

Leonard William Cameron McDONALD 27-4-1896 to 5-3-1964 & Ethel Rose McDONALD, nee TUCKER

Biography as published in 1985 & 1995

Leonard William Cameron was the fourth child and only son of William and Christina McDonald and was born at Noradjuha, two weeks before his cousin Ella Jean McDonald at West Wail, Victoria. His grandparents were Rachel and Ewen McDonald and great-grandparents were Christina and Donald McLean.

Current events included the opening of an hydro-electric power plant at Niagara Falls; poet A. E. Housman wrote *A Shropshire Lad* and the French poet Paul Verlaine died. In Australia, Henry Lawson published *While the Billy Boils* and in Horsham, Queen Victoria's jubilee was celebrated. The town was decorated with flags and streamers, the post office was illuminated with lights which formed a crown and Firebrace Street was ankle deep in mud.

Len attended Carchap State School with several of his cousins including Ivy McDonald who would drive them to school in a gig. Later he boarded with Sam Bleakley and family in Horsham and went to the Central State School No. 298 where he gained his merit certificate. The registrar of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Horsham, records that Len was baptised at his parents' home by the Reverend Thomas Gray on October 21, 1906.

After his father's death in 1915 Len carried on the family farm with the help of his mother and sister Tean. On February 23, 1927, Leonard was married to Ethel Rose Tucker at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Horsham, by the Reverend E. G. Pethcrick. The bridesmaid was Vera Lane and the best man was James Tucker, brother of the bride. The reception was held in the adjoining church hall and the honeymoon was spent touring in Victoria. Ethel was born on January 18, 1897 and was the daughter of George and Martha Tucker nee Williams, farmers of Lower Norton, a district bordering Noradjuha. She attended Lower Norton's Creek State School No 2430 where she gained her merit certificate. George Tucker was a brother of Walter John Tucker who had married Len's aunt, Annie McDonald in South Australia in 1872. In 1920 Ethel Tucker's sister, Violet, had married James Forsyth, brother to Dave Forsyth who had married Len's sister Rachel Annie in 1912.

The young couple bought a house for removal from a neighbour, George Francis, who had originally built it for his son Ernest. Len's cousin Archie Raggatt and his bullock team moved the house to a site half a mile from the *Blackwood* house. Len and Ethel had two daughters, and the family attended Church of England services at the Lower Norton hall. During World War Two, Ethel worked hard for the Comforts Fund and baked many a cake or tray of biscuits for the monthly cake and produce stall at the Lower Norton hall. She was always a keen and successful gardener.

Len grew wheat and oats, and also harvested subterranean clover seed for commercial sale, but his first love was sheep and wool production. He liked reading and played golf for relaxation. Len was an Arapiles Shire councillor, from 1944 to 1959, served his term as president, and was a life governor of the Queen Elizabeth Benevolent Home at Ballarat.

In 1957 Len and Ethel sold *Blackwood* to Ted Rethus and retired to Horsham where they had bought a house from Geoff Leivesley at 36 Natimuk Road. Len's sister Tean also retired to Horsham. Finding it hard to settle to a retired life, Len soon bought 300 acres of land, near his old property, on which he ran a few sheep.

Len died, aged 67, in Wimmera Base Hospital, Horsham, on March 5, 1964, his sister Tean's 83rd birthday. Ethel died in the same hospital eleven years later, September 2, 1975, aged 78 years. She and Len are buried in Horsham cemetery. A headstone marks their grave.

Children of Len and Ethel :-

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| 1 | <i>Dorothy</i> Jean McDonald | Born 21-6-1930 |
| 2 | <i>Margaret</i> Ethel McDonald | Born 23-12-1933 |

• SOURCE : This biography was from page 145 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.