

Allan McRAE & Augusta Berthe (Bertha) McRAE, nee SCHULTZ

Biography as published in 1995

Allan McRae was born 16/11/1856 at Milang, SA.

Parents : Mary McRae (nee McLean) & Duncan McRae

Grandparents Christina McLean (nee McPhee) & Donald McLean:

HISTORY: from their daughter Minna.

"Before his marriage Allan carted wool with a bullock team from outlying stations into Port Augusta (S.A.) where he met and married Bertha Schultz whose parents had a store at Wilmington. Following the wedding at the Wesleyan Church they had their honeymoon on board a wool boat going from Port Augusta to Port Adelaide and from there travelled to Allan's home town of Milang where he was able to buy the hotel as he had made a lot of money in the North.

The first three children were born at Strathalbyn (probably at the senior McRae's house as they had by then retired from Milang.) Allan did very well in the hotel trade but became immersed in horse racing. He had the "Commercial" Hotel in High Street Strathalbyn 1882 – 1867 having sold out at Milang where he had realised that he was living "beyond his means".

Note: Dates in old records seldom "Add up". The photograph of Allan standing before the corner doorway of the "Commercial" clearly has his name painted above and the caption in the Nancy Gemmell book of the town states that the picture was taken before the present day balcony was added in 1881. Also, the register of hotel licensees at the State Library records Allan as there up to 1890 so Minna's list with Percy being born at Sellick's Hill must be an error. The two youngest were definitely born at Sellick's Hill.

Minna went on that her father continued there in the hotel business hoping to escape the wealthy social and racing crowd with whom he had first associated at Milang but which followed him to Strathalbyn. At Strathalbyn the hotel had been the centre of a number of activities, an annual foot race which started out from the "Commercial" and ended there with a dinner following and other events and always the social crowd from Adelaide.

Up until 1902 Allan had the hotel at Old Noarlunga which until 1880 had been called "The Jolly Miller" and thereafter just the Noarlunga Hotel though locally it was referred to as "The Shoe". Here they did very well and catered for overnight guests and dinners and it became a fashionable place with the Adelaide crowd flocking back. From Noarlunga the McRaes moved on to an even more fashionable hotel, the "Victoria" at Tapleys Hill and had land around it where Allan and his son Boyce kept race horses. The children grew up in a very well-to-do atmosphere.

DEATH: of Allan McRae aged 49 years of pneumonia on 23/11/1905 at Tapleys Hill and was buried at the O'Halloran Hill Cemetery.

The licence of the "Victoria" remained in his name from 1903 - 1907 but following his death his wife Bertha and daughter Minna ran it and the licence was only changed to Bertha's name 1908 - 1915. Their fortunes dwindled as the son Boyce was only interested in race horses and racing in general and he ran up huge stock bills which his mother had to pay. She was much too easy going and the business side of the hotel suffered and the trade became too much for her.

DEATH: of Bertha McRae aged 54 years on 16/7/1915. Inten'ed with Allan at the O'Halloran Hill Cemetery.

CHILDREN OF ALLAN MCRAE AND HIS WIFE BERTHA (nee SHULTZ):

1. Cecelia May McRae born 11/4/1882 at Strathalbyn. Married: aged 16 years at Noarlunga to Belton Hill Aldam, farmer and butcher of Noarlunga, S.A. who was born 2/3/1871 at Willunga. Residences: Noartunga, Aldinga Beach, Seaford and Port Noarlunga. Deaths: dates not traced but both buried at Centennial Park Cemetery. There were 3 Aldam children – Monda (b 23/1/1899 at Noalunga), Allan (b 19/2/1901 at Noalunga) & Clyde (b 6/8/1903 at Noalunga)
2. Bertha (Amy) McRae b. 7/9/1883 at Strathalbyn. Married: Victor Charles Stanley Burden on 29/4/1907. They had 2 children – Phyllis & unknown name.
3. Henrietta (Minna) McRae b. 21/2/1886 at Strathalbyn. Minna gave the history of her parents and she was the one who supported her mother Bertha in running the Hotel Victoria at Tapleys Hill. At the age of 30 Minna trained as a nurse, then went to Brisbane. Marriage: To Thomas Griffiths at Brisbane, a builder who became bankrupt during the Depression. At the age of 45 Minna went back to nursing to support them. Having married fairly late, there were no children. Thomas had been a widower when they married, but apparently childless. Death: of Minna aged 94 years on 11/1/1981 just prior to her 95th birthday.
4. Percy (Boyce) McRae b. 16/8/1889 at Sellicks Hill. Married twice. 1st marriage: to Ella Constance Wemen (2 sons). 2nd marriage: to Rose Osmond (no children). As was seen earlier his main interest was in racing and owning and training race horses. However he became a publican and is recorded as being the licensee of the Henley Hotel. Henley in 1924 - the "Central" on Commercial Road, Port Adelaide 7/12/1926 to 23/4/1927 and the Hoyleton Hotel 2/11/1931 to 3/6/1934. Previous to these he had followed his mother after her death, at Tapleys Hill from 1916 to 1923. No record traced after 1934. No death dates. CHILDREN - Lancelot (born about 1916) & Murray.
5. Norma Ivy McRae b. 26/5/1894 at Sellicks Hill, S.A. 5th child of Allan and Bertha McRae. Married: Claude Alfred Victor Richards. Death: She died 1964 aged 74. No children. Residences: Widowed by 1958 and at Anzac Highway, Everard Park, S.A. Electoral Roll of 1963, she was at a Unit at Unley, S.A.
6. Augusta (Vera) McRae b. 11/11/1895 at Sellicks Hill, S.A. Married: Alfred Emmett. He was a builder and a member of the Emmett family, building contractors in a big way of Black Forest, S.A. They lived at adjoining Forestville and the 2 children attended the Black Forest Primary School at the same time as the present writer EMS during the 1920/1930 period. They later lived at Clapham. Death: Alfred died 10/3/1955 and was interred at Centennial Park Cemetery. Residence: Hazelwood park at least until 1966. Thereafter she lived with her daughter and her family at Clare, Mt Gambler, and Mt Barker from where she went to the Nursing Home Alexandra Lodge, at Rose Park near Adelaide and died there in Oct. 1979 aged 84 years. interred at Centennial Park Cemetery. CHILDREN - Norman (b. 23/10/1921 at Kings Park, S.A), & Fay (14/7/1925 at Kings Park, S.A).

- SOURCE : This biography is an extract from "The History of Donald & Christina McLean and Their Descendants" which was published in 1995 – page 386 to 388.
- 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.