

# Donald McLEAN & Christina McLEAN, nee McPHEE

Biography as published in 1995

**DONALD McLEAN  
McPHEE  
(1772 -1855)  
1869)**

**CHRISTINA  
  
(1791 -**

Pioneers of Strathalbyn, South Australia and formerly of Argyllshire - Scotland. They arrived in S.A. by the "Navarino" on December 6th, 1837 with 5 sons and 5 daughters.

An account of nine generations compiled 1995 by E. M. Stevenson of Strathalbyn on behalf of the National Trust. Strathalbyn.

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Donald was born 26 years after the defeat at Culloden.

He grew up to lease the Duiskey Estate. From owning 100,000 acres the family now leased 12,000 acres. Donald grew oats and barley, raised cattle and had interests in herring fishing. Hard times convinced him that there might be better living in Australia. Strife with revenue officers over distilling may have helped his decision. (page 4)

## A McLEAN FAMILY HISTORY WHERE SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S FIRST WHEAT CROP WAS GROWN

Donald McLean was the first man to grow a crop of wheat in South Australia. This he did on his allotment Section 50, situated on the south western corner of present day South Road, and Richmond Road, Marlston, in 1838. A picture of his first home on Section 50, is in the Mortlock Library, of the State Library of South Australia, with details of his wheat growing. He was born near Fort William, Argyllshire, Scotland, in 1772. On attaining adulthood he leased 20 square miles of country known as the Douskie Estate, Ardmore. With hopes of a better future, he sailed for South Australia in August, 1837, on the "Navarino" (163 tons) under the command of Captain C. A. Warming, with his wife, Christina, and their family of five sons and five daughters.

There were 217 passengers on board the vessel and they arrived at Holdfast Bay on December 6th, 1837. It was the 16th ship for the 1837 run to Australia, having departed from Gravesend on the River Thames.

Donald McLean had purchased Land Order No. 454 for £1,000 prior to leaving England, which entitled him to one section of 80 acres on arrival. He chose section 50, Hilton, later Marlestone, and there he grew 20 acres of wheat from seed that his son, Allan, had brought from Tasmania, where he had been sent by his father to procure bullocks, horses, drays and seed wheat.

Dr John Rankine and his family came to Strathalbyn, S.A. in 1839, and Donald McLean came soon after. He took up Section 2603 on the main Strathalbyn to Wellington Road, and there on built a two-storied home for his family, with a substantial stable and loft. He died at his home on October 10th, 1855, aged 84 years, leaving his wife, Christina, five sons and five daughters. He was buried in Section 1 of the Strathalbyn Cemetery. His descendants now number some 4,000 persons, and are spread into all states of the Commonwealth of Australia, with some living overseas.

## BIBLE.

Donald McLean's gaelic Bible is at the Strathalbyn National Trust Museum. On the inside front cover is - "Donald McLEAN bought and purchased 1835". On the back inside face, also handwritten in English, is:- "Son of Allan McLean of Fort William, purchased from me, Mr McPhee". This indicates that Donald's wife, Christina McPhee, was kin to the book seller.

Contributed by Mary Benton: "What may be described as the McLean family Bible was printed in London in 1847 by the British and Foreign Bible Society in London. The Bible apart from the need for re-binding is well preserved. While some of the pages are yellowing, not one is missing.

The Bible 'must have originally belonged to John S. D. McLean as his name is inscribed six times on the inside of the front and back cover. At the beginning of the New Testament the following hand-written details are inserted:

*Allan McLean Senior - born 11th Feb. 1811  
Rachel 21 March 1863  
John Stuart Duncan 12th July 1865  
Margaret 16th April 1869  
Mrs Donato MacLean died April 1869*

On the introductory pages there is the signature of a Mrs McLean signed at Strathalbyn, Sunday A 15 1883, followed by the given names of other people namely William, Thomas and Benjamin. \_\_ Strathalbyn is also written beneath one of the signatures of John S. D. McLean. In fading handwriting the words "*Beginning of the*" and "*The end of the Holy*" appear on the first and last pages.

The following hand-written poem or verses, in now fading ink appears on the inside of the back cover:

*Steal not this book for fear of shame  
For in it you will find the owners name  
And when you are dead the lord will say  
Where is the book you stole away*

*When I am dead and in my grave  
And all my bones are rotten  
This \*\*\* book will remember me  
When I am quite forgotten*

*This is the book the only book  
Will back you from your youth  
To turn over the leavs and over the leaves  
Of God's Holy Holy Book*

The adjective describing the book is illegible.

The signature of the person beneath these verses is not easy to define but it seems to be Magie McLean.

## THE McLEAN'S - PIONEERS OF STRATHALBYN and ANGAS PLAINS, S.A.

### DONALD McLEAN

- Son of Allan McLean of Blaich, Argyllshire and Fort William, Invernessshire
- Born at Blaich, 1772
- Marriage: c. 1810 to CHRISTINA MCPHEE (b. 1791, so 19 years his junior)

If the old system of naming was used her parents would have been Ewen and Mary McPhee, and Donald's mother, Ann. This has not been confirmed, nor the place, and date of their marriage, which was not in either Invernessshire or Argyllshire. Kilmallie as shown below cannot be identified. Therefore, it must be supposed that it was a house name as even detailed maps fail to show it, and the one on Duiskey Estate, Argyllshire from which they left for South Australia in 1837. North of this estate are Glen Mallie and the River Mallie, both skirting Locheil Forest. Where the river enters Loch Arkaig is the village of Inver Mallie. These are west of Clunes and north of Fort William.

### CHILDREN:

Baptisms from the Argyllshire Parish Records.

(1) ALLAN McLEAN - baptised 12/2/1811 at Kilmallie – Argyllshire

There was possibly an infant who died between Allan and Ewen (Hugh).

(2) EWEN McLEAN - baptised 10/1/1814 at Kilmallie - but known as Hugh the Elder. He recorded in his own Gaelic Bible that he was born 20/2/1814, but the Parish says otherwise.

(3) JOHN McLEAN - born 6/2/1816 and baptised 20/2/1816, at Kilmallie.

(4)....MARY McLEAN - born 2/4/1818 and baptised 5/4/1818, at Kilmallie.

(5) ARCHIBALD McLEAN - baptised 4/3/1821 at Kilmallie.

(1) ANN McLEAN - baptised 6/4/1823 at Kilmallie.

(2) RACHEL McLEAN - baptised 13/2/1825 at Kilmallie.

(3) MARGARET McLEAN - 1827/28 - the only one not baptised at Kilmallie.

(4) JANE McLEAN — baptised 16/8/1830 at Kilmallie.

(10). EWEN McLEAN ~ baptised 26/5/1836 at Kilmallie (known as Hugh the Younger).

### THE NAMING:

As can be seen from this list there are two Ewens but no Hughs' yet both are the children of Donald and Christina, (nee McPhee). It would seem that to Donald, the name Ewen and Hugh were the same, as in his Will of 1846 he refers to his son-in-law Ewen McDonald as Hugh McDonald of Finness. This explains the vanished Ewen of the ship "Navarino" in 1837.

The persistent inclusion of a Donald and a Hugh McLean who arrived in 1840 by ship "Tomatin" must be an error as the listed children are the same 10, who with their emigrating parents and in the father's Will. These two may have been nephews. If they were of an earlier marriage of Donald, he had three sons named Hugh which is carrying things a bit far, as to names!

There is a family story that "two sons were sent to Venezuela to look for farming possibilities" referring of course to the Donald and Hugh on the "Tomatin" of 1840. Then not discovering anything suitable followed on to SA. Nothing further is known of them although two men of the same name were at Naracoorte in the South East quite early, and the names of the families were the same as those of the Donald McLean's. They were not mentioned in Donald McLean's Will.

Christina, Donald's wife is named in the Parish Records, sometimes as Christian, the old form of Christina; sometimes as Christy which her husband might have called her, and also as we know her - Christina.

## HISTORY OF DONALD:

The Donald McLean of this present history had ancestry back to 1420 as has already been shown and that he was of the Blaich branch of the Ardgour McLeans. He used the surname McLean, not the older form of MacLean.

Tradition was that only a kinsman of the Laird might lease any of the estate so it follows in having 12,000 acres of Duiskey by Loch Eil, Donald belonged. The old house at Duiskey is no more, and even a later one which Donald may have occupied is now used as a farm building together with the huge stone barn. It was owned in 1933 by an English absentee landlord, the Earl of Morton.

Records are sketchy, but Donald and his family seem to have resided for the most part in the Lochaber district. It is said he brought them to South Australia to escape prosecution for the illegal distillation of whisky, when he was aged 65. However, the 1836 famine in Scotland due to harvest failure, which contributed to the Highland Clearances, is a more likely explanation.

It is evident that he was not without resources as he was able to pay £1,000 (\$2,000) in cash (in golden sovereigns. the family maintains) at London in July 1837 for a land section of 80 acres, "sight unseen" at the new Colony of South Australia (Land Order no, 454).

So Donald made his move, together with his wife and family, and left Scotland and London and travelling by the "Navarino" arrived in December of 1837. The story of Donald, his wife Christina and their ten children and the descendants is recorded in the following pages.

**LATER INFORMATION:** from Diana Facey.

Donald McLean and his wife and family aboard the "Navarino" in 1837 are recorded as all leaving from Fort William, Inverness, Scotland. (The general area is known as Lochaber).

Application for a free passage to South Australia for himself, his wife and the four youngest children was made at London on 19/8/1837. The older children made separate applications. Occupations were given to correspond with those wanted in the new colony and ages were at the time application.

To obtain free passage the applicant at that time had to be under 40 years so there was much lowering of true ages. Donald, already 65 years gave his as 35 and that of his wife Christina who was 46, as 25 years.

When an application had been approved and numbered, an embarkation number was given:

**Donald** - (including wife and 4 children) - Application No. 1376. Embarkation No 720. Occupation - farmer.

**Allan** - Application No. not found. Age given as 24 (actually 26). ' Embarkation No 722. Occupation - Labourer.

**Ewen** (Hugh the Elder) - Application No. 1371. Age 23. Embarkation No 721. Occupation - Shepherd.

**John** - Application No. 1372. Age 22. Embarkation No 723. Occupation - Shepherd.

**Archibald** - Application No. not given. Age 17. Embarkation No 724. Occupation - Shepherd.

**Mary** - Application No. 1373. Age 19. Embarkation No 726 Occupation - Servant.

Ann's age was given as 15. The younger children were not officially named but were Rachel (14) - Margaret (10) - Jane (7) and Hugh the Younger (or Hugh Little to the family) 16 months.

Although it is generally believed that Donald and his family were paying passengers, from above it is obvious that they were not, in view of the adjusted ages. They embarked at Gravesend at the mouth of the River Thames on the "Navarino" in August 1837, a ship of 463 tons, with 217 passengers and under the command of Captain C. A. Warming. They arrived at Holdfast Bay (Glenelg) on 6/12/1837, the 16th ship to reach South Australia, and were carried ashore by sailors.

Rachel was to tell her grandchildren that their first sleeping quarters were under an old canvas sail, and doubtless in the sandhills at Holdfast Bay.

**Text accompanying a sketch of Donald McLean's cottage at Hilton:** (Source - Laurence and Douglas McLean)

*"Donald was the first man to grow wheat in South Australia. This he did on his allotment Section 50 Hilton in 1838. A picture of his first home at Hilton is in the National Gallery. North Terrace, Adelaide with details of his wheat growing. He was born near Fort William, Argylshire. Scotland, in 1772. On attaining adulthood he leased 20 square miles of country known as the Douskie Estate, Ardgore. With hopes of a better future, he sailed for South Australia in August, 1837 on the "Navarino" (163 tons) under the command of Captain C. A. Warming with his wife, Christina, and their family of five sons and five daughters. There were 217 passengers aboard the vessel and they arrived at Holdfast Bay on December 6th, 1837. It was the 16th ship for the 1837 run to Australia, having departed from Gravesend on the River Thames.*

*"Donald McLean had purchased Land Order No. 454 for £1000 prior to leaving England, which entitled him to one Section of 80 acres on arrival. He chose Section 50, Hilton, and there he grew 20 acres of wheat from seed that his son Allan had brought from Tasmania, where he had been sent by his father to procure bullocks, horses, drays and seed wheat.*

*"Dr John Rankine and his family came to Strathalbyn in 1939 and Donald McLean came soon after. He took up Section 2603 on the main Strathalbyn-Wellington Road and thereon built a two storied home for his family with a substantial stable and loft.*

*"He died at his home on October 10th, 1855, aged 84 years, leaving his wife, Christina, five sons and five daughters and was buried in Section 1 of the Strathalbyn Cemetery.*

*"Although genealogical work is nearing completion it is too detailed to reproduce here. Descendants number some 4000 people and are spread through all states of Australia."*

May 1923 - from the Public Library, Adelaide, Museum and Art Gallery of S.A. (by 1995 the Mortlock Library:

**Note to accompany a photograph of a sketch of Donald McLean's house at Hilton near Adelaide, c. 1838.**

*"Photograph of Mr Donald McLean's old home who had been situated in Argyleshire in the Highlands of Scotland, where he held a lease of 20 square miles of land, known as the Duiskie Estate, Ardgour, near Fort William. He reared cattle and sheep, grew oats and barley and was also interested in the herring industry. Mr McLean, his wife and family of 5 sons and 5 daughters arrived in the ship "Navarino" in 1837, landing at Holdfast Bay.*

*"There were no houses in South Australia at the time and Governor Hindmarsh was living in a reed hut on the banks of the River Torrens, Adelaide.*

*"Mr McLean, soon after landing, sent his son to Tasmania for supplies and he returned with bullocks, horses and drays and also seed wheat etc. Mr McLean brought his land order No. 454 from England. This entitled him to an eighty acre section of land near Adelaide. As this land had not been surveyed he had to wait until the 6/6/1838 land meeting was held for 80 acre sections at Adelaide.*

*"Mr McLean had first choice - No. 1. (section chosen No. 50) - (Note: this statement is incorrect as Mr McLean had the 12th choice) Mr McLean's sons Allan and John lost no time in yoking the bullocks to the plough which they had brought with them and put in some 20 acres of wheat on Section No. 50 at Hilton where a good crop was hand-reaped towards the end of 1838. It was on this Section that Mr McLean built his house. (He called this property "Duisky".)*

*"This has always been acknowledged as the very first wheat grown in S.A. In fact it has never been disputed, although it appeared repeatedly in the Adelaide newspapers.*

*"Mrs Calaby of Mt Barker. arrived in 1839 and died several years ago, at about 90 years of age. Since her death an article appeared in the papers relating to her experiences in S.A. She stated that Mr Ottaway, several others and herself had eaten bread made from the very first wheat grown in S.A. and that this wheat was grown by the late Mr McLean (Donald) on his section No. 50, near Hilton. Mr William Grieg of Hindmarsh, who came to S.A. in the same ship as the McLean family, declares that he was present when Mr McLean put in his first crop of wheat and he is positive that this was the first wheat grown in S.A. He died about four years ago aged 95 years of age, and old colonists often spoke in reference to this being correct.*

*"A Mr Crossman, a descendant of an old pioneer, has printed a book wherein it is recorded that the late Mr Donald McLean was the first to grow wheat in S.A. and also that the amount was 20 acres near Hilton. It is also recorded at the Library that no wheat was grown in S.A. before 1838 and only 20 acres were grown in that year.*

*"There are plans in the Public Library describing that Mr McLean was granted Section No. 50 and also that his land order was No. 454 at the land meeting held at Adelaide on 6/6/1838.*

*"Mr McLean was also one of the first to purchase large holdings around Strathalbyn, also on the Angas and Bremer Rivers, and on the frontage of Lake Alexandrina, including Mundoo Island.*

*"The old two storey homestead and out buildings are still standing adjoining the River Angas, near Strathalbyn. The late Mr McLean passed away in his 85th year. The two sons Allan and John who really did the cropping of the very first wheat grown in .S.A on their father's land, passed away, one over 90 years, the other a little under 90 years of age." (Note: the ages are incorrect as to Allan and John.)*

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Although there is a certain amount of repetition, the best and most factual account of the wheat was by Donald's grandson (eldest son of John), namely Donald Henry McLean (1854-1933) of Murrayville, Victoria. It was published in the "Southern Argus" after Donald Henry had been back to exhume his first wife from the Milang Cemetery and rebury her at Strathalbyn where he joined her in due course.

**"The Southern Argus" Strathalbyn, of December 7th, 1922:**

## THE FIRST WHEAT

*"Controversy has furiously raged about the claims of the first wheat crop in S.A., and a vast amount of research work has been put in to establish various claims. So far as we know there has never been a satisfactory claim to this honor, since the confusion of dates and localities, and hazy memories has usually led up to the proverbial Scotchman's "doots".*

*"We give another claim in which we understand dates and family records have been checked and counter checked, with everything possible being done, to establish beyond doubt a genuine claim to the first crop of wheat grown in this State. The particulars which have been supplied to us by a well known resident of Murrayville (Victoria), a relative (grand-son) of the late Donald McLean, are as follows:-*

*"The very first wheat grown in S.A. without a shadow of a doubt was grown by the late Donald McLean in 1838.*

*"Mr McLean was a relative of the late Hon. Allan McLean, a former Premier of Victoria. He hailed from Argyllshire, and left Gravesend, London, with his wife and family of 10 children on August 6th, 1837, landing by the "Navarino" at Holdfast Bay on December 6th, 1837"...*

*"Equipped with a fair amount of capital, he quickly sized up the conditions, and sent two sons to Tasmania who were then aged 24 and 22 years of age (error - 26 and 23) providing them with £800 (\$1600) to purchase seed wheat which at that time was only procurable in Van Diemen's Land, two teams of bullocks, horses, drays and other accessories, which by the way included a cat for his wife, Christina McLean.*

*"A land order entitled Mr McLean to select land, but as the surveying had not been done it was necessary to wait until 6th June, 1838, the date of the first land meeting in S.A. for selecting blocks around Adelaide. Thirty applicants attended, and Mr Donald McLean selected Section No 50, one and a half miles from the (present) G.P.O. and now known as the suburb of Marleston, near Hilton. His two eldest sons, Allan and John (error - Hugh the Elder was the 2nd) started cultivating operations with a plough brought from the old country.*

*"Twenty acres of land were cleared and fenced and seed put in, a good crop being reaped (by hand) at the end of 1838. The records in the Government Office substantiate the claim that no wheat was grown in SA. before 1838, and the first was the 20 acres grown by Mr McLean. In 1839, 120 acres were cultivated and 1816 acres in 1840.*

*"It is believed that this wheat was ground into meal and eaten after the manner of the oaten cake and bannock which was common Scotch fare in those days. A few years ago, a Mrs Calaby of Mt Barker, and old pioneer, claimed to have eaten bread made from wheat grown by the McLeans and by a Mr W. Grieg, a shipmate of the McLeans, testified he saw the wheat put in and that no other wheat was grown in S.A. that year. The remains of the homestead still (1922) stand near Hilton. The land was later sold to Mr Marles' father."*

The remainder repeated the Strathalbyn story and that the old homestead ("Auchanada's") was situated near Strathalbyn, a solid two storey house which was then still standing.

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The coastal shipping lists in the Hodge Index at Mortlock Library, Adelaide, show Allan and D. McLean returning by the "Miniver" from Launceston, Tasmania, on 15/11/1840 and was certainly a second trip as seed wheat had been obtained from the then Van Diemen's Land in 1838. On the first trip their most prized possession was a horse called Nugget which was used for the original ploughing for the wheat crop, of 1838.

The Marleston Post Office is still on that original section No. 50 which Donald chose and on the present Richmond Road and Horwood Bagshaw, manufacturer of agricultural implements of King Street, Mile End was on the site for a long period, but is now of Mannum, S.A.

With Donald's allotted 80 acres went a Town Acre at Hindley Street, Adelaide. Donald built a cottage to house his large family at the Marleston (now Hilton) section, and for postal and official purposes named it "Duisky". A sketch of it is held in the National Gallery, (a photocopy is included at the end of this chapter). There is also a photo of the sketch in the research room at the Strathalbyn Museum. It was presented by members of the John McLean family together with one of Donald's house ("Auchananda's" on Section 2603) at Strathalbyn when it had commenced to decay. This was plain and square, the typical old Scottish style of two storeys. In the picture the balcony is broken and the roof partly gone.

The presenters were John's son, Edwin J. and two youngest daughters, the Misses Elizabeth and Florence McLean and given to the late Town Clerk, Mr H. J. Stowe who was collecting memorabilia of pioneer families of Strathalbyn.

**The South Australian "Gazette"** dated April 16th 1839:

**The drought** - reprinted from the Launceston, Tasmania "Advertiser".

*"The drought still continues and the Colonists have before them every prospect of a famine - crops failed, on every side of the road bullocks have perished for want of sustenance.*

*"The settlers of Argyle (Tas.) are harrowing in their wheat on the stubbles without any ploughing. The ground is like iron, as the Heavens are like brass. The ancient curse of Moses on the Jews when they should lapse into idolatry, has overtaken N.S.W. and we fear South Australia."*

However, the S.A. Gazette Editor wrote:- *"We have suffered though in an exceedingly partial degree from the drought during the past season. It has, however, only been felt during the last three months - the "dry season" under any circumstances; and after the ordinary harvesting time. The samples of wheat, barley and oats ripened this season have all been excellent of their kind. Maize only has in some measure failed in consequence of the want of December rains."*

This then was the situation when the McLeans were at Hilton after their historic first crop of wheat. The same "Gazette" complained that the clock of Holy Trinity church was misbehaving and it was only the public time piece. Edward John Eyre had arrived overland from Sydney with cattle and sheep, ships were arriving from Europe and Britain with new settlers and coastal vessels busy.

Supplied by the old Archives - now Mortlock Library, Adelaide:

**Donald McLean** 1838 **His claim** to have grown the first wheat in South Australia.

**Research Note 276**

15 January 1942

The Town Clerk  
Town Hall  
Adelaide

Dear Mr Morrison,

#### **FIRST WHEAT GROWN IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

There are two claimants in the field. What William Everard did is recorded as follows in a family memorandum book, which was lent to me some years ago by Mrs Nash (formerly Miss Everard):-

"William Everard said that he was the first man to plant wheat here. He lived with his father, Dr C, G. Everard, near the corner of Morphett and Hindley Streets. The ground was hard to dig, but he broke up part of the yard and sowed the seed. The neighbours looked over the fence and jeered at his folly. They said nothing could grow in such



barren ground. Spring brought the plants as high as the fence; great heavy ears appeared, and passers-by stopped to gaze in admiration and thankfulness. Mr Everard was the pioneer in wheat growing."

On the other hand the descendants of Donald McLean maintain that he has always been accepted as the first to grow a crop of wheat in South Australia. McLean took up Section 50, the modern Galway Gardens, in June 1838, and he and his sons at once ploughed the soil and sowed 20 acres of wheat. From this they reaped a good crop towards the end of the year.

It is unfortunate that the Everards have not recorded the year in which William put in his wheat. The family settled on town acre 71 in March 1837 and remained there until July 1838 when they moved to Ashford on the South Road. If William grew his wheat in 1837 he clearly has priority over McLean, but it is quite possible that he put the wheat in during the early part of the Winter of 1838, in which case his crop would be contemporaneous with that of McLean. It is really impossible, in the absence of exact data, to decide between the two.

You will notice that Mr Crompton is under the impression that William Everard dug up the whole of an acre, but the extract from the Everard memorandum book shows that the ground was too hard for digging and that he merely broke up and planted a part of the yard. I do not think the Everards had acre 72, and it is almost certain that wheat was grown on the corner block i.e. acre 71.

Yours faithfully

G. N. Pitt,  
Archivist.

The Hilton land was sold to a Mr Marles, hence Marleston as a suburb. The Rankine family removed from Adelaide to Strathalbyn in November 1840 and the Angas Special Survey took place in 1841. By that time the McLeans had arrived also at Strathalbyn as the South Australian Almanac - **Strathalbyn Census 1841** published:

McLEAN DONALD above 50.  
CHRISTINA under 50.  
ALLAN under 35.  
ARCHIBALD under 21.  
ANN under 21  
RICHARD under 21. (This is an obvious error for Rachel)  
MARGARET under 14.  
JANE under 14  
HUGH under 7

Mary had already married Adam Abercrombie of Hindley Street, Adelaide apparently. and John and Hugh the Elder, would have been absent from the dwelling that day. At this early stage they would have lived either in tents or an extremely rough shelter of some kind. The Rankines had built rooms of pise thatched with reeds from the River Angas. In 1842 the McLeans built a stone bam large enough in after years to be converted to a house, but Donald's "Auchanada's" of two storeys was mud brick that lasted well, until the roof went. Its probable date is uncertain, given as 1841 (far too early) and as 1859, too late as Donald died in 1855. It was on his Section 2603 on the outskirts of the town and close to the river. The legend of Donald hiding his gold sovereigns in a secret place in the river bank has come down to the present and led to more than one treasure seeker hunting intensively - to no avail.

#### The 1844 Census

JOHN ARCHIBALD McLEAN - Strathalbyn - should be JOHN and ARCHIBALD. Together they had:- 20 acres wheat, 1 acre potatoes, 26 cattle, 1 pony and 4 pigs.

DONALD ANGUS - (either DONALD and ALLAN or DONALD of the Angas - there were many errors) had 82 acres wheat, 8 acres barley, 100 cattle, 7 horses, 150 goats.

### **The 1855 Census**

D. McLEAN - Achadale (for Auchanada's), JOHN and ARCHIBALD of Bremer, not yet called Angas Plains apparently.

### **The 1864 Census**

HUGH McLEAN, farmer, Strathalbyn. (Hugh the Younger as the elder was near Milang).  
ALLAN McLEAN of Meadowbank,  
ARCHIBALD McLEAN of Strathalbyn. The latter seems to have had Angas Bank. Strathalbyn for the family and Melrose, Angas Plains to farm.

At first the land was held under Crown Lease and all the early settlers grazed their animals on unfenced land as far as Milang and Lake Alexandrina. These occupational licences lapsed when the official survey was made in the 1850s. The Angas Survey of 1851 enabled the McLeans to purchase largely. In 1854 the District of Bremer (named for that River) consisted of Belvidere, Angas Plains, Lake and Dry Plains and listed 69 owners.

From 1842 to 1846 Donald McLean was the lessee of an Aboriginal Reserve. He made a claim for fencing and grubbing in 1842 but was in arrears for rent for the Reserve 1842-43 so was denied.

**The correspondence of Donald concerning land leases** gave his address as "Duskey Farm" undoubtedly poor spelling of the Duiskie or Duisky Estate of Argyllshire from whence the family emigrated. Whether this applied to the new property at Strathalbyn from 1841 or the one at Hilton, has not been ascertained. According to the 1841 Census they were definitely already at Strathalbyn.

### **Correspondence from Mortlock Library:**

Aboriginal Reserve 2031 A. - 54 acres Donald McLean - annual rental at 54 pounds (one pound per acre) \$108 - for a term of 7 years from January 1st 1842. (Donald signed his name variously as - McLane - MacLean - McLean - McC|ean.) Rent paid to September 30th/1842. Recorded by Robert Gouger, Colonial Treasurer. There had been some months occupation before the date when the lease commenced for which a quarters rent had been paid in advance - thus a whole years rent would be paid on 30/9/1842 and a further quarters due on 1/1/1843.

Ref. CSOK 1842/128: - **to Donald McLean.**

Sir,

The Colonial Treasurer has reported that you have not paid the whole amount of the half years rent due by you on the first of July last, on the following Aboriginal Reserve let to you - No. 2031 District A. The Advocate General has also reported that you have not yet executed the lease of the same which was notified in the Gazette for the period of two months. as being ready for execution and delivery at the Crown Solicitors Office in Rundle Street. His Excellency the Governor. has accordingly directed me to request that you will lose no further time in executing the lease and paying the balance of rent due. I am at the same time to acquaint you that another Quarters rent will fall due on the first of next month.

I am etc. J. A. Jackson. 27th September 1842.

Ref. CSOP/1842/212: Dated 19/11/1842. **To Donald McLean.**

Sir,

In reference to my letter of 27th September last, I now beg to inform you that the Colonial Treasurer and Collector of Internal Revenue has reported that the sum of 27 pounds (\$54) due by you on September last (30th) is six months in arrears on the Aboriginal Reserve let to you, and is as yet unpaid, and to express the hope of his Excellency the Governor that you will see the necessity of forthwith paying the same to that office.

I am etc. J. A. Jackson.

Ref. 451/1842: - **To the Resident Commissioner of Lands** in the Province of South Australia. Dated 23/12/1842.

Your Excellency,

I beg leave most respectfully to intimate my Intention of giving up the possession of the 54 acres of the Aboriginal Reserve which I now rent under your Excellency. And also to state that I have fenced a greater portion of the land to the amount of 64 pounds (\$128) adjoining the public road and have also cleared away the greater part of the scrub and grubbed a great quantity of trees. The expense of the fence being for a substantial stringy bark fence, 16 pounds 10 shillings (\$33) and the expense of the clearing and grubbing 14 pounds 5 shillings (\$28.50). I have therefore most respectfully to request that your Excellency will take my statement into your kind consideration and grant me any relief your Excellency may think proper.

I have the honour to be your Excellency's Obedient Servant,  
DONALD McLEAN - Dusky Farm.

Note the spelling of "Dusky" varied considerably.

Ref. 'CSO 1061/42: **To A. M. Mundy** Esq. Private Secretary - dated Jan. 5th 1843. Aboriginal location.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform his Excellency the Governor that I yesterday visited the aboriginal Reserve mentioned in Mr McLean's memorial and found from measurements that the quantity of fencing as stated by Mr McLean is correct but the rate of 5 pounds (\$10) per road at which he has calculated it, is decidedly higher than the current price for a three railed fence. Mr McLean has only fenced the north side, the east side joins his private property and is not fenced, whilst the south and west boundaries have been fenced by the proprietors of the adjoining sections as shown in the annexed diagram. (A drawing was alongside.) It is completely cleared from trees, thus it would in consequence be improved much in value, but I don't think it could be leased again at one pound (\$2) per acre, if the present lessee be permitted to give it up. Mr McLean says that the lease was never executed as the required security could not be given.

I have the honour to be Sir, your obedient servant,

**J. Morehouse, Protector of Aborigines.**

Ref. \_csc 1061/42; ' Memorandum **from Governor George Gray** - dated Jan. 7th 1843.

Mr Jackson,

While I feel the desire to assist Mr McLean, I do not think that the Government can with propriety do more than allow him to throw up the lease from the 23rd December, the date of his letter and then the lease land can again be put up for auction. Mr McLean can then again become a tenant of the Government, if he chooses to bid higher than anyone else. In the future no tenant nor person must be allowed to enter into possession of Government property until all the documents connected with his tenancy of the said property have been clearly executed.

G. Gray.

George Gray was the 3rd Governor of South Australia from 15/5/1841. His handwriting is most difficult to decipher. He was only aged 29 when he took office. He had found the Colony in financial straits but by exercising strict economy he restored stability.

Note: Donald did not get away with his proposal for remuneration as the last letter and the next directly show. In this Dusky is incorrectly "Dunshey" and section No. 50 is proof of the Hilton farm being so named.

Ref. 501/1842/308: **To Mr Donald McLean**, Dunshey Farm - No. 50. Dated Jan 9th 1843.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 23rd ultimo I am directed by his Excellency to inform you that with every desire to assist you, he does not think that the Government can with propriety do more than allow you to throw up the lease of Aboriginal Reserve of 54 acres (No. 2031) District A. as from the 31st December last, and then to have the section again let by public auction, when, if you chance again to become the tenant of the Government, you would the opportunity of becoming such by bidding higher than any other person.

I am, etc. J. A. Jackson. (Colonial Secretary).

January 14th 1843 - **the Colonial Secretary J. A. Jackson** received the list and which he passed on to the Advocate General's Office of "unexecuted Aboriginal Reserves". This included that of Donald McLean. He allowed the lease to lapse, but on May 9th still owed 13 pounds 10 shillings (\$27) in rent and headed the list sent to Robert Gouger, the Colonial Treasurer. On June 30th Donald had still not paid up together with 13 others whose names are well known in the early history of South Australia.

Ref. CSOM/1846/49: Nothing further appears concerning Donald's lease until 12/9/1846.

The handwritten copy from the Government Letter Book has not photocopied clearly so may not be exact. The letter book kept handwritten duplicates.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your memorandum of the 27th ultimo. transmitting to me statement of the returns of rent due to the Local Government by the indebted lessees of the Aboriginal Reserves, and in reply I am directed to answer you with the following information, thereon, which, through some misdirection in this office was not supplied as it might be, to name mine as (in?) an earlier record.

Donald McLean.

The office of the Auditor General noted:- The consequence of an application made by the individual for permission to give up the lease of Section no 2031 and was allowed to be 31st December 1842.

The rather obscure wording of Donald's letter, if correct, appears to be an objection to being still billed for part rental of the 54 acres he had ceased to lease nearly 4 years earlier.

Ref. CSO/439/1846: **Approved applications** by the Commissioner of Crown Lands 17/4/1846.

Donald and Allan McLean - Mundoo Island, bounded on all sides by Lake Victoria (the original name of Lake Alexandrina) containing more or less one square mile. Lease no 122. Repeated on 28/6/1847.

**Returning to Donald in 1848** - The "South Australian" newspaper of March 17th and 21st published accounts of an adventure of Donald and his servant. Here is a shortened annotation - the full account taken from the original is at the end of Donald's history.

Donald frequently travelled to Adelaide in those days with produce for sale. The 45 minute journey of the present time took many hours, sometimes two days for the 55 kilometres through the Adelaide Hills. On 18/2/1848 when returning home by bullock dray with his man James Halliwell, they stopped for a drink at the Mountain Hut kept by Ruben Spearman and his wife. They left at 9 p.m. to continue to Strathalbyn. On the road a mile further on three masked men armed with pistols held them up, demanding money and 75 pounds (\$150) were extracted from Donald's pockets. Just then a gust of wind blew aside the mask of one man, revealing the face of Robert Spearman.

Donald had known him for two years. He returned at once to Adelaide and laid a charge of highway robbery against the three. The case was heard on 17/3/1848. The men were found guilty and Spearman was transported to Van Dieman's Land for 15 years. Donald does not appear to have recovered his money.

Following the survey (so land could be sold) which commenced in 1851 and continued for some years, Donald (and Allan) purchased large holdings. They, like Rankines, Dawsons and others, had carefully husbanded their profits ready for this time. At the auctions they were able to buy land on the Angas and Bremer sites and on the frontage of Lake Alexandrina, Mundoo Island, and four others close to the River Murray mouth and secured the then prize sections adjoining the mouth of the Bremer as it was expected a port would be built. (It was not).

Between them, Donald and Allan paid 1263 pounds (\$2526) for Sections 2813, 2814, 2816 and 2818, a total of 537 acres. The most expensive piece was the 75 acres of 2818 at 595 pounds (\$1190), the supposed port site.

The road to Belvidere and Angas Plains now cuts through Donald's Section 2603 where he built his house S.E. of the town on the 200 acres of "Auchanada's". It is said that he did not believe in banks, hence the story of his hidden wealth and that when he needed any he would get it at night and was absent only a little while. His Will reveals that he did possess a bank account. During his last day or so when paralysed by strokes he tried desperately to tell his family the location of his hoard, but unsuccessfully.

The last resting place of Donald and Christina at the Strathalbyn Cemetery is a table top tomb, that is, above ground. It is built of red brick and shoulder high with a thick slab of polished black marble on the top engraved incorrectly. Donald's death date there is 10/10/1856. This is an error as his death notice in the Adelaide "Register" newspaper in 1855 has that he died on 11/10/1855, aged 75 years. This too is incorrect as he died in his 83rd year.

The present Strathalbyn Cemetery was used only from 1856, a year later, the first burial being Andrew Melville Walker, a Rankine Kinsman, whose headstone says that he was the first "in this cemetery". Previously interments had been on the slope above the River Angas and above the site of the present swimming pool. A plaque now marks the plain grassed area.

Furthermore, the typescript by E.M.S. of the Matthew Rankine diaries (he was then of "Woodburn", Angas Plains) states that on 11/10/1855 he received a letter informing him of the death of Donald McLean. In those days people were invited to funerals. Matthew wrote that he rode his horse Blossom to the Donald McLean house, starting at noon on the 13th and that many people had gathered for the funeral and that Donald was buried near his house and on his own land and that afterwards the Will was read. Whether Donald was re-interred at the present cemetery or left in his original grave is not now known, but their names are engraved together above where at least Christina is buried. She died at "Auchanada's", Strathalbyn, aged 78 (having been born 1791/2, her exact birthdate not traced) on 9/4/1869. The grave is in Division 1/84 and there is an inscription - "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord".

.....  
**THE WILL OF DONALD McLEAN:** There are 15 hand written pages with Probate. His estate of 3000 pounds (\$6000) was quite a large one for his time. He made his original Will in 1846 and to the surprise of E.M.S. she found that her great-grandfather Allen Wilson of Mt Barker, S.A. was a witness together with Samuel Smart (lawyer and first Sherriff of S.A. who was a witness at the 1843 Wilson marriage and so A.W. was probably just visiting Smart's office when Donald required a second witness.

A Summary: As the Will is filled with lawyers jargon and tiresome to read E.M.S. has extracted just the plain facts. A copy of the original Will and the Probate pages are filed at the Strathalbyn Museum together with the McLean papers. Also punctuation and paragraphs have been added again for easier reading. The Will adds further proof that there were only 10 and not 12 McLean children, the same 10 who arrived by the "Navarino". We are indebted to Jack McLean and his wife Jean of Milang, SA. (retired from farming at "Navarino" on the Strathalbyn/Milang Road) for a copy of the Will and also for Christina's.

**DONALD McLEAN:** *"This is the last Will and Testament of me Donald McLean of the Angas Plains Special Survey in the Province of South Australia, farmer. I do hereby revoke all former Wills, Codicils and other deposition at any time made by me and declare this to be my last Will and Testament."*

Donald naturally directed that all debts, funeral and Testamentary expenses should be paid out of his Real and Personal estate.

**CHRISTINA :** To his wife Christina he bequeathed *"all my household goods, plate (silver), china. wines, liquors, live stock and interest occurring from my money deposited in my name in the Bank of South Australia or any other Bank in the said Province of South Australia for her use for her life so long as she shall remain a widow."*

**The EXECUTORS:** these were Edward Stirling of the Angas Special Survey (he was of "The Lodge", Strathalbyn) - Donald Gollan, Innkeeper of the same place - Adam Abercrombie (a son-in-law), dealer in timber of Hindley Street, Adelaide - and Allan McLean, his eldest son of the Angas Special Survey. farmer - UPON TRUST.

If Christina died or remarried the items bequeathed together with his personal estate and effects of all kinds he left to his Executors - but - to ensure that Christina was never in want he directed that the accruing interest at the Bank of South Australia was to be paid to her for the remainder of her life whether remarrying or remaining a widow.

Donald DIRECTED that dividends and interests paid into the Trust should be used for the maintenance and education of Hugh the Younger (then, in 1846, aged 10) until he attained the age of 21 years. The household goods etc. as already listed, and all Trust money and personal estate, except livestock, in equal shares to his "*present children if the sons were 21 or married, and the daughters also 21 or married, for their own absolute use*" (thus cutting out husbands): This last clause is of course in the event of Christina's death. Hugh the Younger was foremost on his mind as can be seen in the following:-

**HUGH the YOUNGER** - part of Donald's Town Acre in Hindley Street, numbered 57 being allotment No. 1 of the various allotments into which the said acre had been divided, having a frontage to Hindley Street of 32 feet and 1/3rd and a depth of 43 feet along a road of 13 feet width running on the eastern side of the land, devised from Hindley Street to North Terrace in Adelaide. If Hugh predeceased Donald without leaving lawful heirs, this parcel of land was to go to the other sons and daughters as Tenants in Common.

**ALLAN** - allotment No. 2 consisting of the same dimensions under the same conditions.

**ARCHIBALD** - No. 3 allotment adjoining. The same conditions.

**ADAM ABERCROMBIE** - "*husband of my daughter Mary*", to have No. 4 which was only 16 ft. width (there were complications due to another road taking up part).

**ROBERT LESLIE** - "*husband of my daughter Ann*", No. 5 adjoining to the north.

**MARGARET** - No. 6 on the north side.

**RACHEL** - allotment No. 7.

**JANE** - No. 8 last on the north, and also No. 10.

**JOHN** - "*that portion of the acre of the width of 32 feet on which two brick cottages are now standing*"

**HUGH the ELDER** - allotment No, 11 of the same dimensions.

In the Angas Special Survey Donald owned Sections 2624 and 2603 (Strathalbyn). The south-west portion of Section 2624 of 40 acres was for Archibald, the north-east 40 acres of the same was for John. Hugh the Elder was to have 40 acres of the north-west portion of 2603. The house "Auchanada's" built on 2603 was not mentioned.

The four named Executors were to take possession of Section 50 (at Hilton - in 1846 Donald must have still owned it.) of the Provincial Survey marked "B" and also the allotment No. 9' of the Hindley Street Land of Town Acre 57, to be held in Trust together with all the interests accruing from all sources to be paid to Christina during her widowhood and for the maintenance of Hugh the Younger until he was 21.

If Hugh died prior to this age leaving no heir, all those of his family still living were to share as equally as possible, a surviving husband or wife to have the share. Almost two pages set out this simple direction.

The trustees were to pay themselves any expenses incurred. When the Trust was no longer needed all lands and tenements from which interest was paid into the Trust were to be sold and the proceeds divided between the surviving children. If any Trustee died before the winding up of the Trust and Estate, another was to be appointed (as Adam Abercrombie did but was not replaced). There is a whole page on this and very tedious to read.

**FINALLY** - Donald bequeathed to his son Hugh the Younger - 6 bullocks, together with a dray and furniture of a complete team as well as 12 head of dairy cows and *"all my household furniture at the time of my decease"* and the Trustees were to see that these were handed over to him at the time of his decease. Date 16/1/1846.

**The Will** was signed by Donald and witnessed by Robert Mitchell, Allen Wilson and S. Smart (the lawyer previously mentioned).

In 1853 Donald made the first of a series of Codicils. He must have either quarrelled with Hugh the Elder or given him his share, because in **Codicil B** he revoked all his prior bequests to Hugh the Elder. These were to be shared between all the children living at Donald's decease. Witnesses were Harriet Stanley and John Thomley. A prudent lawyers's clerk wrote in what must have been some space following Codicil B. of 1855. For these pages being copied are not the original documents, just one of the copies.

**Codicil C**. dated 2/8/1855 was witnessed by Archibald McLean, Elizabeth Watson and "Justina" McLean made her mark "X". This last was surely the clerk's error for Christina. This was added two months before Donald's death and before he was fully incapacitated by the series of strokes which followed.

He recommended that *"My body be buried in my own land and near my own place"*. Secondly - two acres were to be set aside *"as a burial ground for his family and their generations coming after them without any encumbrance whatsoever"*. Thirdly, he appointed Mr John Cheriton of the River Angas (a son-in-law) and Mr Hugh McDonald of the River Finness (this was Ewen McDonald - a son-in-law, so apparently to Donald, Ewen equalled Hugh in every case) to be Trustees of the two acre family burial ground on Section 2605 in the Hundred of Strathalbyn. It is still just waste land in 1993. This Codicil C was signed by Donald. (Note: these would have been the two acres "near the foundry").

**Codicil D** - dated 2/10/1855 and only 9 days before the death of Donald and clearly not written by the Lawyer's Clerk as the spelling and set-out is poor. Donald was making absolutely sure that Hugh the Elder did not benefit. On "this day he bequeathed all those sections of land in the Hundred of Bremer belonging to Hugh the Elder - Nos. 2819, 2814, 2817, 2813 and half section 2818 to be equally divided amongst the family, that is they were to be sold for their benefit. He revoked all former Wills concerning this land. He appointed Donald Gollan and Mr P. Prankard as Executors for this property. Donald signed and the witnesses were:- Mary Blue and Catherine Cox (her mark X.)

**Codicil E** - dated 3/10/1855, was almost a copy of the one above, but said ALL his land at Bremer and Strathalbyn were to be sold for the benefit of his family and that he revoked "all former Wills concerning these lands". Donald signed (and so within a week of his death he could use his hand). The two witnesses were Elizabeth Watson and Catherine Robinson (her mark X).

**Codicil F** - dated 10/10/1855. Donald made a final Codicil the day prior to his death which seems a mite dodgy as family descendants have said that he was by then completely paralysed and unable to speak clearly, and although he tried hard to tell Christina where he kept his cash in hiding, he was unsuccessful. In this codicil he states that he has given his sons John and Archibald Section 2611 in the Hundred of Strathalbyn, but there was doubt whether he owned this or Section 2612 (which Donald when clear in mind would have known). One was the property of William Morriss and if 2612 "should be mine" the same to his sons John and Archibald in place of 2611. As Donald was beyond signing and someone wrote his name and made an "X" witnessed by Richard Tregilgas and Malcolm McRae and Donald was in effect on his death bed the question arises, how could he have possibly conveyed this last wish.

Whatever the lawyers thought of all these twists and turns they made no complaint, nor did Judge Benjamin Boothby of the Supreme Court, Adelaide, who on 4/1/1856, granted Probate.

Edward Stirling and Allan McLean swore that the WILL was a TRUE copy and that Donald had died on 11/10/1855 and that the other two Executors had withdrawn, Adam Abercrombie being deceased and Donald Gollan no longer willing to act. The Will itself was A - the Codicils B, C, D, E, and F. Having found the deceased's Estate did not exceed 3000 pounds (\$6000). his Honour granted Probate.

## LAW SUITS FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF DONALD

The Adelaide "Observer" of 15/11/1856 - page 3:

**McDonald and Others versus Shorney.** (MacLean was still then in use.)

Mr Gwynne for plaintiffs, the MacLean ladies and their husbands. Defendant:- Shorney.

This was an action of ejectment to recover possession of Section 2623 Angas Special Survey near Strathalbyn. The case of the plaintiffs rested simply on the production of a land Grant to Rachel MacLean, Margaret MacLean and Jane MacLean.

Mr Gwynne: Submitted: that the husbands of those grantees were entitled to possession during coverature, even against their wives. He called to prove their marriages. Ewen McDonald stated that he was married to Rachel McLean in December 1847.

By Mr Bakewell:- Had heard his wife say that her father had bought the Section in question at a land sale. He heard of his right to that property shortly after his marriage. The section had lain open for some time after it was purchased; at last Messrs. Shorney and Thrum took possession of it. He supposed that he knew when they took possession and he was aware that they lived upon it. He first objected to their living upon it 5 or 6 months ago. Before that time he made no objection. He delayed so long in asserting his right because there was one of the plaintiffs (James Keating) out of the Colony. That was the reason why he did not interfere with the Defendants' occupation of the land. Did not know that the Defendant had been paying rent all along to his late father-in-law. Mr MacLean died about 12 months ago. Would swear that the section in question belonged to the three daughters as far back as 1848 he was told by his father-in-law that the section in question belonged to his three daughters. He was not aware that his father-in-law had leased the section. He knew that Mr Thrum and Mr Shorney were on it, but never interfered with them until the last six months.

By Mr Gwynne:- Could not tell exactly what portion of the section Shorney occupied. Believed it was the eastern portion. His (witness's) wife was of age when he married her. John Cheriton, farmer on the Angas stated he was married to Jane MacLean in November 1849. She was one of the ladies mentioned in the land grant. The defendant had been in possession of the south-eastern portion of the section for 4 or 5 years.

By Mr Bakewell:- The diggings sprang up about the time all the daughters were married and the parties entitled were not until lately all in the colony at the same time. He first saw the land grant produced after the death of Mr MacLean. He knew he was entitled to his share before Mr MacLean died. Knew that Shorney was in possession of the land but knew nothing of a lease to him by the late Mr MacLean. The Chief Justice, on ascertaining that the defendant held a lease. suggested that there should be a compromise.

Mr Bakewell:- This is a case of great hardship. The defendant holds under a lease with right to purchase from Mr MacLean whose title he could not suppose required investigation. Five years labour have been expended on the land which has now greatly increased in value.



Mr Gwynne admitted that the defendant had the right to look to the estate for compensation. The question however in the plaintiffs family was whether the compensation should come from the plaintiffs or the estate generally (i.e. the estate of the late Donald McLean). There was no probability of an agreement in the family, and the only way to settle the matter was on its legal merits. The estate of the late Mr McLean was quite equal to meet any damage which the defendant had sustained.

The Chief Justice said there really was no defence against the land grant but he thought it would be advisable to join the wives with their husbands as the plaintiffs in the action and also to come to some compromise.

Mr Gwynne: Would if His Honour pleased make the amendment suggested as the plaintiffs wives were in attendance. The jury then, under direction, returned a verdict for the plaintiff's

### **McDonald and Others versus Thrum.**

This was a similar action for another part of the same section and terminated with a similar verdict.

## **CHRISTINA**

Christina was illiterate and unable to even sign her own name. This was not then unusual in an age when females were so often considered to be unworthy of an education, particularly those who lived in remote places - nor did the lack of "the three Rs" prevent such women from being most excellent wives and mothers. Donald himself was certainly literate even if he did spell his name in a variety of ways.

Christina lived on at "Auchanada's" after Donald's death and it seems very likely that Hugh the Younger and his family joined her there from his own cottage "Ardgour" as he was spoken of as living at "the old Place" into old age in an "Argus" newspaper account (at some time prior to her death in 1869). Hugh did not marry until well after his father died so would have continued to farm the home place for his mother.

That Christina was a stubborn woman is certain. She had not approved of her daughter Rachel marrying the one time shepherd of the McLeans, Ewen McDonald, yet Ewen became a large landholder. The marriage was in 1847 but it was not until 1865 that Christina paid a visit to Rachel at her home at Finnis and even stayed overnight, according to Ewen's diary (See the McDonald book).

Her Will shows her concern for the well-being of her illegitimate grandson, Donald McLean, child of Hugh "Little" and Ann McBain. At this time of writing (1992) no photograph of her has been found (or of Donald) although when she died in 1869 it was fashionable to have "cartes-de-visit", the tiny photos of the day.

**DEATH:** of Christina McLean was at "Auchanada's" on 9/4/1869 at the age of 78, having been born 1791/92, the exact date is unknown. She was buried at the Strathalbyn Cemetery as has been stated earlier.

SUMMARY OF CHRISTINA'S WILL of 17/4/1867 - 2 years prior to her death.

**The Will:** That *"as soon as maybe after Christina's death all her just and lawful debts, funeral expenses and testamentary debts should be paid out of her personal estate. John Cheriton, farmer of Angas Plains (a son-in-law) and John James Bonnar, solicitor of Strathalbyn, to be Trustees and Executors and they were to sell for whatever price it would bring, all her Real Estate.."* This was to be invested for her grandson Donald McLean, the natural son of Hugh McLean (Hugh the Younger) and Ann McBain, until Donald came of age at 21 and to pay the same to him with accrued interest.

*"I give and bequeath to my daughters my body clothes to be divided among them".* If the grandson Donald did not live to attain his majority and leave descendants, the accumulated monies were to go to the daughters, share and share alike, without the control of their husbands.

(Note: The Married Women's Act which allowed them to own property in their own right, and not automatically become their husband's on marriage, did not become law until late last century and in Switzerland only in quite recent years.)

The witnesses to Christina's Will were William H. Giles, National Bank of Adelaide and Stratnabyn and Von Louis Von Doussa, clerk to J. J. Bonnar, Strathalbyn. She signed by making her mark "X" between the Christina and the McLean. A copy now at the Strathalbyn Museum (on file) is per favour of J. S. and J. McLean of Milang, S.A. and also of the Probate record. Probate was granted on 26/4/1869 by the Supreme Court of South Australia, and sworn that her estate did not exceed one hundred pounds (\$200).

There is a notation alongside Christina's signature, above those of the two witnesses - *"Signed sealed and published and declared by the said Testatrix as and for her Last Will and Testament"* etc. etc. (the usual wording), but with the addition of *"that the same having been first read over and explained to her when she seemed fully to understand the nature and effect thereof"*.

That Christina's wardrobe would not have been either extensive or elegant must be taken for granted and with their unwanted nephew the main beneficiary her five daughters had small benefit from their mother. Small Donald was about 12 when his grandmother died. Nothing is known of what became of him.

- SOURCE : This biography is an extract from "The History of Donald & Christina McLean and Their Descendants" which was published in 1995 – page 6 to 20.
- BEGINNINGS : 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 much more about your family history – or about privacy and copyright.