

Christina Margaret McDONALD

5-3-1881 to 15-10- 1976

Biography as published in 1985 & 1995

Christina Margaret was the first child of Donald William and Christina McDonald and was born at Carchap, Victoria. Later that year her first cousin James Arthur Mott was born in New South Wales. Her grandparents were Rachel and Ewen McDonald and great-grandparents were Christina and Donald McLean.

Current events included the premiere of Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffman* and the assassination of the Russian Tzar, Alexander II. The first simultaneous census was taken in Australia — population 2,250,194.

Tean started school at Lowan South No. 2984, held for a time at her Uncle Charlie's home. This school later shared a teacher with Nurrabiel, and Tean walked to both centres, gaining full time schooling until she obtained her merit certificate. She was glad when there was a male teacher; then there was no sewing. An accomplished horsewoman, Tean loved horses and for years helped her father work the farm. Her favourite pastime was reading, but she was also an expert bottler of fruit and won over 1,000 prizes for her preserves at agricultural shows and the local Noradjuha flower show. In 1975 a conversation with Tean was taped. Her strong clear voice recorded well and a precis of this talk uses her own words.

Talking of horses, I will claim that I could stick on.

My father used to breed horses; used to have about half a dozen foals a year, some light and some heavy. One morning I wanted to go down the paddock and went to the stable and got this horse, he'd only just had the feed given in to him. I suppose he resented me. I got on him, and, by gosh, I was hardly on when I was up in the air and round about; he had all the ways of bucking, and I lost one of the stirrups. He was making for a sand-drift further along and I thought, 'I'd better go into this, it won't be too hard.' Off I came and he pulled away from me and off down the paddock. Then I had to chase down the paddock and catch him. Anyway I got on him and rode him back as hard as he could lay legs to the ground.

My father had a buggy and a gig. The gig was very handy as it only had one horse and it was easy to get around. I did a lot of riding and I always had a name for my horse and some I remember were Jeanette, Trump and Comedy.

Then of course my sister Annie and her husband Dave, they were married in Victoria and went away to West Australia, with eight children and two were born over there. So most of my relations are over there and we didn't go over; we thought it was so far it was just about the end of the world. Just occasionally some would come over here. Once Annie and Dave brought one of the children over.

Well every Saturday at our place there'd be a sheep killed and then in the summer time half would be cured and we had a great big jar, one with a lid on, those porcelain jars you know. Well it would hold half the sheep and that cured meat was delicious. Then everybody had their pigs and I know my Dad used to kill about three pigs a year. And then you'd have the bacon, the sides of bacon hanging up and you'd take it down whenever you were out of mutton. And every year each farmer round about killed a beast, a steer you know, and when he killed he'd share up with all his neighbours. Then the next neighbour would kill and he'd share up and pay it all back. That was the way they worked it, and there was no money paid for it. We were never out of meat.

We had a big fruit garden, apples, pears, peaches, plums and figs, all kinds. Mother used to make jams, jellies and preserves, and sauces and pickles and everything you made from fruit. My Dad grew bags of potatoes, onions and turnips and beet and tomatoes, pumpkins and marrows and broad beans. We grew little marrow bushes that didn't spread out. One part of the garden was a vineyard, all grapes and all irrigated from the channel running through Uncle Charlie's property about half a mile from our place and my Dad dug a drain down to us. About once a fortnight it was irrigated along the furrows ploughed down between the fruit and it would get a real good watering and be alright till next time. The vineyard had all kinds of grapes and the vines were trellised along low fences.

Often on a Saturday there was a big stock sale in Horsham and my Dad was very interested in that, he didn't like to miss it. After breakfast the pair of horses would be harnessed in the buggy and Dad and Mum would dress up and off they'd go to Horsham for the day. They'd never get back before sundown. Different stock would be offered, sheep, horses, cattle, and he'd very often buy something, a few sheep, a horse or two. We were always waiting to see what would come home. We kids were never taken to Horsham. Mother always had a girl to help her you know and we would be left home with her.

We hardly ever bought groceries in Horsham because in Noradjuha there was a good grocer's shop. Mother got all the groceries there nearly as cheap as in Horsham and because she was a customer the shopkeeper would always roll up a poke of paper and fill it with lollies for the children. There were two blacksmith's shops, one was Treadwells and the other was Wil Scott and any repairs to the men's machinery was taken there.

In those times we did a lot of visiting and sometimes we would play draughts or look at the photo albums. We had great times over at Aunt Flora's, we'd walk back and forwards across the paddocks, only about a mile and a half away you know. There was Jess and Alan, Bill and Ted. It used to be a case of we'd go over there one week and they'd come to us the next week. We didn't see much of them after they shifted to Mockinya. It was a fair distance over there.

You did most of your own sewing, I got to the stage I'd make my own house dresses. Mother used to do all our sewing. Perhaps occasionally if you wanted something extra special you'd get dress made by a dressmaker. Yes, plenty of tucks and flounces. You always had two petticoats you know, a flannel one that only came to your waist and a flash white calico petticoat over the top of it. That one had all the frills. I always did like a pink colour for, a dress which reminds me of this story:

I was only a kid and had long hair, it was before I started school and anyway Mother wanted to cut my hair. I wouldn't have my hair cut and she was just biffed off. I suppose she told Grandmother McDonald and I used to take a lot of notice of grandmother because she called me duckie and dearie and all these sort of things. Well grandmother said, 'if you let me cut your hair I'll make a new dress for you.' So that was alright, and the hair was cut and grandmother made this dress, it was a pretty pink with white spots and just came below my knees. Wasn't I proud of this pink dress.

One day I was due to get a dose of castor oil from that blue bottle and I made a disturbance. Grandmother was there and I wouldn't take it from her either and I bolted. I ran through the water in the irrigation drain and thought 'no one will catch me' and grandmother came after me and dragged me back through the water and I got my medicine.

When her mother died Tean continued to live at *Blackwood* caring for her invalid sister Polly until Polly entered the Queen Elizabeth home at Ballarat in 1950. When her brother Len sold *Blackwood* in 1957, Tean moved to a house in Palk Street, Horsham. It was her custom to take a taxi to the main street, Firebrace Street, once a week to have her midday meal at a cafe. For several years before her death Tean lived at the Lutheran Rest Home in Roberts Avenue, Horsham. She died at Wimmera Base Hospital on October 15, 1976, in her 96th year and was buried in Horsham cemetery.

- SOURCE : This biography was from page 136 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.