

**Reading Cemetery,
Reading, Berkshire
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



577 GUNNER

A. MCKINLAY D.C.M.

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

19TH SEPTEMBER, 1915

Alan McKINLAY

Alan McKinlay was born at Newcastle, NSW on 30th April, 1893 to parents Charles Colin and Helen Maria McKinlay (nee Rudder).

Alan McKinlay attended Fort Street State School in Sydney.

Alan McKinlay was aged 21 years & 3 months, single and a Farmer from Demonstration Farm, Nyngan, NSW when he enlisted in Sydney, NSW on 24th August, 1914 with the 1st Field Artillery Brigade, Brigade Ammunition Column of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 577 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs H. McKinlay, of Mervale, Waters Road, Neutral Bay, NSW. Alan McKinlay stated on his Application for Enrolment for Active Service that he had served 2 years & 3 months in Junior Cadets & 2 months with Senior Cadets.

Alan McKinlay was posted as Gunner to 1st Brigade Ammunition Column on 24th August, 1914.

Gunner Allan McKinley (as per Nominal Roll) embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Argyllshire (A8)* on 18th October, 1914.

Gunner Alan McKinlay was transferred to 3rd Battery, Field Artillery on 13th February, 1915.

Gunner Alan McKinlay joined M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) on 4th April, 1915.

Gunner Alan McKinlay was admitted to No. 15 General Hospital at Alexandria on 7th April, 1915 with acute Arthritis.

Gunner Alan McKinlay was admitted to No. 17 General Hospital at Alexandria on 1st May, 1915 with Rheumatic Fever.

Gunner Alan McKinlay embarked for Overseas from Alexandria on 27th May, 1915 on HMT *Kingstorian*.

Gunner Alan McKinlay, 577, of 3rd Australian Field Artillery Battery, was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal on 3rd August, 1915. The notice appeared in the *London Gazette* on 15th September, 1915 & the *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* on 30th December, 1915.

A letter was sent to Mrs McKinlay, mother of late Gunner Alan McKinlay, from Base Records on 7th February, which reads:

Dear Madam

I am directed to forward herewith the following extract from the Supplement No. 29296, dated Wednesday, 15th September, 1915, to "London Gazette" of Tuesday, 14th September, 1915, relating to the conspicuous services rendered by your son, No. 577 Gunner A. McKinlay, 1st Australian Field Artillery Brigade.

X X X X

AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL

NO. 577 Gunner A. McKinlay, (Died of illness)

3rd Battery,

1st Field Artillery Brigade

"For conspicuous gallantry on 8th June, 1915, south-west of Krithia, Gallipoli Peninsula. When a Company of Infantry had been forced by enfilade fire to vacate a trench, it was reported that one of their wounded had been left in the trench, which was now absolutely commanded by the enemy's fire. Gunner McKinlay, with another man, volunteered to bring him in, and succeeded in doing so. It was a most gallant adventure, and showed a fine spirit of self-sacrifice."

X X X X

The above has been promulgated in Australian Military Orders No. 4 of 1916.

Distinguished Conduct Medal – D.C.M.

The Distinguished Conduct Medal was established in 1854 as a decoration for gallantry in the field by other ranks of the British Army. The medal was also awarded to non-commissioned military personnel of other Commonwealth Dominions and Colonies.

During the First World War, the concern arose that the overwhelming number of medals which were being awarded would devalue the prestige of those already awarded. The Military Medal for bravery in battle on land was therefore instituted on 25th March 1916, as an alternative award to the Distinguished Conduct Medal. The lesser Military Medal was usually awarded for bravery from this date and the Distinguished Conduct Medal was reserved for exceptional acts of bravery. Around 25,000 Distinguished Conduct Medals were awarded during the First World War, while approximately 1,900 were awarded during the Second World War.

(Information & photo from Wikipedia)



The Distinguished Conduct Medal

Gunner Alan McKinlay was suffering from Jaundice & was transferred to No. 11 Lower Field Ambulance on Gallipoli Peninsula on 25th August, 1915. He was transferred to Hospital Ship *Cawdor Castle* on 31st August, 1915.

Gunner Alan McKinlay was admitted to Reading War Hospital, Reading, Berkshire, England on 11th September, 1915 seriously sick.

Gunner Alan McKinlay died on 19th September, 1915 at Reading War Hospital, Reading, Berkshire, England from Dysentery and Jaundice.

A death for Alan McKinlay, aged 22, was registered in the September quarter, 1915 in the district of Reading, Berkshire, England.

Gunner Alan McKinlay was buried in Reading Cemetery, Reading, Berkshire – Screen Wall. 72. 16607. Those buried in Plot 72 & buried in other parts of the cemetery that do not have headstones marking their graves are named on the Memorial Screen Wall located near the Cross of Sacrifice. Their deaths are still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

A War Pension was granted to Helen Maria McKinlay, mother of the late Gunner Alan McKinlay, in the sum of £26 per annum from 19th November, 1916.

Base Records contacted Mrs Helen McKinlay, mother of late Gunner Alan McKinlay, in regards to the disposal of his medals & enquiring if there were any nearer blood relatives. Mrs McKinlay begged to ask that the medals be sent to her address – “Barclay” Undercliff St., Neutral Bay, Sydney, as she had been separated from her husband for 15 years & that her son had left her all his possessions. She stated that she had his D.C.M. Mrs McKinlay advised that she believed her husband’s address was Burwood Colliery, Charlestown, Newcastle, NSW if they wished to contact

him. Base Records contacted Mr McKinlay on 3rd March, 1921 asking if he had any objections to his son's war medals being handed over to his mother. "She seems to have distinct moral claims to these items, and if you are not agreeable for them to be given to her, full reasons must be submitted for the consideration of the Minister." Mr McKinlay replied that he was agreeable for the war medals of his late son could be handed to his mother.

Gunner Alan McKinlay was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Gunner McKinlay's mother - Mrs H. McKinlay, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent June, 1921 & Plaque sent January, 1923).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Gunner Alan McKinlay – service number 577, of 1st Bde., Australian Field Artillery. He was the son of Charles and Helen McKinlay, of "Barclay", Undercliff St., Neutral Bay, Sydney.

Gunner A. McKinlay is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 11.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. McKinlay is remembered on the Nyngan and District War Memorial located at Bogan Shire Offices, corner Cobar & Tabratong Streets, Nyngan, NSW.



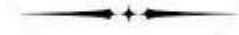
Nyngan and District War Memorial (Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW)



Nyngan and District War Memorial

(38 pages of Gunner Alan McKinlay'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





Gunner Alan McKinlay



Newspaper Notices

D.C.M.

AUSTRALIANS HONOURED

Distinguished Conduct medals have been awarded to Gunner G. Finlay, of the Second Battery, First Australian Field Brigade, and Gunner A. McKinlay, of the Third Battery, for conspicuous gallantry at Krithia on June 8. A company of infantry who were forced to vacate a trench reported that a wounded man had been left in the trench, which was absolutely commanded by the enemy's fire. Gunner Finlay and McKinlay brought in the man after a gallant adventure, showing fine spirit of self-sacrifice.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 16 September, 1915)

PERSONAL NOTES

OUR MEN OF GALLIPOLI

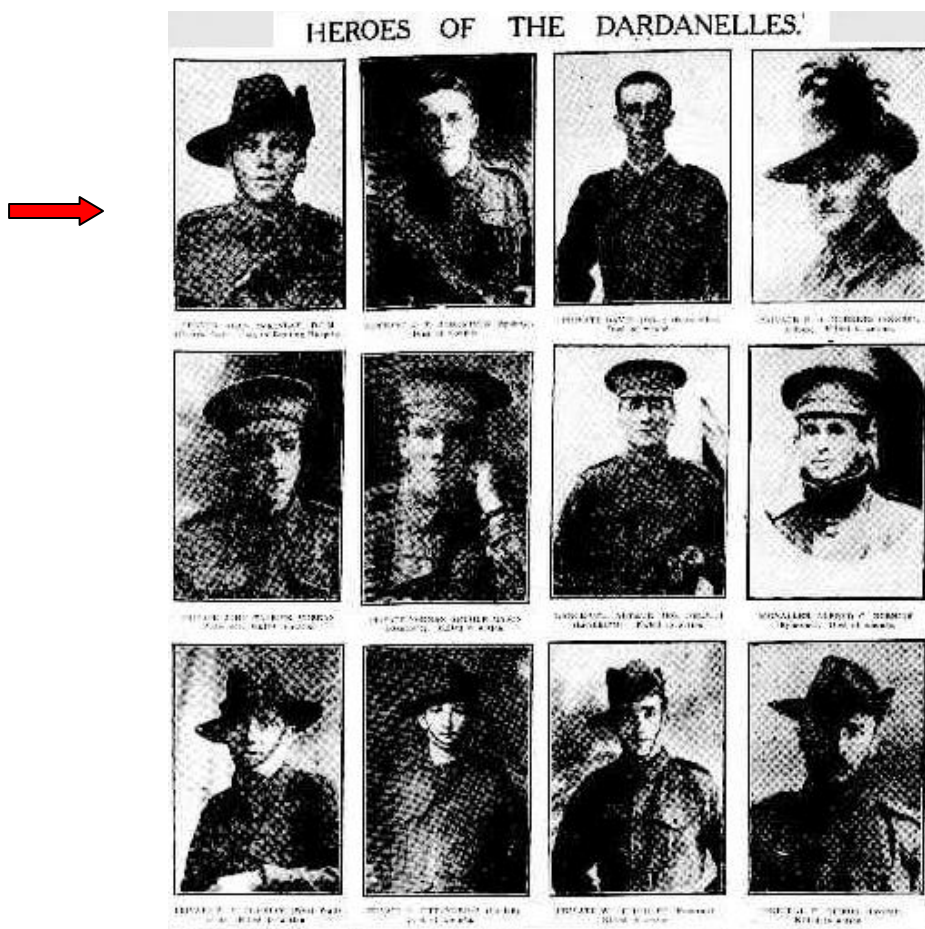
GUNNER ALAN A. MCKINLAY, D.C.M.

The Defence Department has notified Mrs A. McKinlay, of Mervale, Waters-road, Neutral Bay, of the death, in the hospital at Reading, England, of her son, Gunner Alan A. McKinlay who was recently awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous gallantry on June 8, at Krithia.

After a company had been forced to vacate a trench it was reported that a wounded man had been left behind. Although the trench was absolutely commanded by the enemy's fire, McKinlay and Finlay brought the man in. It was a most gallant adventure, carried out in a fine spirit and self-sacrifice.

Gunner McKinlay was 22 years of age, and previous to enlisting was employed by the Department of Agriculture on wheat experiment work.

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 8 October, 1915)



HEROES OF THE DARDANELLES



GUNNER ALAN MCKINLAY, D.C.M.

(Neutral Bay). Died in Reading Hospital.

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 8 October, 1915)

THE AUSTRALIANS

91st-92nd Casualty Lists

DIED OF ILLNESS

N.S. WALES – Gunner A. McKinlay.

(Examiner, Launceston, Tasmania – 15 October, 1915)

Reading Cemetery, Reading, Berkshire, England

Reading Cemetery, Reading, Berkshire contains 248 War Graves, 17 of those being from Australian Forces – World War 1.

The War Graves Plot is situated at the back of the cemetery, in the right hand corner from the entrance. A Screen Wall Memorial commemorates those buried in Plot 72 and those buried in other parts of the cemetery whose graves are not marked by headstones. There are 207 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war and 41 of the 1939-1945 war. There is also 1 Serbian burial.

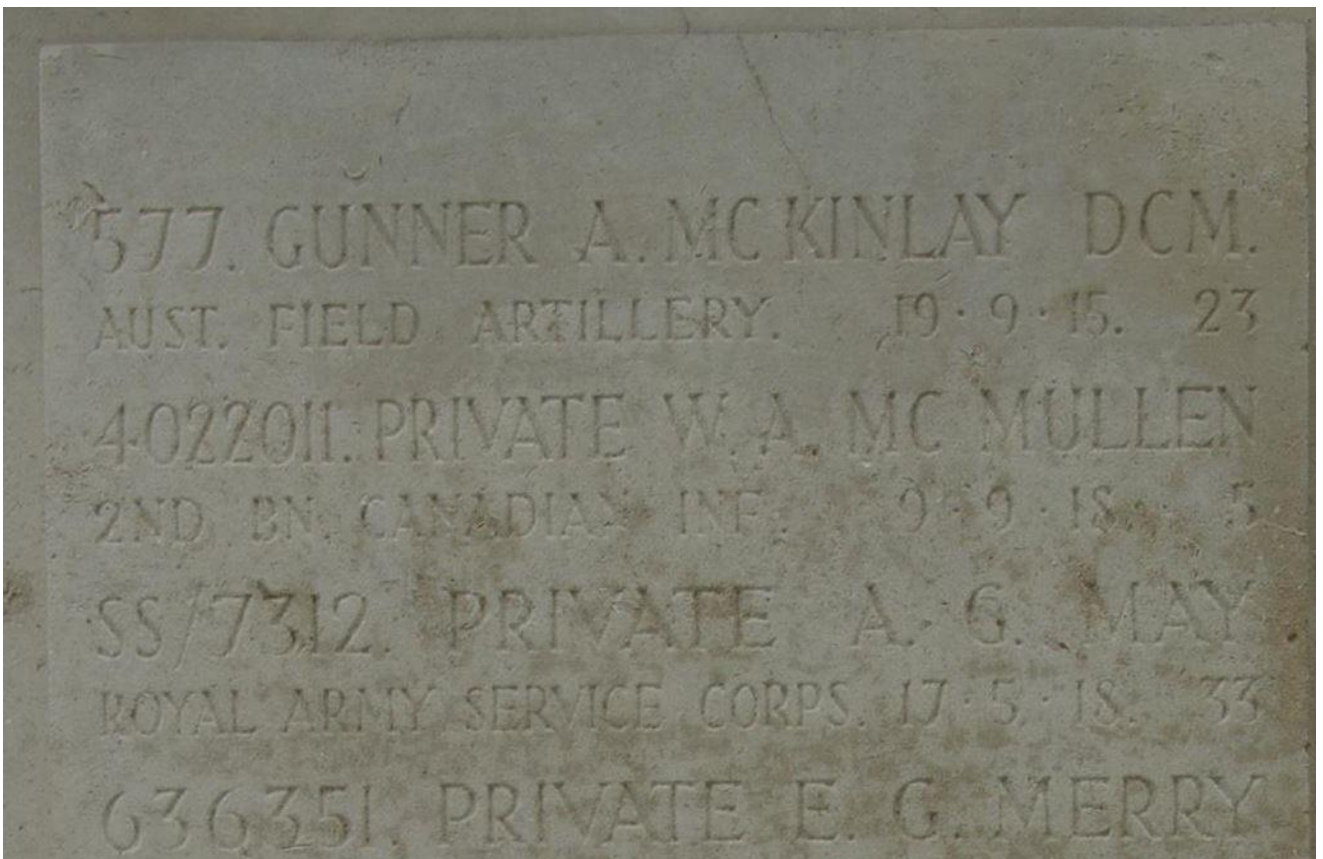
(Information & photos from CWGC)



Cross of Sacrifice & Memorial Screen Wall, Reading Cemetery, Reading, Berkshire *(Photos from CWGC)*



Photo of Gunner A. McKinlay's name on the Screen Wall Memorial in Reading Cemetery, Reading, Berkshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Phil Wood)