married by the Reverend R. B. Scott at the Presbyterian church. Their witnesses were Mary Florence Hall and Letitia Frances Young. Joseph was born on October 16, 1851 in the county of Cumberland, northern England. He was the second son of Thomas and Margaret McDonald, nee Scott, who migrated to South Australia about 1854. The family lived at Cooke Plains, east of Lake Alexandrina. before selecting land at Woodchester near Strathalbyn, South Australia. In the 1870s they moved to the Jallumba district of the Victorian Wimmera. The families of Ewen McDonald and Thomas McDonald were not related. Thomas and Margaret McDonald had five sons. Four married and lived on farms in districts adjoining their parents' home.

The first son, Thomas junior, was born in England. He married three times; first to Elizabeth Dunn of South Australia, three children; then to Mary McLellan of South Australia, four children; and to Mary Keen, no family. Thomas died on December 31, 1919, aged 74 years. He is buried in Nurrabiel cemetery. The second son, Robert, died in England at an early age. The third son was Joseph who was born in England and who married Flora McDonald. The fourth son, Robert, was born in South Australia and married Edith King. There were five children. Robert died on July 18, 1934, and was buried in Nurrabiel cemetery. The fifth son, John, known as Jallumba Jack, married Annie Jenz. They had ten children. John died on April 27, 1940, aged 80 years and was buried in Nurrabiel cemetery.

Thomas McDonald senior died on January 11, 1901, aged 81 years. His wife Margaret died on September 6, 1902, aged 83 years. They are buried in a double plot in Nurrabiel cemetery with a headstone marking the grave.

Flora and Joseph lived at Jallumba before moving to a wattle and daub dwelling with a corrugated iron roof at Nurrabiel. Here Joe selected allotments numbered 30, 31, 31A, Parish of Nurrabiel. The house had belonged to

the Cameron family and, when the thatched roof burned, the district people had taken up a collection to help pay for sheets of iron as a replacement. It was the first iron roof in the district.

Joe was a foundation member of Nurrabel Cricket Club and a very keen player. His sons were to follow in his footsteps. He and his brother Tom started a merino sheep stud, exhibiting their animals at local shows; Balmoral, Natimuk, Horsham and elsewhere. When he moved to Mockinya he took part of the stud with him. By the 1890s, Joe owned four to five hundred sheep and shored about eight bales of wool a year which were sold through the agents Strachan and Bostock, of Geelong. He was the first in the district to own a reaper and binder for harvesting his crops. In 1905, Joe sold the land to his brother Tom and he, Flora and their six surviving children moved to Mockinya, about ten miles east. Here he had bought land from M. J. Warland, on the main road from Horsham to Hamilton. The original selector had been Pickford.

Joe and Flora had a solid house built on allotment 74, Parish of Nurrabel, for which the redgum timber used in the frame was sawn at McKenry's sawmill at Toolondo. There was a detached kitchen, dining room, store and pantry at the back to reduce the risk of fire destroying the main house. In the kitchen was deep brick oven used solely to bake bread, an open fireplace and a wood stove. The brickwork was by a Mr Jones, bricklayer of Horsham. The woolshed at Nurrabel was dismantled and brought to the new property where it formed the basis of a larger shed. They called their farm *Glencoe*. Joe had a well-equipped farm blacksmith shop complete with huge bellows and a forge. He was a very tidy man and everything had to be in its place, even the fowl feathers had to be picked up from the yard. From 1909 to 1912 he was an Arapiles Shire councillor for the south riding.

Flora made a delicious cheese which was always a ready seller at district fetes. She never went outside the house without wearing her sun bonnet which completely covered her head and face and had a frill around the bottom to shield the neck. She was known for her cat whip, made of plaited binder twine which she used skilfully on her daughter Jessie's cats when they ventured into the house. She also used it on any of her children who misbehaved.

In 1916, two of their sons, Edwin and Gordon, were among the volunteers who joined the 1st Australian Imperial Force and served in France. Gordon was killed in the trenches by a sniper's bullet.

Because of Joe's failing health, Flora and Jessie took him to live in Horsham about 1922, to be near medical help. He was attended by Dr Roy Felstead. They first lived in a house in Urquhart Street but soon moved to a house in Stawell Road, Green Park, with three acres where they could keep buggy horses and a cow. Joe died of diabetes on March 19, 1924, just before the general introduction of insulin as a treatment. He was buried in Nurrabel cemetery and his grave is marked by a headstone. Flora and Jessie returned to the farm, and the house in Horsham was rented until sold about 1936. In her ninetieth year Flora died in Wembley Private Hospital, Horsham, on October 21, 1939, and was also buried in Nurrabel cemetery. A headstone marks her grave.

Children of Flora and Joseph :-

1. Jessie McDonald	Born 23-9-1880	Died 20-8-1963	Biographies 5137
2. Edith Florence McDonald	Born 7-10-1882	Died 11-3-1884	Biographies 5138
3. William Joseph McDonald	Born 29-5-1884	Died 26-9-1958	Biographies 5139
4. Archibald Ewen McDonald	Born 3-11-1886 twin	Died 8-2-1888	Biographies 5140
5. Oswald Allan McDonald	Born 3-11-1886 twin	Died 27-4-1968	Biographies 5141
6. Louis Stanley McDonald	Born 4-2-1888	Died 13-4-1889	Biographies 5142
7. Edwin Harold McDonald	Born 15-2-1890	Died 13-1-1936	Biographies 5143
8. Olive McDonald	Born 4/9/1892	Died 8-11-1960	Biographies 5144
9. Gordon Lloyd McDonald	Born 1/7/1894	Died 20-6-1917	Biographies 5145

- SOURCE : This biography was from page 99 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 or Strathalbyn Museum phone 08 8536 2656 to discover more about your family – and about privacy and copyright.