

**Balgay Cemetery,
Dundee, Scotland
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2705 PRIVATE

H. MCDONALD

29TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

6TH AUGUST, 1917 Age 40

Farewell My Husband Dear

Hugh McDONALD

Hugh McDonald was born at Lara, Victoria around 1875.

Hugh McDonald stated on his Attestation Papers for enlistment in World War 1 that he had served in the Boer War – Commonwealth Horse. A “Hugh McDonald” aged 26 years & 6 months, born at Elko, Victoria enlisted with the Contingent for Service in South Africa on 20th January, 1902. He was a single, Boundary Rider who had been a member of the Anakie Rifle Club for 7 months. This “Hugh McDonald’s” description was listed as 5ft 5 ½ inches, medium complexion, blue eyes, brown hair with a chest measurement of 33 ½ inches. His religion was Presbyterian & his father was listed as Angus McDonald of Kalile P.O. Victoria. He was given a Regiment/Service number of 721.

Hugh McDonald married Selina Maud Trigg in 1908 in Victoria.

The 1909 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Corangamite, subdivision of Meredith, Victoria listed Hugh Meredith, Labourer.

Births were registered in Victoria for the following children of Hugh & Selina Maud McDonald (nee Trigg):

- William Roy Walter McDonald – born 1909
- George Hugh Meredith McDonald – born 1910
- Gordon McDonald – born 1911, died 1911
- Annis Selina Isabel McDonald – born 1912
- Leslie Allen McDonald – born 1914

Hugh McDonald stated he was a 40 year old, married, Horsebreaker when he enlisted at Geelong, Victoria on 6th January, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 29th Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2705 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Selma McDonald, care of Mrs Trigg, Meredith, Victoria. His description was listed as 5 ft 5 inches, fair complexion, grey eyes, brown hair with a chest measurement of 37 ½ inches.

Private Hugh McDonald was posted to 19th Depot Battalion, Geelong on 12th January, 1916. He was transferred to 5th Reinforcements of 29th Battalion at Broadmeadows on 5th March, 1916.

Private Hugh McDonald embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Anchises* (A68) on 14th March, 1916 & disembarked at Suez around 15th April, 1916 (date not legible on service record).

Private Hugh McDonald embarked from Alexandria on 21st June, 1916 on *Ivernia* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 29th June, 1916.

Private Hugh McDonald was marched out from 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) & attached to 2nd ANZAC Headquarters as Permanent Base on 30th September, 1916.

Mrs Selina McDonald, wife of Private Hugh McDonald, wrote to Base Records on 30th April, 1917 enquiring as to any trace of her husband as *“this is address he gave me 12 months come June I cannot get any answer to my letters. Last Sept. I received a card to say he was in France & never received any my letters & haven’t heard from him since. Last week one letter was returned to me stating he wasn’t with 29th Battalion. So I cannot make out where he is or what has become of him...”* Base Records advised that Private Hugh McDonald was now attached to 2nd Anzac Headquarters & letters should be addressed to 2nd Anzac Headquarters, Australian Imperial Force, Abroad.

Private Hugh McDonald, 2nd ANZAC Headquarters, was on leave to England from 4th August, 1917.

Private Hugh McDonald died on 6th August, 1917 at No. 21 Glamis Street, Dundee, Scotland from Fracture of skull.

Private Hugh McDonald was buried at 4.30 pm on 10th August, 1917 in Dundee Western Necropolis now known as Balgay Cemetery, Dundee, Scotland – Plot number DD.4.116 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission

headstone. From the burial report of Private Hugh McDonald - *The deceased soldier, whose untimely death, is the subject of further investigation at Dundee was accorded a Military Funeral, Firing Party, Band and Bugler were supplied by the Argyle & Sutherland Highlanders. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. Col. Rev. A. J. Campbell officiated. There were no relatives present at the funeral. One soldier of the A.I.F. and one soldier of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, who were on leave in the district at the time paid their last respect to the deceased soldier by attending and assisting at the funeral. An oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F.* Details of the burial were sent to Pte McDonald's widow on 18th October, 1917.

A Court of Inquiry was held on 9th August, 1917 at Western Barracks, Dundee, Scotland for the purpose of "enquiring into and reporting on the circumstances attending the death of No. 2705 Pte Hugh McDonald, a soldier of the Australian Imperial Force."

COPY OF POLICE REPORT OF SUDDEN OR ACCIDENTAL DEATH

No. 19704 Private James Smith of 2nd Siege Battery R.G.A. presently residing at 21, Glamis Street, Dundee, states:-
"Deceased was an entire stranger to me.
On the afternoon of Monday 6th August, 1917, I arrived in Edinburgh from France on my way to Dundee where I met deceased in a Publichouse, who informed me that he also was going to Dundee. We had a few drinks there together and left Edinburgh with the train leaving about 5 p.m. arriving in Dundee about 7 p.m. We were both a good deal the worse for drink, and I asked him to accompany me to my sister's house at 21, Glamis Street, which he did where we had some more drink. Deceased remained there until about midnight, when my sister offered him a bed, but he refused to stay for the night. My sister's house is situated two stairs up at said address. About 12 midnight I left the house along with deceased to show him down the stairs and out to the street. It being an outside stair case, and platforms with iron railings about 3½ feet in height, which was very dark I went down the stair in front of deceased lighting matches all the way. I do not know how far he followed me, but while going down the second stair, I missed him and as I turned round to look for him, I heard a thud on the Court below as if some person had fallen there. I went down to the bottom of the stair and lighted another match, and on looking through the sparred gate leading into said Court saw deceased lying on his face in a pool of blood. He had evidently failed to turn down the second stair and walked to the end of the platform which is a short distance from the top of the stair, and had on coming against the railings overbalanced himself and fallen over. I climbed over the gate and saw the deceased was bleeding freely from nose and ears. He was quite unconscious and never spoke. I tried to lift him up and with the assistance of Special Constable Young who came on the scene, we got the gate open, and carried deceased out on to the street. The ambulance van ~~we~~ came on the scene shortly after and deceased was removed to the Infirmary. Deceased never told me his name neither did he say whether he had any relatives in Dundee or not".

Mary Connelly or McQuillan (46) 21, Glamis Street, states:-
"Previous witness Smith is my brother and I corroborate his statement re deceased arriving at my house along with him about 8 p.m. date in question and leaving about midnight. I did not go to the door with them, and I have no idea how the accident happened. I was the worse for drink".

Mary McQuillan (22) Spinner, 21, Glamis Street, daughter of previous witness and also corroborates her Mother's statement re deceased coming to the house and leaving about midnight. I followed them out to the platform and saw deceased half way down the first stair, I then returned to the house but immediately after heard some noise at the foot of the stair and went down, saw deceased lying in the Court there in a pool of blood, bleeding from nose and ears, he was quite unconscious and never spoke.

Annie McBain (30) Housekeeper, 21, Glamis Street, states:-

"I occupy a house on the ground floor at said address. About 12 midnight Monday 6th August 1917 while I was in my house, I heard footsteps coming down the stair and also a noise of somebody striking matches. I then heard witness Smith say take care of your feet and almost immediately after that there was a thud in the Court in rear of my kitchen window. I went out to the close where I saw witness Smith at the foot of the stair, he was the worse for drink. I asked him if anyone was hurt. He replied "I can't see him", he then lighted a match and through the spars of the gate we saw deceased lying in the Court on his face in a pool of blood. I went then to the Northern Police Office and reported the matter where I got the assistance of Special Constable Young, who accompanied me back and I let him through my kitchen window into the Court. at the same time witness Smith was standing along side deceased trying to lift him up. The gate was opened and deceased was carried out to the street. He was quite unconscious and never spoke".

2.

William Young a Gardener, Baldovan Industrial School, states:-

"About 12 midnight date in question I was on duty at the Northern Police Office as a Special Constable, when witness McBain came there and reported that a soldier had fallen over the platform at rear of the tenement there and alighted in the Court beside her kitchen window. I accompanied her there and found deceased lying in the Court there with Witness Smith standing beside him trying to raise him up. The gate leading into the Court being fastened, I went in through the kitchen of McBain's house and got out at the window. Deceased was unconscious and bleeding freely from nose and ears, his forehead was also bruised and left eye swollen. I got the gate opened and had deceased carried out to the Street. I returned to the Northern Police Office and called out the ambulance van which arrived shortly after and deceased was removed in it to the Royal Infirmary, but I am of the opinion that deceased was quite dead by that time."

John White, Police Sergeant, states:-

"About 12.10 a.m. Tuesday 7th August, 1917, I had information of this matter at the Northern Police Office and went there and found deceased lying on his back on the footway. He had been bleeding from the ears and nose his forehead was bruised and left eye swollen. On examination I formed the opinion that deceased was dead. Shortly after the Ambulance van came on the scene, and deceased was removed in it to the Royal Infirmary. I also made the foregoing enquiry, 1st and 2nd witnesses were both a good deal the worse for drink. The distance from the top of the railing of the platform where deceased had evidently fallen over to the Court below, would be about 14 or 15 feet, the railing itself being about 3½ feet high. "

Robert Quarrier, Police Sergeant, states:-

"About 12.5 a.m. Tuesday 7th August, 1917, while on duty at Central Police Office, I had information of this matter by telephone from Northern Police Office. I immediately proceeded there with the ambulance van, found deceased lying on the footway and he appeared to be dead. I had him placed into the van, and removed him to the Infirmary where deceased was examined by ~~Mr~~ Dr. Milln, who certified life to the extinct, said death was due to fracture of the skull. I then had the body removed to the Mortuary in West Bell Street, where I searched the body and found the following named articles thereon - £4 Treasury Notes, 1/4½ in money, Bill for Deux Francs, pipe, tobacco-pouch, knife, and a soldier's pass from France to Dundee dated 13th instant., and name Private Hugh McDonald of the Australian Expeditionary Force thereon and several letters, but no names or addresses of relatives in Dundee."

Finding of Court of Inquiry:

The Court having viewed the scene of occurrence, find that No. 2705 Private Hugh McDonald, 29 Battn, Australian Imperial Force, met his death at 21 Glamis Street Dundee about midnight 6/7th August 1917 by falling accidentally from a landing of the outside staircase, a distance of fourteen or fifteen feet into a paved Courtyard below, thereby sustaining a fracture of the skull. They found that Private Hugh McDonald was not on duty at the time of the accident, being on leave from France.

Newspaper Report from *Dundee Advertiser* 7 August, 1917:

Falls over stair in Glamis Street

An unknown Australian soldier met his death under somewhat pathetic circumstances in Dundee last night.

A local soldier while journeying home on leave met him in Edinburgh, and deceased decided to accompany him to Dundee.

They went together to the house of the Dundonian's sister in Glamis Street, and after spending a pleasant evening the Australian left.

He had just reached the top of the stairs, however, when, it is supposed, he took the wrong turning and fell over a small railing to the basement fifteen feet below.

The Colonial landed on his head, fracturing his skull. He was taken to the Infirmary but succumbed to his injuries.

In his possession was a pass bearing the name Hugh McDonald.

Mrs Selina McDonald, widow of the late Private Hugh McDonald, wrote to Colonel Hawker on 15th October, 1917 enquiring as to the belongings of her late husband & also "*Have you heard as to the cause of fractured Skull & to be in Scotland at the time of death. Did he get wounded and sent there for treatment or what. Seems so strange. Ever since my husband left Australia I couldn't trace him with letters only to get some returned.....*"

Base Records replied to Mrs McDonald on 22nd October, 1917 advising her that her late husband "*was on furlough at the time of his death, and with a comrade was visiting some friends in Edinburgh, when late at night through taking a wrong turning, deceased fell over the railing of a stairway to the pavement below and was killed. His personal effects have not yet been returned to this Office.*"

A War Pension was granted to Selina McDonald, widow of the late Private Hugh McDonald, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 11th October, 1917. A War Pension was also granted to the following children of the late Private Hugh McDonald, also from 11th October, 1917:

- William R. W. McDonald – 20/- fortnightly
- George H. McDonald – 15/- fortnightly
- Annis McDonald – 10/- fortnightly
- Leslie A. McDonald – 10/- fortnightly

Private H. McDonald is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 115.



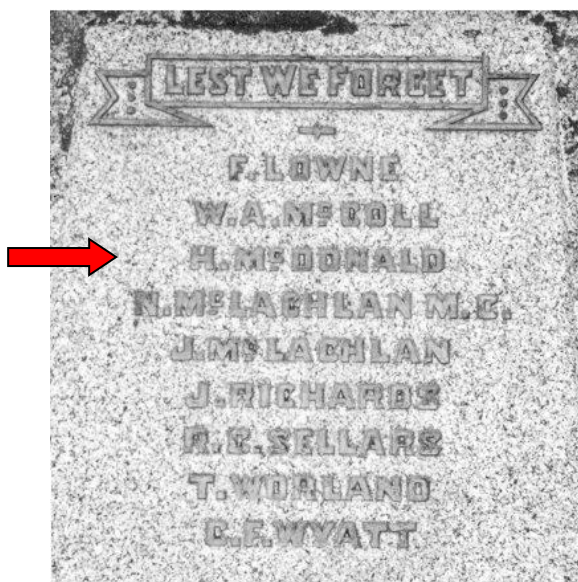
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

H. McDonald is remembered on the Meredith War Memorial. It was originally erected on the corner of Staughton and Wallace Streets then was relocated to Wallace Street. The War Memorial was relocated was again in March, 2013 to the Meredith Memorial Hall, Staughton Street, Meredith, Victoria.



Meredith War Memorial

(Photos (left & below) from Victorian Heritage Database, (right) Monument Australia – Kent Watson)



Private Hugh McDonald was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private McDonald's widow - Mrs S. McDonald, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent September, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Hugh McDonald – service number 2705, aged 40, of 29th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the husband of Selina Maud McDonald, of Meredith, Victoria, Australia.

(79 pages of Private Hugh McDonald's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives

Newspaper Notices

The 333rd CASUALTY LIST DIED OF CAUSE NOT STATED

Private H. McDonald, Meredith

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – 29 August, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

McDONALD – In sad and loving memory of my dear husband and our dear father, No. 2705, Private Hugh McDonald, who was accidentally killed, in Dundee, Scotland, on the 6th August, 1917.

Gone, dear husband; yes, gone for ever;

Gone from this world of sorrow and pain;

Gone from a wife that loved you so dearly,

Never on this earth to meet again.

Oh, could I have raised his dying head,

Or heard his last farewell,

The glow would not have been so hard

To his wife and children he loved so well,

But Christ will link the broken chain

Much closer, when we meet again.

The mail has brought from o'er the sea,

The photo, of a soldier's grave,

With a cross, name, and Number 2705;

'Tis our dear daddy's grave in Dundee.

-(Inserted by his loving wife Selina, and children (Roy, George, Annia, Leslie), Meredith.)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 7 August, 1918) & (*Geelong Advertiser*, Victoria – 6 August, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

McDONALD – In sad and loving memory of my dear husband and our dear father, Pte Hugh McDonald, who was accidentally killed in Dundee, Scotland, 6th August, 1917.

Two years to-day since my great sorrow fell,

Yet in my heart I mourn the loss of my husband, dear, I loved so well;

Time will bring its changes, but still my aching heart

Will keep my loved one's memory a sacred thing apart.

Never shall my heart forget the sorrow of the past,

When grief has left so deep a wound, the pain will always last.

Your cheery, sunny countenance will not from memory fade;
Nor yet will I forget the noble sacrifice you made;
For my heart is still united with the same fond love for you,
And loving thoughts are cherished of one so brave and true.

A loving father, true and kind,
None on this earth we'll ever find;
Two years have passed, and none can tell
The loss of a father we loved so well.

-(Inserted by his loving wife Selina, and children, Roy, George, Annis, Leslie, Meredith.)

McDONALD – In sad and loving memory of my dear son-in-law, Pte H. McDonald, who was accidentally killed in Dundee, Scotland, on the 6th August, 1917.

This is the day so sad to recall,
This is day of remembrance to all;
Dear is the grave where our dear Hugh is laid;
Sweet is the memory that never will fade.

He went away so bravely,
His head so proudly held;
His footsteps never faltered,
His courage never failed.

Years may roam, but time will fly,
Every leaf will fade and die;
Every rising sun will set,
But dear Hughie we'll ne'er forget.

- (Inserted by father, mother-in-law, W.J. and A. A. Trigg, Meredith).

McDONALD – In sad and loving memory of our dear brother-in-law, Pte Hugh McDonald, who was accidentally killed in Dundee, Scotland, 6th August, 1917.

We are thinking of you to-day, dear Hughie;
We are thinking of the past,
Picturing you in memory,
Just as we saw you last.

Though absent from amongst us,
You are always in our thoughts,
And those you left behind you
Still keenly feel your loss.

Sadly our thoughts do wander
To a grave far, far away,
Where they laid our dear Hughie
Just two years ago to-day.

-(Inserted by his brothers and sister-in-law, Meredith).

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 6 August, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

McDONALD – In sad and loving memory of my dear husband and our dear father, Pte Hugh McDonald, who was accidentally killed in Dundee, Scotland, 6th August, 1917.

He went with the hope of returning,
Along with his comrades so brave,
With many a hero he is sleeping
In a soldier's honoured grave.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 6 August, 1920)

IN MEMORIAM

McDONALD – In loving memory of my dear husband, and our dear father, Pte Hugh McDonald, who was accidentally killed at Dundee, Scotland, 6th August, 1917.

Time may pass, and bring its changes,
Fresh with every coming year;
But your name will e'er be cherished
In the hearts that hold you dear.

I, who loved you, sadly miss you,
As it dawns another year;
In my lonely hours of thinking
Thought of you are ever near.

To-day recalls sad memories
Of our loved one far away;
The death of our soldier daddie
Four years ago to-day.

-(Inserted by his loving wife Selina, and children, Roy, George, Annis, Leslie McDonald, Meredith.)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 6 August, 1921)

IN MEMORIAM

McDONALD – In fond and loving memory of my dear husband, and our dear father, Private Hugh McDonald, who died on active service 6th August, 1917.

Though life brings much that alters,
And time brings much that is new,
There is one thing that never alters,
That's my thought, dear Hughie, of you.

He's sleeping away in his lonely grave,
His march of life has ended;
But he played the man across the waves,
Where the path of duty wended.

You are not forgotten, father, dear

Nor wilt thou ever be,
As long as life and memory last,
We will remember thee.

-(Inserted by his loving wife Selina, and children, Roy, George, Annis and Leslie McDonald, Meredith.)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 5 August, 1922)

IN MEMORIAM

McDONALD – In loving memory of my dear husband, and our dear father, Private Hugh McDonald, who died on active service, 6th August, 1917.

Six years have passed since that sad day,
When our dear loved one was called home to rest,
To memory ever dear.

Treasured memory of one so dear,
Is oft recalled by a silent tear;
Dearer to memory than words can tell
Are the thought of my husband I loved so well.

Just a loving memory fond and true,
A loving thought, dear father, of you;
And these few lines will show
We still remember you.

-(Inserted by his loving wife Selina, and children, Roy, George, Annis and Leslie McDonald, Meredith.)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 7 August, 1923)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

A letter from Base Records, dated 25th July, 1921, to Mrs S. McDonald, c/o Mr Trigg, Meredith, Victoria, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of her husband the late Pte H. McDonald had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Mrs McDonald was advised in a letter from Base Records on 13th August, 1921 that the proposed inscription greatly exceeds the limit imposed by the War Graves Commission – namely 66 letters. She was advised to abbreviate the same or choose a shorter inscription.

Pte H. McDonald does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Farewell My Husband Dear

Balgay Cemetery, Dundee, Scotland

Balgay Cemetery, Dundee, Scotland contains service plots of both wars. Most of the 1914-1918 burials are in a war plot in Section B. A Screen Wall memorial is erected by the Plot to name those whose graves are not marked by headstones. There is a Cross of Sacrifice in the Plot. The 1939-1945 burials are in various parts of the necropolis.

There are now nearly 150, 1914-1918 and nearly 130, 1939-1945 War casualties commemorated in this site. The Polish Group plot contains a special memorial, commemorating a Polish soldier buried elsewhere in the cemetery.

(Information from CWGC)



The Cross of Sacrifice at Balgay Cemetery, Dundee *(Photo by Leslie)*



CWGC Headstones of the Three Australian Soldiers

Photo of Pte H. McDonald's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Balgay Cemetery, Dundee, Scotland.



(Photo from Find a Grave – John G Duffus)