

# James Francis Ewen McDONALD 31-5-1859 to 31-3-1924 & Annie Fyffe McDONALD, nee MOSSMAN

Biography as published in 1985 & 1995

James Francis Ewen was the seventh child and third son of Ewen and Rachel McDonald, and was born at Lower Finniss, South Australia. His grandparents were Christina and Donald McLean.

In that year Charles Dickens published *A Tale of Two Cities*, Arthur Conan Doyle was born, and the first oil well was drilled, in Pennsylvania. In Australia, Queensland was created a separate colony from New South Wales, and in Victoria twelve rabbits were released in the Western District, and so began the pest that spread Australia-wide.

Nothing is known of Jim's education but that he was taught to read and write. About the time of his fifteenth birthday he accompanied his parents, brothers and sisters to Noradjuha. He was nearly 20 years when he pegged allotments 46 and 46A on January 10, 1879 in the Parish of Carchap, County of Lowan. On June 3, 1885 he applied for a lease and was able to list improvements.

- Post and rail fence - split stuff, 89 chains at 6 shillings a chain.
- Post and rail and five wires - 146 chains at 20 shillings a chain.
- Post and 6 wires — 5 chains at 30 shillings a chain.
- Log fence — 58 chains.

#### Cultivation

- 3rd year - 32 acres wheat at £1 an acre - 10 bushels an acre.
- 4th year — 34 acres wheat at £1. an acre,- 6 bushels.
- 5th year — 34 acres wheat at £1 an acre - 11 bushels.
- Altogether 100 acres.

#### House

- House, 33 feet by 34 feet, plaster and mud with iron roof - £120.
- Kitchen - £30
- Stable and chaff house made of split stuff - £50.
- Dam, 800 yards - £50
- Tank, 50 yards, £6
- Two stockyards - £20.
- Garden - £10.

Total cost of improvements over six years, £550-11-6.

The house had four rooms and his family resided with him. All his land was enclosed.

During the 1880s, Jim was married at Horsham to Annie Fyffe Mossman who was a school-teacher in the area. Annie was the daughter of Charles Stuart and Ellen Mossman, nee Harrison, and was born in Victoria about 1864. According to the *Cyclopaedia of Victoria* her father, who died in 1871, was identified with squatting pursuits in New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria. Her brother, Charles John Mossman, was a surveyor. For some years he was in partnership with Mr W. J. Crowther during which time the firm made a survey in the Wimmera. Mossman and Crowther purchased North Wonwondah Station which they carried on until 1899 when Charles Mossman purchased his partner's interest and the property was sold. Mossman then became a stock and station commission agent and valuer with premises in Wilson Street, Horsham. An advertisement in the *Horsham Times* of May 3, 1910 showed the variety of his business.

*Charles J. Mossman — Wilson St – Horsham  
Land finance House & General Commission Agent  
Advances made on wool & other Farm Produce  
All land office business done  
Agents for -  
- Dalgety & Company  
- National Mutual Life Association of Australasia  
- International Harvester Company  
- George Munro, Ballarat, manufacturer of horseworks & chaffcutters.*

The old parish map of Wonwondah, County of Boning, shows that C. J. Mossman owned allotment 17 in 1894, plus allotments 94 and 95 in 1897. In 1974 Tean, eldest daughter of Donald William McDonald, remembered her Uncle Jim as a bit of a dandy who wore a flower in his buttonhole and was always smartly dressed.

According to Lands Department records, Charles Stuart McDonald purchased his brother Jim's land, allotments 46 and 46A on April 28, 1897. Around this time Jim, Annie and family left the Horsham area for Western Australia. At least two of their four children were born in Victoria. The first-born, Muriel, was known as Poppy. The second child, Norma Stuart Mossman, was born on February 17, 1890 and baptised at Horsham by the Presbyterian Near Bibra Lake, South Fremantle, on March 31, 1924 Jim was found dead, aged 64 years. The coroner's finding was death by a self-inflicted rifle shot. On his death certificate Jim is described as an auctioneer. He was buried in the Presbyterian section of Fremantle cemetery after a service conducted by the Reverend James Marshall.

Son Roy joined the Royal Australian Navy during World War One and became a marine engineer. A few years before World War Two he was working as a Mobil Oil representative at Stawell, Victoria. He later became the engine driver for the Stawell brickworks. During this time he made minister, the Reverend Thomas Gray, on May 21, 1891. They subsequently had another daughter, Madge Mossman, and a son, Roy Ewen. Jim and Annie settled at Fremantle. Some time after the turn of the century they parted and Annie returned to teaching. himself known to his relatives in the Horsham area. Roy was married with a son and a daughter. When war broke out he rejoined the navy and died when his ship was sunk with all hands.

Annie died at Rivervale, Perth on October 16, 1940, aged 76 years. After a service conducted by the Reverend T. Whitehead she was buried in the Anglican section of Karrakatta cemetery, Perth. Two children survived. During the sixteen years between her husband's death in 1924 and her own in 1940, their daughters Norma and Madge had died. Annie's death certificate gave her father's profession as soldier. Efforts to trace descendants of this family have been unsuccessful.

Children of James and Annie McDonald :-

1. Muriel McDonald
2. *Norma* Stuart Mossman McDonald Born 17.2.1890
3. *Marjorie 'Madge'* Jean Mossman McDonald Born 1892 [See biographies 5179](#)
4. Roy Ewen McDonald

• SOURCE : This biography was from page 193 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.