

**St. Edith's Churchyard,
Baverstock, Wiltshire, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



4581 PRIVATE

W. C. G. M. McKELLAR

29TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

16TH APRIL, 1917 Age 44

He Left His Home, His All,

To Serve

At His Country's Call

Perfect Peace

William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKELLAR

William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar was born on 16th March, 1872 at St. Kilda, Victoria to parents Peter & Barbara Mcbeath McKellar (nee Meiklejohn).

William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar was a 44 year old, single, Farmer from Meereek, Apsley, Victoria when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 4th September, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 4581 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his brother – Robert McKellar from Meereek, Apsley, Victoria. (Parents were both deceased – father died 1910 & mother died 1913).

Private McKellar was posted to Depot Battalion on 4th September, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 21st Depot Battalion at Royal Park on 18th September, 1916 then transferred to “B” Company 5th Reinforcements of 24th Battalion at Domain Camp on 11th October, 1916. Private McKellar was transferred to 12th Reinforcements of 29th Battalion on 1st November, 1916.

Private William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Medic (A7)* on 16th December, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 29th Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 18th January, 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private McKellar was admitted sick to Fovant Hospital on 13th March, 1917 from “D” Company, 8th Training Battalion, Hurdcott, Wiltshire.

Private William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar died at 9.30 p.m. on 16th April, 1917 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire from Bronchitis. From the hospital report – *“Patient had a history of long standing bronchial trouble. When admitted he was suffering from an acute attack....”*

A death for William C. G. M. McKellar, aged 44, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

Private William Charles Gordon McKellar was buried on 19th April, 1917 in the churchyard of St. Edith's at Baverstock, Wiltshire and has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone.

From the burial report of Private William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar - *Coffin was good class (Military), Military Funeral, Letter written to his relatives by his Officer.*

Probate was granted on 11th September, 1918 in the Supreme Court of Victoria covering the Will of No. 4581 Private W. C. G. M. McKellar of 29th Battalion. The following received – Sister – Mary McDonald (Land); Elizabeth McKellar (Life Insurance); Brother – Olipheth Robert Smith McKellar (Rest & Residue).

Private W. C. G. M. McKellar was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque (see photo) were also to be sent to the next of kin of the late Private William Charles Gordon McKellar.

Base Records contacted Mr R. McKellar, Meereek, Apsley, Victoria on 3rd June, 1921 stating he was registered on the records of the late Private W. C. G. McKellar as next of kin & were requesting to know if *“there are any nearer blood relation than yourself to the above named, for instance, has he any brothers older than yourself (stating the eldest...)”* due to the “Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918” which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc.

Mr R. McKellar stated that he was the eldest surviving brother of the late Private W. C. G. McKellar but there was an older sister – Mrs McDonald, Blackwarry, Carrajong, Sth Gippsland.

The War Medal, Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were sent Private McKellar's eldest brother – Mr Robert McKellar, as the closest next of kin (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent January, 1923)



Memorial Plaque for Private William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Charles Gordon McKellar – service number 4581, as being 44 years old & served with 29th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of the late Peter and Barbara Meiklejohn McKellar. Born at Meereek, Apsley, Victoria.

Private W. C. G. M. McKellar is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 115.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

W. McKellar is remembered on the Apsley War Memorial, located at Wallace & Splatt Streets, Apsley, Victoria.



Apsley War Memorial (Photo From Trip Advisor – Michael C)

W. C. G. M. McKellar is remembered in the Book of Remembrance at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Victoria.

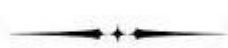


(48 pages of Private William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



Private William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar



Newspaper Reports

FOR FREEDOM'S CAUSE

McKELLAR – On 16th April, 1917, at Fovant Military Hospital (England), William C. G., loved eldest son of late Peter and Barbara McKellar, or Meereek, Apsley, brother of Mary (Mrs L. McDonald), Devon Meadows; Robert O., Meereek; and Andrew B., Eaglehawk.

One of the best.

(*Bendigo Advertiser*, Victoria – Friday 22 June, 1917 & *Bendigonian*, Victoria – Thursday 28 June, 1917)

THE 290th CASUALTY LIST

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private W. C. McKellar, Apsley

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – Wednesday 2 May 1917)

Private William McKellar is also remembered on his parents' headstone which is located in Apsley Cemetery, Victoria.



(Photos courtesy of [Carol's Headstone Photographs](#))

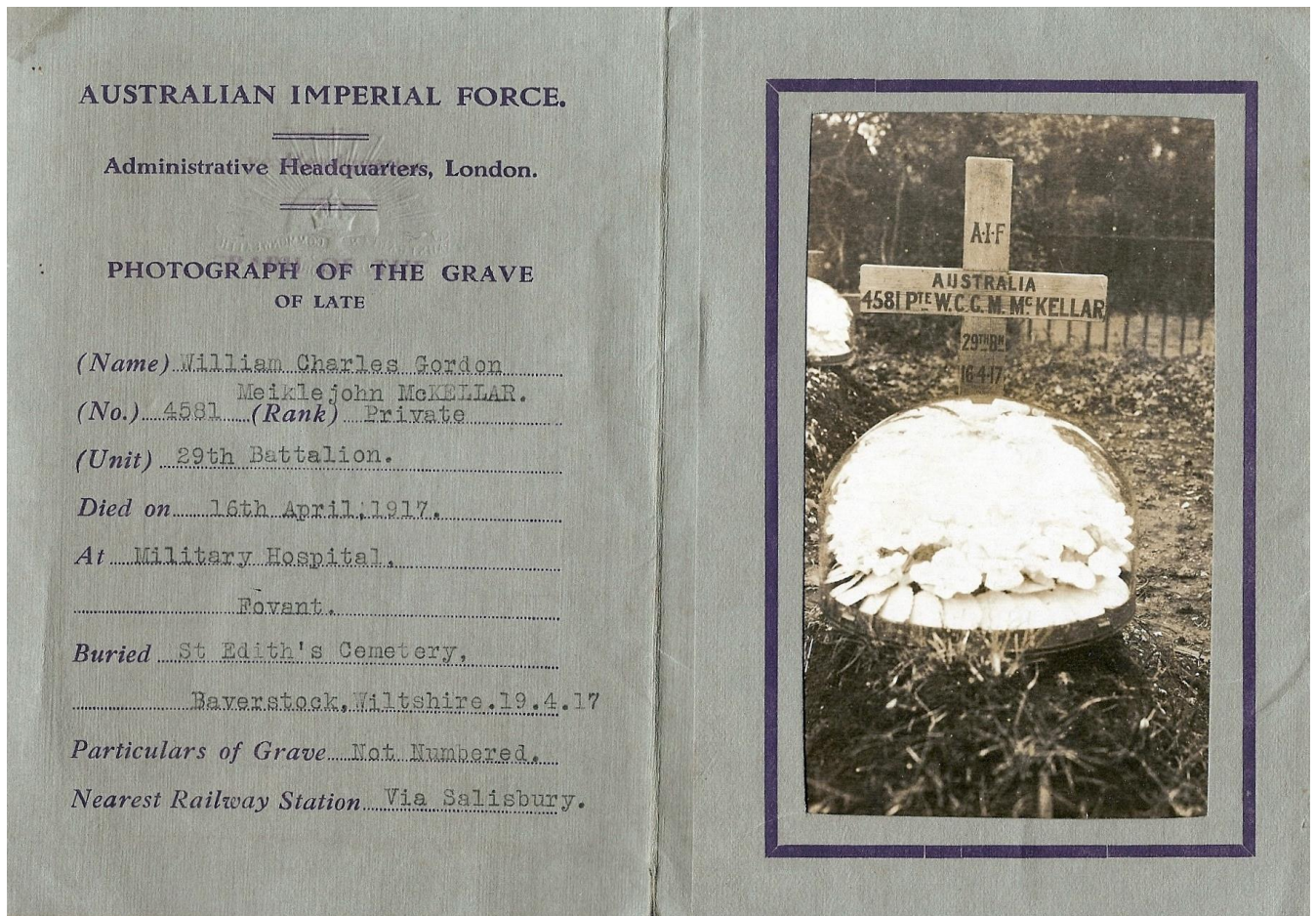
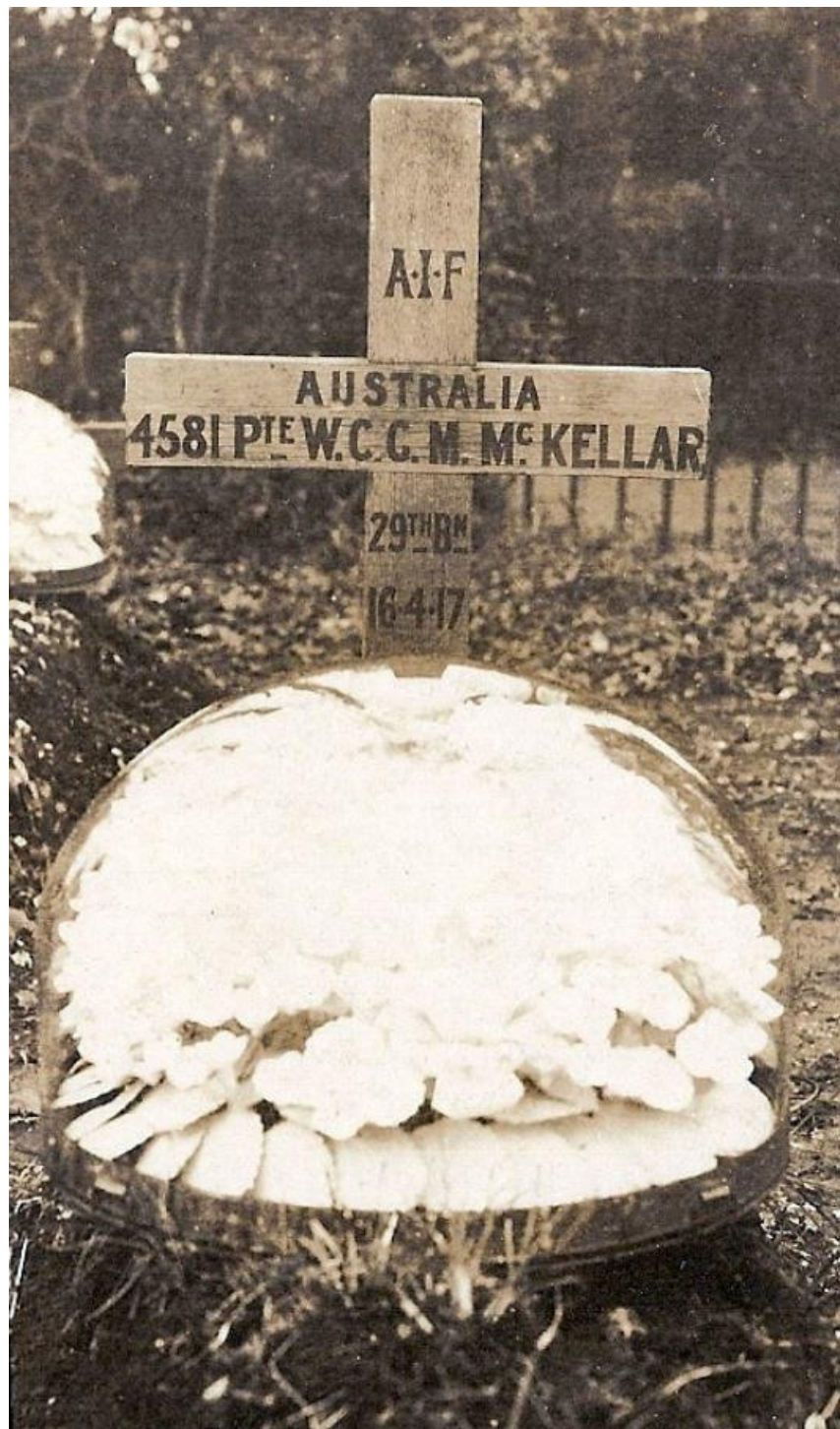


Photo & folder sent to next of kin with original grave marker



Original grave marker for Private W. C. G. M. McKellar

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 at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock. 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 dated 24th May, 1919, from Officer in charge of Records to Officer in charge Base Records reads:

"A communication has been received from Mr Robert McKellar, Meereek, Apsley, Victoria, requesting information regarding the erection of private memorials.

The Imperial War Graves Commission have decided to adopt a uniform headstone for all Australian graves and consequently private memorials such as desired are not allowed....."

Private W. C. G. M. McKellar does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

He Left His Home, His All, To Serve At His Country's Call Perfect Peace

St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire, England

St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock contains 32 World War 1 War Graves – 3 London Regiment Graves in the south-west corner & 29 Australian War Graves.



St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock *(Photo courtesy of Helen Roberts)*



St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock (Photos courtesy of Helen Roberts)



Photo of Private W. C. G. M. McKellar's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey 2012)