

The McDonalds and Armstrongs

PREFACE

A family tale, passed down through the generations, claims descent from Flora MacDonald, the Scottish heroine who helped Charles (Bonny Prince Charlie) escape to France after his defeat at the Battle of Culloden in April 1746. Charles was a Stuart prince who tried, but failed, to reclaim the English throne from George II.

It's a nice claim to fame, but no evidence has been found to support a direct link.

The family's earliest proven ancestor is Donald McDonald, son of Peter and Sarah, both born McDonald. However these names have not been found among known descendants of Flora and her husband, Captain Allan MacDonald and no verifiable details have been found of Peter's or Sarah's births, his military career or their marriage. Perhaps the kinship, if any, is more distant than a direct line.

This book aims to record the history, such as it is known and can be proven, of the McDonald and Armstrong families.

The McDonalds

Donald and Sarah Folder

Donald McDonald was born sometime between 30 March and 27 May 1811 in the area of Glengarry, Inverness-shire. ([Scotland map Glengarry,2024 Glengarry pic](#)) The birthdate is surmised from the census dates of 1841 and 1851, 6 June and 30 March respectively and Donald's death certificate, which also provided his birthplace and parents' names. ([Donald death cert](#))

A soldier, Peter's life was hard, but the army provided relatively secure employment for a young man. After 1806, the maximum term a soldier might serve was 21 years, counted from when he turned 18, even if he had enlisted at a younger age. He would then have been eligible to claim a Royal Hospital Chelsea Pension. Soldiers whose careers had ended prematurely due to battle wounds or other, service-related, reasons were also eligible.

Marriage was only permitted after seven years of service, but life was not easy for a soldier's wife. Donald's death certificate states his father's profession as soldier, so it may be assumed Sarah, like other army wives, was accommodated in a village near the barracks, as there were no married quarters within. She might have gained employment there as a domestic, at least until children came along and could also claim assistance from her local parish. If Peter was sent away on duty, she might be allowed to accompany him. At least she would be fed, if only half-rations. If she stayed at home, Peter could allot all or some of his wage to her, so she and their family could survive. However, this wage, a shilling per day, was subject to deductions from his pay – for food, clothing, damage to barracks, time lost due to imprisonment for offences or other infringements.

If Sarah and their children accompanied Peter on active duty and he had died, they would have been looked after. She could have re-married and stay with the regiment, but if he had died in other circumstances, she and her children would have been repatriated to the regimental depot in Britain. They would then have been given travel vouchers back to their home parish. Peter and Sarah's children, both male and female, could also have been educated at the Royal Military Asylum at Chelsea. The boys were given uniforms and often taught musical instruments as well as elementary subjects, giving them basic numeracy

and literacy. The girls were also taught domestic duties such as sewing. Perhaps this was how Donald became literate. (18)

Soldiers usually returned to their homes and trades after service, so it could be assumed that, if Peter completed his service, he returned to Inverness-shire, in the Scottish Highlands, home of kilts, tartans, clans, claymores and bagpipes. ([Highlands Lowlands map](#)) The Highlands are mountainous, intersected with lochs, but could still support agriculture and the grazing of sheep and cattle. (12) In the wide stretches of plains along the coastline and along the many glens and valleys, crops were grown, generally animal fodder, potatoes and other vegetables. Forestry, especially of pine, oak, birch and spruce, was also practised and the lochs and seaboard areas were home to a flourishing fishing industry. (2), (3) ([2024 Highlands pics](#))

Traditionally, land was owned by a Laird and subdivided into smaller plots, managed by a Tacksman, who collected the rents from tenants for the Laird. After the Battle of Culloden, Lairds who had been loyal to the Stuarts forfeited their lands to the Crown. The new owners were Englishmen, loyal to King George II, who came in with new ideas for land management, which meant that tenant farmers were squeezed out to make room to run more sheep, which were more profitable. These evictions became known as “The Clearances” and continued from approximately 1750-1860, causing mass migration to the cities. (24)

Included in that number were Inverness-shire man, Donald McDonald and Sarah McLean, who came from Argyllshire. Both had moved to Paisley, in Renfrewshire, a popular destination for people from the Highlands searching for employment.(1) At the time of their marriage, 25 November 1839 at Abbey, Church of Scotland, Donald was a labourer and ([marriage record, Paisley Abbey pic](#)) (32) Sarah, most likely, a domestic servant. Both were residing in Cowieston, in the Parish of Paisley.

Their first child, Isabella, was born 3 October 1840 and baptised 15 November at St Andrew's Catholic Church, Glasgow. ([Isabella birth record](#)) It is not known which parent was Catholic, but Isabella and all subsequent children were baptised in that faith. By the time of the 1841 census, ([1841 census image](#)) in which Donald's occupation is recorded as Quarrier, the little family had moved to Brecklet, near Glencoe, Argyllshire, site of the infamous 1692 massacre of 38 MacDonal clan members by the Scottish army for failure to swear allegiance to King William III of England. [Glencoe massacre painting](#) (22) [Glencoe Scene of massacre](#) (30)

Brecklet is near the Ballachulish Slate Quarries, opened on the land of Charles Stuart, Esquire, of Ballachulish, in response to increased demand for building supplies as towns grew during the Industrial Revolution. Around 1840, output from Ballachulish exceeded that of the original slate quarry at Easdale Island for the first time. Perhaps that prompted the family's move, Donald seeing an opportunity to improve the family's fortunes, but maybe they were returning to Sarah's home and Donald became one of the very few employees who had not grown up in a slate-quarrying household. The following extract from the 1841 Statistical Accounts of Scotland below explains the restricted nature of employment in the industry. (41)

master as if directly hired by himself. With a very few exceptions, the workmen are all the descendants of the original inhabitants of the immediate neighbourhood of the quarries, such as are not being chiefly from the adjoining districts; and as employment can be obtained at an early age, the boys generally follow the calling of their fathers, and a very effective body of workmen is thus kept up. Indeed no man can become dexterous in the various departments of the manufacture of slates unless he is trained to it from his youth, for nothing but experience can enable a man to judge of the quality of the rock on which he is engaged, and understand the best way of working it; and it requires early and continued practice, to become expert at splitting and cutting slates.

[Ballachulish quarries map](#) (16) [Ballachulish, Brecklet and Glencoe map](#) (16) [Brecklet in Ballachulish photo from glass negative and 100 years later](#) Glencoe Folk Museum credit

The East Quarry, noted in the 1841 Statistical Accounts, had “greater natural facilities for quarrying” with a rock face length of 536 feet, cut to create three levels and a total height of 216 feet. The first two levels were defined by tram roads, cut into the face of the rock, along which wagons on tram tracks transported quarried blocks of rock down to banks, formed by unusable rock being dumped into the sea. The banks gradually created peninsulas out into Loch Leven, along the edges of which wharves were constructed, to facilitate the loading of ships carrying the slates away. Quarriers on the third level sent their rock down an inclined plane, via a fly wheel, to the second level, from where it was sent to the bank. ([Ballachulish levels at East quarry pic](#)) (16) [quarriers at work pic](#) (48) [Fly-wheel pic](#) (Craig McHugh credit) [Ballachulish inclined plane 2 pic](#) (Maureen Fyfe credit)([2024 Quarry pic](#))

The Gaelic-speaking quarriers worked and were paid as a crew, generally four men, who contracted to be paid a stipulated rate for the number of slates produced during the term of their agreement. The men kept up their tools and paid for the blasting powder, while the landowner supplied the wagons and maintained the tram roads. Two men blasted the rock face, discarding unusable material, then sent the slate blocks to the bank. There a third man split the rock to proper thickness and the fourth shaped the rock into Duchesses 24” x 12”, Countesses, 20” x 10”, Sizeable, averaging 14” x 8” and Under-size slates, the last two sizes comprising the chief production. Annually 8,000 -11,000 tons, or 5-7 million slates, were shipped to sea ports in Scotland and to Northumberland in England. An able and well-matched crew could each earn £1 per week, at a time when 12 shillings a week was the average wage.(41) ([pic 2 slate quarriers](#)) (10)

Despite the inherent dangers of quarrying, life was relatively comfortable for the workers. More than three-quarters of men employed by the quarry lived on the Ballachulish Estate, in houses “built of lime and stone and slated”. Each house comprised three rooms, all plastered, with “chimnies and grates” in the main room for coal-fired cooking and heating and an open garret above. Most houses had cow-houses attached for the family cow, which provided milk, butter and cheese for the family. Vegetables, mostly potatoes, were grown on the small plot of land provided for the quarriers. Up to two and a half tons of potatoes could be produced annually on this small plot.

([Ballachulish slate quarriers houses 801kb pic also 2024 pic](#)) (17) [Pic of Brecklet path with caption Up and over the hill after a hard day's work?](#)

The yearly rent for such a house was £2/5/-, plus £1/6/- for cow pasture and 15/- for the potato and vegetable land, a total of £4/6/-. In 1840, £4/6/- was equal to 21 days' work for a skilled tradesman. To service the men and their families, there was a public-house, shop and smithy. Shoemakers, carpenters and weavers also lived in or around the area. In 1841

around 300 men were employed at the quarry. [\(Brecklet stores pic\)](#) (48) There was a daily postal service and the Glasgow *Herald* would arrive the day following its publication. Steamers connected to Glasgow, Inverness, Skye and Mull for those who had time and money.

Care of the souls and minds was not forgotten. In 1841 the combined Parish of Lismore and Appin was served by the Catholic church of St Mun's, including a priest's house, near the quarry, which served the 15 Catholic families, including the McDonalds. [\(2024 St Mun's sketch and pic\)](#) The priest from Fort William, the Rev Alexander MacKintosh from 1838 -1897, [\(2024 list of parish priests\)](#) would visit often and stay for a short time, performing the necessary rites of births, communions, confirmations, marriages and deaths. There was also an Episcopalian chapel in Glencoe and two Church of Scotland churches, one each for Lismore and Appin. As well, the parish provided eight schools, one of which was in Glencoe where, in Gaelic and English, reading writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, English Grammar, Latin and, sometimes, basic Mathematics, were taught. Parents paid 1/- to 2/6d per quarter and, in 1841, few between the ages of six and fifteen were not at school. (41)

Many of the quarriers had boats that they used for fishing the waters of Loch Leven after work, on the Sabbath after church services and in winter, when the weather made work at the quarry too dangerous and difficult. When the quarries shut down, the men had to find alternative means of income. Fishing was the obvious choice, providing food and a small income. Boats were housed in small sheds at the edge of the loch, built from slate off-cuts and fragments. [\(Ballachulish boat sheds pic\)](#) (49)

In the nine years following the 1841 census, Donald and Sarah added to their family, with:
Ann (Annie) born 25 November, baptised 27 November 1842
Mary born c. 1844
Catherine born c. 1846
Peter and Allan born 27 June, baptised 30 June 1848
Sarah and James born 24 May, baptised 25 May 1850, joining Isabella.

Birth records have not been found for Mary and Catherine, but the other children's birth and baptismal dates are in the records of the Church of the Immaculate Conception, now St Mary's, in Fort William, Inverness-shire, [\(2024 St Mary's pic\)](#) written up by Reverend MacKintosh on his return to Fort William. Although burial records were not kept in the parish, the 1851 census reveals that babies Peter and Sarah had not survived infancy. The census also reveals that, of the three eligible children, only Annie was at school. [\(birth records Ann Peter Allan Sarah James\)](#) (1851 census)

The Passenger List of the sailing ship *Chance* is the next record of the family, minus Sarah McLean McDonald, who had died sometime after the 1851 census. *Chance* set sail from Liverpool 24 July 1852, bound for Melbourne, in the relatively new colony of Victoria, Australia. [\(passenger list chance 1852 2\)](#) The specific reason for Donald's decision to emigrate can only be speculated on, but the employment opportunities for new immigrants following the discovery of gold in Victoria in July 1851 and the resulting rush to the gold fields by men from all walks of life, must have been a factor.

The Sydney Herald's call for workers in the summer of 1852 reflected the lack of necessary workers in the colonies. It stated there was “ample employment for many thousands of emigrants provided they be men who really give a good day’s work for a good day’s wages. We do not want idlers; neither do we want any more of that swarming class of young gentlemen who can do nothing but sit on a stool and handle a quill: Of those we have

enough.”

Those who responded to the call had the option of Assisted Migration, a scheme whereby those who wished to emigrate to Australia, but hadn't the means to do so, could apply to the Board of Emigration Commissioners for help. There were some restrictions on who could apply, however. Age was the first, as migrants had to be able to work for some time in their new country. *Chance's* Passenger List shows only 52 migrants in their 40s, including Donald McDonald and a mere three in their 50s. Also, the number of children under seven allowed for each family was limited to two. If accepted, migrants' passages from the U.K. would be subsidised or totally paid for by the Victorian government in Australia.

Assisted migration had existed, but had not been regulated, since the 1830s but, following several infamous voyages during which hundreds of migrants died as a result of overcrowding, poor sanitation and inadequate supplies of food and water, on 14 January 1840 the Board of Emigration Commissioners had been established. (38) A series of Passenger Acts were then passed to put into law the conditions for emigration schemes, the selection of persons for free and assisted passages and the chartering of ships specifically for emigrants. The Board's most important contribution however, was to regulate the conditions on board British passenger vessels. By appointing surgeons and matrons to the migrant ships, the Commissioners aimed to safeguard the health and comfort of the emigrants. Their success can be measured by the Report to the Victorian Parliament on Immigration for the year 1852, which states that, in that year “...of the 48 Surgeons Superintendents and Assistant Surgeons, it was found necessary to withhold the usual gratuity or certificate from two only which speaks well for the care bestowed on the selection of those officers,” referring to the practice of paying extra money or recognition to the surgeons on completion of the journey if the condition of passengers and number of deaths was deemed satisfactory. (34)

Despite the best efforts of the Commissioners, some shipping companies and their captains, who were paid at the end of the journey per passenger, (half-rate for those who died during the voyage) continued to send ships with as many passengers as they could cram in. Edward Grimes, the Immigration Agent who reported annually to the Victorian Parliament, commented in his report on 1852 that recent practices of using two-decked ships to accommodate from 600-800 passengers had resulted in 849 deaths and named four of the 42 ships that arrived in 1852 - *Bourneuf*, *Marco Polo*, *Wanata* and *Ticonderago* - for contributing 356 to those numbers. Grimes notes he was gratified that the Commissioners had since put a halt to the practice and restricted the number of passengers to 350 on a vessel of moderate size. (34)

No doubt with mixed emotions, Donald and his surviving children left their home in Brecklet and travelled to Glasgow, then on to Liverpool, most likely by boat, the last leg at a cost of 5/- per person. (Bradshaws2) In Liverpool, they waited for up to ten days for *Chance*, a vessel of 1049 tons, to arrive. They may have been able to stay at the Emigrant Depot, which had been opened for Australian emigrants in Birkenhead, across the Mersey River, that year. The only other option was a lodging house, which were often inhospitable, dirty and overcrowded. Once *Chance* arrived, the emigrants could not board until the day before or the actual day of sailing. (26) Family details were recorded on the Passenger List, with varying degrees of accuracy, in part due to the confusion of men, women and children milling about and in part because of language difficulties. Of the 508 passengers, 391 were Scottish, some of them speaking only Gaelic. The McDonald family's record omits Isabella, who was possibly travelling with another family, and only Allan's and James' ages are correct.

Chance's journey to Australia took 110 days, sailing via the “Great Circle” route down the west coasts of England, Europe and Africa, before heading east. In either Rio de Janeiro or Cape Town, she stopped for supplies, before continuing far south of the Cape of Good Hope, to find the “Roaring Forties” - strong winds which blew from west to east between 40 and 50 degrees South. After the heat of equatorial regions, *Chance's* passengers faced freezing conditions and the risk of icebergs, before she turned north towards the Australian coast. (39) (Clipper route pic) (45)

Assisted migrants like the McDonalds were allocated the cheapest accommodation, called “steerage,” below the water line. This was similar to a dormitory with bunks down each side of the ship and tables in the centre. (Emigrants at dinner pic)(29) Decorum was maintained by accommodating the single men and single women at either end of the ship, separated by married couples and their families. (Emigrant ship drawing pic) Passengers would string up blankets or clothing in front of and between the bunks, giving them a modicum of privacy.

Most ships provided only basic toilet facilities and even these were unfamiliar to many of the poorer assisted passengers, accustomed to just going outside the home when the need arose. Toilet paper hadn't been invented, so rags, soaked in vinegar, were hung on the back of the privy door, to be used by all. Basic rules of hygiene were not understood, so diseases like dysentery spread rapidly.

Bathing facilities were equally primitive. Many people of the time did not bathe regularly anyway and the cramped and overcrowded conditions in steerage meant that a quick clean-up with a damp cloth under the blanket sufficed, especially for women. Men, on the other hand could, at least in good weather, have a “sea bath,” (sea-bathing sketch) (29) as illustrated by the “Sea bathing in the Tropics” sketch from the diary of Edward Snell, who sailed from London to Melbourne aboard the *Bolton* in 1849. However, even if passengers could get their bodies clean, fresh water was precious, so there were very limited opportunities to wash any clothes, let alone the heavy and multi-layered items of women's clothing, so many people wore the same apparel for the entire voyage.

Areas below deck, including sleeping berths, were scrubbed and disinfected as often as possible with a mixture of vinegar and chloride of lime. However, cracks in the wooden slats of the bunks harboured cockroaches, lice and fleas which, alongside rats and mice, then moved into the straw-filled pallets that served as mattresses. These were taken to the upper decks to be shaken out and aired in fine weather in the hope of dislodging unwanted tenants. (29)

The journey was difficult at times, particularly during storms, when the hatches were battened and seasickness overcame many passengers. Closing the hatches did not completely stop seawater entering below decks and mattresses would become sodden, adding influenza and pneumonia to the perils of the journey. Diseases such as cholera, tuberculosis and typhus were also a constant threat in the confined and poorly ventilated decks and deaths at sea were common. (burial at sea sketch) (29) *Chance* was one of the ships affected by the outbreak of disease. She arrived in Melbourne 26 October, but not released from quarantine until 11 November, scarlet fever, typhus fever and measles being the main diseases aboard. During the voyage, there were forty-six deaths, including thirty-eight children aged 0-14 years. Two year old James McDonald was one of those. (Passengers Chance Assisted Migrants Register deaths)

Once *Chance* berthed, the McDonalds gathered their belongings together, collecting any large items from the hold (immigrants arrival sketch) (31)and were probably, even though

Donald was a widower, herded to the Married Couples Depot, erected “at great expense during the past year” according to the official report to Parliament for the year 1852. This was where immigrants were housed while agents for employers completed the necessary paperwork before the immigrants could be transported to their employer. (34) Details were recorded on the Register of Assisted Immigrants, which also specifies the length and conditions of the employment, religious denomination, marital status and literacy levels. (Passengers Chance Records on Arrival 1852) Donald, a Roman Catholic widower, could both read and write, but his children could do neither, according to the ship's records. He and his family were engaged by J. Matthewson, an agent for a landowner, for 12 months for £50, less than the average, but with included rations. (Passengers Chance Assisted Migrants Register employment) (Immigrants Periods of engagement table)(immigrants Wages and crops grown table) It is likely that he was employed in the County of Grant as a farm labourer, as that was where he stayed. Crops grown in this county were grains commonly grown in Europe and fruit and vegetables of all kinds. (34) xxxxx

Donald and his family settled in to life in Australia while, it can be assumed, keeping the Scottish traditions, stories and Gaelic language alive, at least within the family unit. Scottish families in the district would no doubt have gathered together to share meals and talk of life “Back Home” and the strangeness of this new world, but they were determined to make the most of their opportunities to create a better life for themselves and their children. Donald was the breadwinner of his family, but the children had been hired as well, to work in the fields, with the animals or in the landowner's house. At first it would have been just the girls, but as soon as Allan was old enough he, too, would have been put to work. Harsh as this might sound today, the girls would have been used to working with their mother, both in the home and on their small piece of land in Brecklet and they had somewhere to sleep and food in their bellies.

The McDonalds had moved to Australia the year after Victoria became a colony, had watched as men continued to flock to the gold fields, heard the stories of great finds and equally great disappointments, but had not been tempted to join them. Perhaps Donald sensed the trouble that was brewing. The fledgling government had been ill-prepared for the huge influx of people into the state and, in an attempt to create revenue to build the infrastructure needed to feed, house and provide medical treatment for the newcomers, a 30-shillings a month licence fee was imposed on gold miners. This was not well received by the miners. Surface gold had begun to run out in 1852 and the licence fee and its heavy-handed collection by police saw a gradual building of resentment. This came to a head on 3 December 1854 when what became known as the Eureka Stockade Rebellion resulted in the death of 22 miners and six soldiers. (Eureka stockade pic) (31) The good folk of Ballarat and its surrounding settlements, such as Cargerie, would have had much to discuss in its wake.

Gold was still to be found below the surface however and, perhaps in part because of the miners' new-found sense of brotherhood, the diggings grew larger and their operations more co-operative. So successful were their efforts that in the 1850s gold mining in Victoria accounted for more than a third of the world's gold production. Partly as a result of this, by 1871 the Australian population had quadrupled from 430,000 to 1.7 million. (31)

In the years following the arrival of the McDonalds, folk would have been gossiping about the restrictions on Chinese immigration, especially to the nearby goldfields. Between 1855 and 1861, ships' captains had to pay taxes of up to £10 per head for each Chinese passenger they landed in Victoria. The captains evaded the tax by disembarking immigrants from China in South Australia, the sea port of Robe being the most popular landing point after 1857. It's estimated 17,000 Chinese, mostly men, predominantly from Southern China,

walked to Victoria from Robe following over 400kms of tracks, hoping to be successful in the search for gold. (43) They were not welcomed with open arms, however, often being discriminated against by the other miners.

People would also have eagerly awaited letters from family and friends. The Gold Rush proved beneficial to them as shipping companies vied to improve their fleets and shorten the time taken to travel between Britain and Australia in order to accommodate and benefit from the increase in passenger numbers. During the 1850s, steam ships and the use of the "Great Circle" route, also taken by the McDonalds, cut the travel time to two months. However, this still meant a four month wait to receive reply letters from "home". (31)

In the 1860s and early 1870s, the gossip would have been about the expeditions of Burke and Wills and John McDouall Stuart, ([John McDouall Stuart pic](#)) (5) who led expeditions hoping to discover land suitable for farming and to map routes between settlements, including a way for the overland telegraph. Burke and Wills failed but Stuart was successful in crossing the continent south to north, from Adelaide to the Arafura Sea in July 1862 and returning to Adelaide in December the same year. The telegraph line was laid generally along Stuart's path, which itself had been created and used by the Aboriginal people for millennia. Begun in 1870, the Overland Telegraph line ended in Darwin in August 1872 and soon after was connected to the Java-Darwin line and thus the world. (31)

Donald was used to hard work and perhaps remained with his original employer for many years. While Isabella remained at home, keeping the household running and caring for her siblings, the younger girls were able to get paid work away from home, probably as housemaids, within a few years. Around 1863, having left school, Allan was able to join his father in full-time farm work. By 3 April 1866, Donald was able to apply for a Licence to Occupy 80 acres, allotments 55B, 56B and 57B of the original Cargerie Run, claimed by squatters in the early 1800s. ([Cargerie map](#)) ([land purchase docs Pp 1,2, hard copy](#)) This was approved and he took possession of the land 17 September, paying £11/10/- per annum. The land was described by Contract Surveyor Joseph Shaw 25 August 1866 as having medium soil, timbered with gums and she-oaks and having a water course. ([Land Purchase docs 3 hard copy](#))

The land had first to be cleared, at least sufficiently for a dwelling and fields prepared for planting. The dwelling could have been a tent to begin with, or a simple bark hut or a wattle and daub dwelling. ([Sample bark hut](#) (15) and [wattle and daub house pics](#)) (39) Donald's move to his own land marked the beginning of three generations of McDonalds at Cargerie.

Under the terms of the Licence, Donald was able to make improvements to the land and over time, he constructed a six room weatherboard residence, such as the one illustrated here ([sample weatherboard house pic](#)) (27) and fenced the property, at a cost of £217. He proved to be a successful farmer and in 1872, applied to the Board of Land and Works for proof of payment of £69 in Rent and Survey fees in the intervening six years. ([land purchase docs p5 hard copy](#)) He was then able to apply to purchase his occupied land, ([land purchase docs p6 hard copy](#)) using the Rent and Survey fees already paid as part-payment for the £80 purchase at £1 per acre. At some stage in the same year he leased Allotments 54A3 and 54B2, gaining another 20 acres.

Along with the majority of farmers in the Moorabool shire, Donald would have grown vegetables for the family and hay for a small herd of dairy cattle, kept for milk, cheese and butter, but his large flock of sheep formed the mainstay of his livelihood. (28) He and the

other 165,109 Victorian primary producers and the 46% of the population living in rural areas at the Census of 1901, were vital to the survival of the fledgling country. The animals they raised and crops they grew not only supported the local population, but also contributed to national and international export trade. (Victorian population according to occupation 1901 and Victorian pop distribution diagrams)

By the time Donald died 27 May 1902, aged 91, a further 147 acres and 37 perches, Lots 55C, 56C, 57C, 58B and 59A, had been added to his holdings, the total valued at £992. As Donald aged and his health deteriorated Allan, wife Flora and sons, Allan and Alexander, had gradually assumed more responsibility for the house and land, passed to Allan after Donald's death. (Donald McDonald will and probate docs)

It was the year after Federation and Donald had witnessed momentous times for the state and the country since the family's arrival in 1852. His death was reported by Allan who, when listing all the children of Donald and Sarah and their ages, stated that two children had died. It can be assumed that they all remembered James, who had died on the journey to Australia, so either Peter or Sarah had been forgotten. Donald is buried at Clarendon Cemetery according to his death certificate, but no record exists there.

Isabella Children in separate folders with Donald and Sarah

Firstborn Isabella, the only McDonald child not born in Brecklet, appears in both the 1841 and 1851 census of Scotland. The eldest, she must have been a help to her mother, both in caring for her siblings and keeping the household running, especially from around 1850 when her mother gave birth to a second set of twins in two years.

Isabella was not attending school in 1851, probably because she was needed at home and, after coming to Australia, that need remained. Poor families could not afford school fees and children were expected to help out, both in the home and at farm chores. Education was not compulsory in Victoria until 1872, so Isabella remained illiterate.

When she married Joseph Wilson, a stonemason from nearby Bunninyong, 30 November 1882, she was still living at Cargerie. Joseph was born at Inverkeithing, Fifeshire 14 February 1826 to Joseph, a sea captain and Janet née Jamieson Wilson. (Joseph birth record) The younger Joseph married Janet McCallum 26 November 1849 in Scotland and they had a son, also Joseph, born c. October 1850. (1851 census joseph wilson) The couple emigrated to Australia on the *Flora* 21 July 1852, arriving 23 October, young Joseph presumably dead. Another son, John Peter, was born 1855. Janet died in July 1881 and is buried in Bunninyong Cemetery.

Isabella and Joseph married at the Presbyterian St Andrew's Manse in Ballarat, making their marks on their marriage certificate, Isabella claiming she was 38 and Joseph that he was 53. (Marriage Isabella and joseph) They lived on a quarter acre block at the corner of Simpson and Inglis Streets, Bunninyong, in a four-roomed brick and wood house, valued at £70 in 1898.

There were no children from the marriage and Joseph died 13 June 1898, leaving Isabella all his property, real and personal, making sure she was supported by entrusting her interests to his son, John Peter, a merchant and also Mayor of the Borough of Bunninyong 1891-2; 1898-9; and 1903-4. (John Peter store pic)(Credit Bunninyong Historical Society) John Peter honoured his father's wish. In a letter regarding the granting of Probate of Joseph's will, dated June 5 1901, he acknowledges that the house, land and furniture were Isabella's, free of rent, until her death. (Joseph will 3) Joseph is buried with Janet, while

John Peter, who died 1 August 1930, is nearby.

At the time of the compilation of the Electoral Roll of 1903, Isabella was living with John Peter, his wife Mary Jane née Dryden and their children Amelia Jane (Milly), Ilma Florence Janet, John Henry and Joseph Percy. Mary Jane died 29 June 1904, aged 46 and she is buried in Bunninyong Cemetery with their son, Norman Harold, who died, aged seven, 3 July 1897. Another daughter, Vera Gladys, born 1888 died at three months in 1889. [\(Obituary Mary Jane, Ballarat Star 1 July 1904, Gravestone Mary Jane and Norman\)](#)

John Peter then married Elizabeth Jenkins née Williams in 1906, at which time, it may be assumed, Isabella moved to Ballarat to live with her nephew, William Armstrong, whose wife had died 10 February that year. She appears in the Electoral Roll of 1909 with William, who re-married that year. Sometime before 1921, when she re-appears on the Electoral Roll, Isabella moved back to Cargerie and she remained there until her death.

When she died 15 April 1930, her death was reported by her nephew, Allan Aloysius McDonald and her plot purchased by either her brother, Allan or his son, Allan Aloysius. She is buried with sister Mary, in the McDonald family plot, Section C, at Clarendon Cemetery. Her other sisters, Ann and Catherine, ensured she remained in the family memory, naming their daughters after her. Nephew John Allan Armstrong also included her name when naming his daughters. [\(Gravestone Isabella and Mary, Death record Isabella, Clarendon cemetery mud map\)](#)

Ann

Ann, known as Annie, moved to Bunninyong, probably in her early teens, to work as a domestic servant, paid around £35 per year. There she met Denis Cavanagh, a farmer, born c. 1839 in County Clare, Ireland to John Cavanagh and Bridget Kett. It is believed he sailed from Liverpool to Melbourne on the *Ocean Chief*, 5 July 1860 with his cousin, John Kett, arriving 2 October. [\(pic Ocean Chief\)\(arrival denis passenger list\)](#) (45)

Annie and Denis married 8 July 1868 at St Alipius Catholic Church in Ballarat, both able to sign their names in neat hands [\(Marriage Annie and Denis^{1,2}\)](#) and Annie moved to Denis' farm near Warrenheip Railway Station. A bare three years later, Denis' health began to deteriorate and after several years of illness, he was unable to work, although he still liked to keep an eye on his properties. He was at his farm at Yendon about 10 kilometres away, with son John and brother Patrick, when he became very ill. John and Patrick were able to get him home to Warrenheip, where he died, 6 August 1883, aged 44. [\(Funeral notice Denis\)](#) [\(Map Yendon to Warrenheip Google maps\)](#)

An Inquiry was held into his death, the cause of which was stomach cancer. Annie, Patrick and John were required to provide statements, Annie stating that four children, two boys and two girls, were alive at the time of Denis' death. John's birth is the only one found on the BDM Victoria site, so the other three children were a mystery, but purchase of John's birth record revealed an older sister, Sarah. [\(Birth record John Cavanagh\)](#) More information came from Ballarat New Cemetery files which record three sons, John, Thomas and William, buried with their parents. [Cavanagh family grave information](#) William's name, however, is absent from the gravestone in Roman Catholic B, Section 07, Grave 48. [\(Cavanagh family gravestone\)](#) [\(Ballarat New Cemetery map\)](#)

The final piece of the puzzle fell into place with the Electoral Roll of 1903 revealing

Isabella, a younger daughter, living with Annie and John Cavanagh at 10 Oliver Street Ballarat East. Victorian Railways' records show John was an engine cleaner 21 January 1889, having put his age up to 21. He had become a fireman by 1899, earning 9 shillings per day by 1902 and an engine driver by 1905, earning 11 shillings per day. He was living in Melbourne when he died in June 1907 and was buried on the eleventh of that month in Ballarat Cemetery.

Annie remained at Oliver Street, where she died about 8 January 1923. She was buried 9 January, her pall bearers being her grandsons Francis, John, Phillip and William Dunn and nephews Allan and Alexander McDonald. (funeral notice Annie)(Obituary Annie)

Family Ann and Denis:

- Sarah 1869 – 12/09/1955
- John 1871 – buried 11/06/1907
- Thomas 1874/5 – 1876
- Isabella Agnes 1878 – 27/06/1958
- William Patrick 03/1883 – 05/10/1883

Sarah married Thomas Dunn (1866 – 30/12/1950) in 1894. Both buried Brighton General Cemetery, they had six children:

- Francis Vincent, (18/03/1895 – 08/04/1982) m. Rebecca Winifred, maiden name unknown. Francis is buried Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park, Matraville NSW;
- Ann Elizabeth, (1896 – 28/08/1984) buried Melbourne General Cemetery;
- John Coleman, (1898 – 01/03/1926) buried with parents;
- Michael Joseph, (1900 - cremated 30/01/1979) m. Jessie Victoria Moloney (1907 – 13/05/1992) in 1938. Their ashes are interred in niches at Fawkner Memorial Park;
- Phillip Leo, (1902 - 30/09/1986) m. Carolena Abreham (1903 – 03/07/1975) in 1928. They are both buried St Kilda Cemetery;
- William Patrick, (1905 – 13/01/1977) buried Melbourne General Cemetery.

Isabella married George Edward Simmonds (c.1877 – 09/02/1944) in 1912. Buried in Ballarat New Cemetery, they had six children:

- Monica Mary, (1913 - buried 09/10/1958) m. Edward Flynn (1910 – buried 05/03/1984) in 1948. They are buried together at Ballarat New Cemetery;
- Angela Isabella, (1915 -17/08/1932) buried with parents in Ballarat New Cemetery;
- Bernard John, (24/02/1918 – 09/08/1969) buried Ballarat New Cemetery;
- Winifred Eileen, (28/07/1919 – 15/10/2013) m. Henry George Towns (1915 – 31/01/1992) in 1943. They are buried together Ballarat New Cemetery;
- George Francis, (30/04/1922 – 04/01/1988) m. Sheila Mary Manning (07/06/1922

-30/08/2006) in 1948. They are buried Richmond, Tasmania;

- Annie Noreen, (12/03/1924 – 18/03/2023) m. Bertie James Griffin (1925 - 11/07/1983) in 1951. They are both buried Ballarat New Cemetery.

Mary

Mary's life from 1852 to 1866 is unknown. She was about eight years old when the family arrived and had not been at school in Scotland, at least not at the time of the 1851 census and it seems Mary also slipped through the cracks. When she registered the births of her first two sons, in 1866 and 1868, Mary was not able to sign her name, instead making her mark.

It may be assumed she also worked as a domestic servant once she was old enough. She stated she married John Armstrong at Geelong in 1866 when registering the births, but her death certificate, registered by her grandson-in-law, Dominick Brennan, states the marriage was at nearby Inverleigh. No record of the marriage has been found, so either she did marry as she claimed and the record has been lost, or she moved in with John Armstrong, assuming his name. He was a miner, probably of coal, from Northumberland, born c. 1837. They lived in Cambrian Hill, described in the mid 1860s as a postal hamlet with agriculture, grazing, alluvial mining, three hotels and a predominantly Welsh community. (victorianplaces.com.au) (44) John quite likely came to Australia as part of the Gold Rush, possibly in 1857 with brother James on the *Anne Reydon*. ([john armstrong poss arrival 1&2](#))

New gold miners like John arrived on the fields full of hope and little else. Equipment, including a tin pan, pick axes, spades, shovels, a wheelbarrow, felling axes, trowels, iron wedges, crowbars, metal buckets and a cradle had to be purchased, either from storekeepers or miners leaving the field. The Eureka Stockade rebellion of 1854 had resulted in the removal of the disputed miners' licence fee, replaced by an export duty and a nominal £1 per year Miners' Right. However, alluvial gold mining was still hard work, the techniques often learned from other miners. Panning, ground sluicing, cradling, puddling and digging shafts all meant human labour and water, to free the gold from the earth. ([prospecting pic](#)) (31) It is not known how successful John was, but he was named a miner on the birth records of his three sons, so was mining at least until 1869.

When son Donald married in 1891, John was named as a deceased farmer. What occurred between 1869 and 1891 is another unknown. What can be proved is that the first two sons were born at Cambrian Hill and the third at Cargerie. ([Birth records sons](#)) There were no more children from the marriage, indicating John was no longer around or was incapacitated. Whatever the reason, Mary and her sons remained at Cargerie with Donald, Isabella, Allan and, after 1883, Allan's family, until the boys left home to find employment.

Electoral Roll records between 1903 and 1936 place Mary at Cargerie, with son, John, except 1935, when they are at Duncan's Road, Werribee with John's daughter, Ethel and her husband, Dominick Brennan. It may be that a bout of ill health required extra nursing care for Mary for a time. After 1936, Mary resided at Werribee, at 60 Station Street, Ethel's usual address. Ethel cared for her grandmother, who suffered from senility for three years until she died of heart failure 8 June 1942, aged 97.

Mary is buried with Isabella, the plot purchased by her son, John. There is no verifiable

record of the elder John Armstrong's death or burial. [\(Mary death record in John armstrong Mary McDonald folder\)](#)

Mary was much loved by her sons. Each of their first-born daughters shared her name. In Donald's case, a daughter from both his families had Mary as part of her name and John also made provision for Mary in his will in the event she should survive him. Younger siblings, Catherine and Allan, named daughters after her as well.

Family Mary and John:

- James William 20/12/1866 – 03/11/1953 (James' names had been reversed by the time Donald was born and he remained William James)
- John Allan 15/02/1868 – 26/05/1957
- Donald Alexander 01/07/1869 – 18/08/1945

Details of the three sons and their families follow in the **Armstrong** section of this story.

Catherine

Catherine, aged about six when the family arrived, probably didn't have formal schooling either, although she did learn to write. She moved to Ballarat to work as a domestic servant, probably in her early teens and was living in Bridge Street when she married Duncan McKenzie. He was a farmer from Inverleigh and they married at The Manse, Soldiers Hill, in a Presbyterian ceremony 20 April 1866, aged 19 according to her death record, although the marriage record says 21. [\(marriage Catherine and Duncan\)](#)

Duncan was born 13 June 1841 to Kenneth McKenzie and Catherine McDonald, in Portree, Isle of Skye, Inverness-shire, Scotland, around 100 miles north-west of Brecklet. Duncan, his parents, sisters Flora, Mary and Ann, brother John, another Flora, possibly the elder Flora's daughter, had also arrived in 1852, aboard the infamous *Bourneuf*, where 84 of the 754 passengers had died on the journey. Another sibling, Marion, had possibly died in Scotland. Kenneth was engaged by Curry and Anderson of Geelong for six months for wages of £60.

After their marriage, Duncan and Catherine moved to Mount Mercer and their own home, named Fairlie Grange, where they lived with their fifteen children. Duncan was a successful farmer, having £5592/16/- in real estate and £666/11/- in personal estate when he died 15 September 1908. [\(Death Duncan funeral notice\)](#) Even when the liabilities of £2483/2/7 were deducted, the balance was healthy, at £3109/13/9.

In his will, Duncan left Catherine the “use, benefit, occupation and income of his estate for her lifetime.” After her death, the estate would be divided into twelve equal parts; three parts to Duncan, two parts to Alexander (provided he had paid off his creditors) and one part each to Allan, Kenneth, John, Joseph, Murdoch, Catherine and Mary Isabella. It is not known why Sarah, Peter, and Donald were excluded. [\(Duncan will\)](#)

Duncan, Joseph and Mary Isabella were living at Mount Mercer in 1909 according to the Electoral Roll. It is not known why Catherine is absent, nor why both Catherine and Mary Isabella are missing from Mount Mercer in the 1912 Roll. It is possible they were living in Ballarat at 1005 Mair Street, close to the Ballarat Base Hospital, perhaps for health reasons, between 1912 and 1915. They reappear in the Roll at Mount Mercer in 1915 and remain until 1931.

Catherine died 24 December 1931 at Fairlie Grange and she is buried, presumably with Duncan, at Clarendon Cemetery, in Section D, exact location unknown. ([Death and Obituary Catherine](#))

Family Catherine and Duncan:

- James 1867 – 06/06/1902
- Alexander 1868 – 15/12/1955
- Sarah Ann 1870 – 1956
- John 26/12/1872 – 17/09/1944
- Catherine 1873 – 26/10/1951
- Peter 1875 – 27/05/1918
- Kenneth 1877 – 23/11/1960
- Donald 1878 – 14/07/1966
- Duncan 1880 – 18/08/1976
- Isabella 1882 – 1883 aged 11 months
- Allan 1883 – 25/04/1965
- Joseph 24/11/1884 – 06/08/1961
- Murdoch 24/11/1884 – 06/07/1962
- Mary Isabella 1887 – 14/08/1971
- Flora 1889 - 1900

James married Mary Ann Bowers (1867-16/02/1893) in 1890 and had Mary, (1892 -30/09/1893). It is likely they are all buried at Clarendon Cemetery.

Alexander married Janet Howie Martin (c.1869 - 19/09/1936) in 1897. Buried at Camperdown Cemetery, they had seven children:

- John Walter, (1898-03/09/1946) m. Gladys Irene Porter (1900 – 26/07/1987) in 1924. They are both buried at Terang Cemetery;
- Catherine Sarah, (1899 -12/09/1985) m. Harry John Armstrong (1897 – 30/01/1959) in 1924. They are both buried at Geelong West Public Cemetery;
- Alexander Kenneth, (1901- 15/07/1957) m. Edna May Hewitson (04/04/1914 - 04/03/1982) in 1937. They are both buried at Colac Cemetery;
- Hector James, (1903 – 24/08/1968) m. Mary Isobel Ross (1907 – 07/04/1976) in 1929. They are both buried at Box Hill Cemetery;
- James, (1905 – 29/11/1940) buried at Camperdown Cemetery;
- Myra Janet, (1910 -19/08/1991) m. William Leslie Walker (c.1899 – 29/09/1960) in 1937. They are both buried at Geelong West Public Cemetery;
- Margaret Isabel, (1915 – 01/12/1971) m. Robert Gent McGregor (1908 – 25/08/1975) in 1940. They were both cremated at Altona Memorial Park.

Sarah Ann married, in 1894, David Toshack Bowers (1860- buried 05/06/1919 at

Clarendon Cemetery with Sarah). They had five children:

- Henry, (1895 – 1895, one day old);
- Henry James, (1897 – cremation 10/08/1962) m. Annie Florence Stacey (1900 – 04/05/1999) in 1927. They were both cremated at Fawkner Memorial Park;
- David Alexander, (1899 – 19/09/1986) m. Christina Olive Campbell (1899 – 23/09/1994) in 1927. They are both buried at Colac Cemetery;
- Harold, (1903 - 06/04/1995) m. Mary Lillian Williams – (1903 - 11/09/1997) in 1932. They are both buried at Ballarat New Cemetery;
- Catherine Mary (1903 - 26/11/1992) m. William Stepnell (1902 - 01/01/1989) in 1927. They were both cremated at Ballarat New Cemetery.

NOTE: One of Sarah's descendants, Robert Bowers, is the current (2022) Secretary of the Clarendon General Cemetery and provided invaluable help in identifying grave sites of the author's McDonald and Armstrong forebears.

John married Mary Martin (1876 -11/05/1956) in 1900. Both buried at Colac Cemetery, they had eight children:

- Alexander Kenneth (23/11/1900 – 15/07/1957) m. Edna May Hewitson (04/04/1914 – 04/03/1982) in 1937. They are both buried at Colac Cemetery;
- Walter Allan, (23/11/1900 –16/02/1977) m. Jessie Wright (d. 1937) in 1936; m. Fay maiden name unknown, date unknown. He is buried at Allambe Memorial Park, Nerang, Qld. There is also a memorial at Qld Garden of Remembrance, Bridgeman Downs;
- Marion Preston, (17/02/1902 – 11/08/1997) m. William Ernest Higgins (1896 – 13/07/1969) in 1927. They are both buried at Colac Cemetery;
- Duncan Cyrus, (1904 – 28/12/1984). He is buried at Colac Cemetery;
- Dorothy Jean, (1906 - 1957) m. Roy Leslie Clark b. 15/04/1908, in 1932;
- Isabel Mary, (1911 – 19/06/1997) m. Harry Fisher Whineray (d.17/11/1965) in 1942. Harry is buried at Geelong East Cemetery and Isabel is buried at Allambe Memorial Park, Nerang;
- Florence Helen, (25/10/1915 – 12/05/2004) m. Lindsay Keith McCoombe (22/09/1915 – 18/10/1998) in 1942. They are both buried at Colac Cemetery;
- Ian Douglas, (06/02/1919 -)

Catherine married, in 1902, John Wylie Martin (1868 –02/08/1946 at Bunninyong Cemetery with Catherine). They had three children:

- Duncan John, (1910 – 30/06/1987), is buried at Ballarat New Cemetery;

- Florence Catherine, (1913 – 14/06/1974) m. Henry Gordon Bowers (1914 – 25/03/1998) in 1943. They are both buried at Clarendon Cemetery;
- William James, (26/04/1916 – 31/10/1998) m. Emma Elizabeth Skelton 1950. William is buried at Ballarat New Cemetery.

Peter married Charlotte Elsie Raven (1881-10/08/1960) in 1904. Both buried at Colac Cemetery, they had seven children:

- Frederick James, (24/07/1905 – 27/12/1979) m. Mavis Priscilla McTaggart (14/10/1904 – 08/11/1996) in 1933. They are both buried at Colac Cemetery;
- Peter Alexander, (1906 – 1906 aged 8 months);
- Albert Allan, (09/10/1907 -11/01/1939) buried at Colac Cemetery;
- William John, (1910 – 1910 aged 3 months);
- Raymond Aubrey, (23/07/1911 – 02/03/1989) m. Francis Leveasque Palmer (28/06/1915 – 12/05/2004) in 1934. They are both buried at Springfield Botanical Cemetery;
- Ronald Gilbert, (1913 – 01/06/1974) m. Mavis Jean McLean (1918 – 05/06/1966) in 1940. They are both buried at Colac Cemetery;
- Cecil Raven, (09/1924 – 09/10/1924) buried at Colac Cemetery.

Kenneth married Margaret Whitehead (1883 – 29/03/1942) in 1908. Buried at Colac Cemetery, they had five children:

- Florence Jessie, (1909 – 21/09/1971) m. Arthur Noel Cockings (23/10/1908 – 20/07/1984) in 1933. Arthur was cremated at Enfield Memorial Park, South Australia. Florence was buried at Colac Cemetery with brother Archibald;
- Archibald Kenneth, (1910 – 24/10/1949). Buried at Colac Cemetery with Florence;
- Kenneth William, (1913 – 27/02/1972) m.(possibly) Melva Marie Moors in 1933. Kenneth was buried at Centennial Park Cemetery South Australia;
- Norman Kennedy, (26/11/1916 – 28/05/2005) m. Grace Cameron Dickinson (02/02/1912 – 13/07/1997) in 1941. They were both cremated at Lilydale Memorial Park;
- Nellie Margaret, (1919 – 24/07/2008) m. John Edward Morgan (1912 – 01/05/1993) Both are buried at Colac Cemetery.

Donald – d. 14/07/1966. Buried at Clarendon Cemetery.

Duncan – m. Sarah Ann Lewis (c.1876 – 08/05/1964) in 1911. Both were cremated at Ballarat New Cemetery.

Allan married Jessie Isabella McIvor (1885 – 13/01/1977) in 1908. Buried at Colac Cemetery, they had seven children :

- Duncan, (19/10/1909 – 05/12/1986) m. Hazel Margaret Catherine Bumstead (29/06/1912 - 11/07/1989) in 1944. They were both cremated at Springvale Botanical Cemetery;
- Donald John, (11/04/1911 -) m. Marjorie McPherson in 1940;
- Johanna, (1913 – unknown);
- Jessie Isabelle, (10/06/1916 – 16/03/2013) m. Hugh Knuckey (c.1918 – 29/03/1965) in 1944. Both are buried at Colac Cemetery;
- Allan Hector, (1918 – 14/04/1918);
- Margaret Florence, (1919 –) m. Frank Ronald Schaaf (22/07/1915 – 18/04/1978) in 1945. Frank is buried in the New South Wales Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood;
- Allan Hector, (17/10/1921 – 07/03/2005) buried at Colac Cemetery.

Joseph m. Alice Earl Bennett Saunders (1892 – 12/08/1950) in 1919. Buried at Clarendon Cemetery, they had five children:

- Donald, (1919 –);
- John Hope, (1919 – 01/12/1977) m. Mary Joyce Musgrove (25/02/1924 - 15/02/2015) in 1946. Both are buried at Ballarat New Cemetery;
- Norman, (24/12/1920 – 22/10/2005) m. Audrey Winifred Cole (29/01/1926 – 17/10/2021) in 1954. They are both buried at Geelong East Cemetery;
- Lorna Florence, (1922 –);
- Dulcie Eleanor, (1923 –). m. Gordon Theodore Rew in 1943.

Murdoch m. Ruby May Edmonds (1888 – 10/09/1966) in 1912. They were cremated and their ashes stored in niches at Fawkner Memorial Park. They had two children :

- Mavis Isabel, (1912 –) m. Leo James Graham (1899 – 29/11/1977) in 1942. Leo was buried in Templestowe Cemetery;
- Joyce, (1913 –) m. Nevil Dunstone Sims (1907 – cremated 19/12/1975) in 1941. Nevil's ashes were scattered at Fawkner Memorial Park.

Mary Isabella (1887 – 14/08/1971) She was cremated at Ballarat New Cemetery.

Flora (1889 – 1900) Unknown, but probably Clarendon Cemetery.

Allan

Allan, the youngest of the surviving McDonalds, was only four when he arrived in Australia. He probably had no personal memory of life in Scotland, his mother, twin brother or younger brother and sister.

He may have had some schooling, as he was able to write, at least. As the only son, it was expected that he work the farm at Cargerie with his father and that he would inherit. He took to the life and over the years took on more responsibilities. At some stage Allan and Donald had come to an agreement that he would purchase stock and equipment for the farm and care for his father in his old age, in return for the use of the land for grazing purposes, the land remaining in Donald's name until his death. ([Donald probate docs](#))

Allan married Flora Elizabeth McPhee on 31 January 1883 at St Alipius Church in Ballarat. She was born 23 February 1856 in Port Fairy, Victoria to John McPhee and Flora McDonald, but the family had then moved to Werribee, where several more children were born. Her occupation as described on her marriage record was "Lady", indicating her family was sufficiently well-off that she didn't need to work. ([Marriage Allan and Flora](#))

Flora joined Donald, Mary and her sons, at Cargerie. Mary's son, William, turned 17 that year and may well have already left to find work elsewhere but John and Donald were probably at school as, after 1872 Education Act, all children had to attend school between the ages of 6 and 15, unless they had a reasonable excuse. It must have been a bit crowded in that six-room house for the first few years of married life for Allan and Flora, but easier after John and Donald had also left home to find work. One can imagine, also, possible friction between the two ladies as to details of the running of the house.

After the Eureka Stockade, the move towards Federation grew apace. The Chinese "problem" was still an issue in society. The majority of people in Australia were of British descent and wanted the country to stay that way. They felt that a federal government would be able to control immigration. The McDonalds, living close to the goldfields, would probably have had some contact with the Chinese and no doubt held strong opinions about them. Eventually, on 1 January 1901, a new century and a new nation were celebrated among the state and territories of Australia.

The social issue of women's right to vote may have excited the female McDonalds, whose pay rates were about half that of males. The women's suffrage movement had gathered force during the late 1880s and Victorian women gained the right to vote in 1908, and were able to vote for the first time at the 1911 state election, the last state to grant this right and the last state to give women the right to stand for Parliament. ([Getting it together site](#)) (20)

White Female suffrage ([Ancestry library database](#)) ~~Delete????~~

	Right to vote	Right to stand for Parliament
Commonwealth	1902	1902
State		
South Australia	1895	1895
Western Australia	1899	1920
New South Wales	1902	1918

Tasmania	1903	1921
Queensland	1905	1915
Victoria	1908	1923

The early part of the century was marked by external conflicts, in which Australia became involved, as part of the British Empire. The Boer War in South Africa 1899 – 1902, was followed 12 years later by the outbreak of World War I. Australian soldiers answered the call to both wars, resulting, especially the latter, in the loss of large numbers of young men. No record of enlistment in either of these wars appears in the National Archives of Allan's sons, perhaps regarded as essential workers.

The return of Isabella around 1921, aged in her early 80s, added to Flora's duties, but perhaps Mary and Isabella were company for each other. Allan died 16 January 1938, leaving Flora all his “interest in the land on which I reside, together with improvements, stock and chattels property for her use absolutely.” He also specified that, on her death, it would pass to his son Allan Aloysius, with the proviso that he take care of his brother and sister. Flora died 14 August 1939. They are buried in Clarendon Cemetery in the McDonald family plot. [Gravestone Allan and Flora](#)

Family Allan and Flora:

- Donald 07/12/1883 - 17/12/1885
- Flora Mary 25/12/1885 – 07/07/1951
- John James 18/08/1888 – May/June 1889 aged 9 months
- Allan Aloysius 18/08/1889 – 18/02/1967
- Sarah Cathleen 03/02/1891 – June/July 1892 aged 16 months
- Johanna 01/01/1893 – 08/01/1893
- Mary Agnes 01/01/1893 – 24 /01/1964
- Alexander Joseph 16/02/1898 – 18/07/1980

Flora never married. She is buried at Clarendon Cemetery with her parents, brothers, Allan and Aloysius and aunts, Mary and Isabella.

Allan Aloysius never married. He is buried at Clarendon cemetery in the McDonald plot.

In his will of 11 September 1959 left £50 to the Catholic Parish Priest at Elaine for the saying of masses for the repose of his soul and £5 to the Catholic Church, the farm and remaining personal estate going to his brother, Alexander Joseph.

Mary Agnes m. James William Ryan (1892 -18/03/1983) in 1927. Buried at Clarendon Cemetery, ([Gravestone Mary Agnes pic](#))they had five children:

-

- Mary Therese, c.1928 -;

- Patrick Joseph, (29/06/1930 – 22/01/2008) m. Joan Abene Watts (21/08/1934 – 21/05/1976) in 1961. He later married Bev (surname unknown). Patrick and Joan are buried at Clarendon Cemetery;
- Allan James, (16/11/1931 – 12/01/2012) m. Mary Teresa Spratling in 1958. He is buried in Ballarat New Cemetery;
- James Gerard, (28/07/1933 – 09/03/2018) m. Carmel Anne Tuddenham in 1961. James is buried at Clarendon Cemetery;
- Flora Helen, c.1935 - m. Ronald Francis Read (1934 - 2021) in 1958.

Alexander never married. He is also buried at Clarendon Cemetery in the family plot.

A carpenter, he reported his father's death, stating he had “lived constantly with his father” and that Allan had been ill for six years. When Alexander made his will 13 March 1980, he was even more generous to the church.

- (b) To the Rector for the time being of the Redemptorist Monastery Ballarat the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100.00)
- (c) To the Rector for the time being of Saint Columban's Mission at Essendon the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100.00)
- (d) To the Administrator of Saint Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat for the sick priests fund the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100.00)
- (e) To the Mother Superior for the time being of Saint John of God Hospital Ballarat the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100.00)

I DIRECT that the receipt of any one of those persons shall be sufficient discharge to my said Trustee

4. I DIRECT my Trustee to pay the following sums:-

- (a) To the Parish Priests for the time being of Meredith for masses for the repose of my own soul the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100.00)
- (b) To the Parish Priests for the time being of Meredith for masses for the repose of the souls of my close deceased relatives the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100.00)
- (c) To the Parish Priests for the time being of Meredith for masses for the repose of the souls of those who have no-one to pray for them the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100.00)

(Pic of St Joseph's Church Meredith) (26)

Alexander was also generous towards his executor and trustee of his estate, John Francis Vanstan, a carpenter from Billiang, giving him \$20,000, as well as his Howard tractor and all his tools of trade. With conditions, he was also given the right to occupy and farm the Cargerie property as outlined below.

5. In the event that at my death the said JOHN FRANCIS VANSTAN has not any right or lease to farm and occupy my property at Elaine then I DIRECT that for a period of five years from the date of my death he shall have the right to occupy and farm my property free of all costs and shall be responsible for the payment of all outgoings rates and taxes on the said property and shall also be responsible to keep all fences and outbuildings in good condition and repair

6. At the expiration of any lease that I may have given devising my farm property to the said JOHN FRANCIS VANSTAN or at the expiration of the period of occupation that I have given to the said JOHN FRANCIS VANSTAN in accordance with Clause five of this my Will I DEVISE my farm property to my niece FLORA READ of Highton for her sole use absolutely IT IS MY WISH that she should occupy and farm the property for at least 15 years before she sells the said property and I FURTHER CHARGE this devise and property to her with the following legacies:-

- (a) To ALAN RYAN of Main Road Ballarat the sum of FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$4,000.00)
- (b) To PATRICK RYAN of Ballarat the sum of FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$4,000.00)
- (c) To MARY RYAN of Sebastopol the sum of FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$4,000.00)
- (d) To JAMES RYAN of via Beaufort the sum of FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$4,000.00)

After all debts, expenses and duties had been paid, the residue of Alexander's estate would be held in trust by John Vanstan until Flora Helen took over the property. It is not known if she accepted Alexander's bequest.

Alexander's death was the end of the McDonalds of Cargerie as neither he nor Allan Aloysius had married. The brothers are buried together, alongside their parents, sister and aunts, at Clarendon Cemetery. (Gravestones Allan, Alexander, Flora)

The Armstrongs

The 1862 opening of the Melbourne to Ballarat railway, which crosses the highway at Elaine, had two important effects on the Armstrong boys. Firstly it facilitated the opening of Roman Catholic and Free Presbyterian schools around 1864. The Catholic school remained popular, maintaining a school attendance equal to or higher than the government school, opened in 1875 and regarded as the domain of Protestants. While not compulsory until 1872, the year William James turned six, education proved to be another source of rivalry between Catholics and Protestants (all other religions).

(Victorian places site Elaine) (44)

The divide between Catholics and Protestants was encouraged on both sides by sermons from the pulpits and newspapers such as The Advocate (Catholic) and The Watchman (Presbyterian).

The Advocate 27 April 1878 proclaimed:

The schools at Warrenheip, Bungaree, Gordon's and other outlying districts under immediate supervision from the diocesan centre, are so well supplied with schools ... that no Catholic parent has now a valid excuse for sending a child to a Godless [State] school, and

7 September 1878, boasted about the school at Elaine:

At this little mining township there is now a flourishing Catholic school of which Mr E. Wallace has recently been appointed teacher. The average attendance exceeds 50, so that the neighbouring State School has not proved a very powerful magnet for the attraction of the Catholic juvenile population,

while *The Watchman*, 4 December 1909, chastised the Presbyterian Church at Elaine for generously lending its organ to the opening of the new St Patrick's Catholic Church. (Pic St Patrick's Church Elaine)(43)

Nuns and brothers from Ireland, often not well-educated themselves, but fervently believing in Catholicism as the only religion, came to Australia for the explicit purpose of educating children, not only in the “Three Rs” - Reading (W)riting and (A)rithmetic, but also in the tenets and practices of the Catholic Church. Schools, convents, presbyteries and churches were built in the same grounds and the Parish Priest governed all. The Church thus became the centre of life in the community, providing spiritual, social and educational support. (28) It may be presumed from the proximity of the Elaine school, compulsory schooling and the neat handwriting of the Armstrong boys and their McDonald uncles both Mary and Allan, at least, sent their children to school.

St Patrick's, St Mary's at Clarendon and St Joseph's at Meredith were all churches near the McDonalds and Armstrongs and St Joseph's and St Patrick's are mentioned in and benefited from the wills of Allan and Alexander McDonald, bearing testament to the importance of Catholicism in their lives.

The second effect was that the eldest and youngest Armstrong boys obtained employment with Victorian Railways.

William James

The eldest of the Armstrong boys, William moved to Ballarat to work and gained employment with Victorian Railways as an Engine Cleaner, beginning 11 May 1889, according to the *Victorian Government Gazette* of 1890. *The Footplate*, a monthly publication of the Victorian and Tasmanian Divisions of the Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Enginemen, explains in its May 9 1929 edition that, to qualify for this position, men must pass strict tests and examinations in physique, vision, colour sense and hearing. It comments that many applicants failed the tests.

In 1929, adult Cleaners received sixpence per day above the basic wage and during their first six months of service must study and pass examinations in washing out boilers, lighting up and firing duties. As well, they could be called on to assist Fitters and Boilermakers, light-up, wash-out, clean tubes and brick arches, fill sand boxes and water tanks and numerous other duties of a “rough and dirty nature.” Hours of duty were irregular, with a large amount of night work and the Cleaners would often have to walk to and from work as the trains were not running during their starting or finishing hours.

Once a Cleaner had completed 313 days of firing, he could be classified as Fireman. The Fireman was crucial to the smooth running of the boiler, fuelled by wood or coal. Balancing the heat of the fire with added water, he managed the amount of steam required for the steam train to climb hills, change speed and stop at stations.

By 1899, when William married Annie Josephine Costello, born c.1872 to Thomas Costello and Catherine Griffin, he had become a Fireman, earning, in 1902, 9/- per day. They lived at 34 Princes Street North, Ballarat East. Annie died 10 February 1906 and is buried at the Ballarat New Cemetery. (Pic Annie's gravestone James Will folder)

Three years later, William married Bridget Mary Margaret Monaghan, born 1880 to Denis Monaghan and Catherine Eva Creed. They were living at 3 Princes Street South in Ballarat East, with William's aunt, Isabella, when the 1909 Electoral Roll was compiled, in which he was erroneously recorded as William John. William had the Right to Occupy a Residence for that address and the Right apparently was passed on to his son, also William, who is recorded in the Electoral Roll at the same address until 1980, the last year that the Roll can presently be accessed online. (William will)

By 1911 William had become an Engine Driver, a highly-respected position, second only to the Station Master. To gain this position, he had mastered engine driving skills and passed the compulsory tests, including the Roads and Signals examination and was earning 12/- per day. From the early days of the railways, safe working practices alerted train drivers to upcoming road crossings and stations. At first, semaphore arms on tall poles were moved manually to indicate "Stop", "Caution" and "Proceed." At night, a rotating lamp of coloured lights was used. Later, separate, high-set signal boxes were installed at stations, allowing signalmen to control all signals and points with a single bank of levers. By the time William became an Engine Driver, electrically connected machines ensured only one train at a time had authority to proceed on a given section of track and crossing loops at the end of each section allowed trains to safely pass in opposite directions. (pic A2 class steam loco museumsvic)(29)

Where train tracks and roads intersected, hand-operated or interlocking gates had been installed by the late 19th century at busier level crossings, but they required a gatekeeper or signalman to be on hand at all times trains were running, to close the gate to vehicular traffic and allow the train to pass safely. (gatekeeper at Doveton St picmuseumsvic) (29) The Engine Driver, as well, had to be familiar with the location of all crossings. Unmanned crossings were made safer in 1923 with the installation of automatic signals which warned road users of an approaching train by means of a swinging overhead arm. From 1933, at the end of William's working life, flashing automatic lights and bells were the norm at level crossings. (museumsvictoria.com.au/scienceworks/resources/victorian-railways/stations/) (29)

William remained an Engine Driver, earning 21s/2d a day in 1929, around £275/3/4 per year. He became eligible for the Age Pension in 1931, aged 65 and probably retired then. He remained at 3 Princes Street South until his death 3 November 1953, not long after wife, Bridget, who died 20 October. They are buried in the Ballarat New Cemetery with son, Joseph Allan. (Pic Gravestone William and Bridget)

Family William and Bridget:

- Kathleen Mary 1910 – 19/04/1975
- Joseph Allan 1915 – 1933

- (known as Allan)
- William John
Gerrard 08/01/1918 – 19/09/1998

Kathleen married Francis Xavier Collins (1910 – 19/07/1987) in 1935. They are buried together at Templestowe Cemetery.

William was the first known member of the family to serve in Australia's military. On 12 August 1940, he enlisted for mobilisation at Ballarat. He began as a Private in the 8th Battalion, Company A and was promoted to Corporal 27 June 1941 before being called up to full time duty 29 July 1941 with the AIF, No VX111649. (William J war record 6,7 in William John Gerrard folder) Promoted to Sergeant 28 November 1941, William was sent to the Northern Territory and then to South Australia, working in the Records Office. (William J War record 9) It was in Wayville in South Australia 30 September 1942 that he completed the Attestation Form for Special Forces Raised for Service in Australia and Abroad. From South Australia he was moved to Queensland and then on the *Shawnee* to the Solomon Islands 22 February 1945.

While stationed in that posting, William completed the New Guinea Training School No. 1 Mobile Team Jungle Craft Wing Course 24 May to 6 June 1945. (William J war record 4) He was then transferred to Bougainville Island, his final posting, on 19 June 1945, where he remained until 16 January 1946 when he embarked from Torokina on the troopship *Anatina* for Brisbane. There were about 200 stowaways on board as well as the 1100 official troops, including Private John Ewen who, no doubt voicing the feelings of all on board, recorded in his journal,

Everybody on board is happy for at last we are heading in the right direction – Home. As I watched Bougainville sink into the mist I couldn't help but think that the 12 months I'd spent there seemed years and years. I thought of the chaps who were with me when we landed off the "Cape Victory" in Nov, and who will remain here forever. When I landed here shells were bursting on the point. When we left they were swimming and riding surf-boards ... The tucker is pretty crook and I'm looking forward to a good juicy steak. (6)

Arriving in Brisbane 21 January, William remained there until 10 April when he was posted to the Victorian Leave and Transit Depot at Camp Pell, to be discharged 15 April 1946.

William married Mary Margaret Green (19/07/1919 – 15/05/2013) in 1948 and they had six children:

- Carmel
- John
- Marian Patricia
- Paul
- Peter Joseph
- Vincent

William died 19 September 1998 and Mary (known as Mae) 15 May 2013. They are buried at Ballarat New Cemetery.

John Allan

John spent most of his life at Cargerie, working on the family farm. On 29 April 1896, in the Roman Catholic Church in Clarendon, he married a local girl, Mary Ann Scott, born 1872 to John Scott and Bridget Torpy. Her family is remembered with a headstone at Clarendon Cemetery ([pic Scott family memorial, marriage cert](#)) as one of the pioneering families of Cargerie and Narmbool Stations.

Three children were born to John and Mary Ann, all at Cargerie, before Mary died of Childbirth Septicaemia 11 August 1900, seven days after giving birth to their only son, who died mid 1901. ([Mary Ann death record](#))

Sometime in the next two years, John moved to Melbourne, likely leaving his girls with his family in Cargerie and gained employment with the Melbourne Tram and Omnibus Company. Suburban rail lines and cable trams linking to those lines, had been established about ten years earlier, adding to the horse-drawn cabs and omnibuses already being used.

The Melbourne Omnibus Company had been formed in 1869 by American businessmen Francis Boardman Clapp, Henry Hoyt, and William McCulloch, who introduced brightly decorated, American-style coaches, with an enclosed cabin, glass windows and a rear door. At first imported from the United States, the coaches were later manufactured at the company's stables in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy. The omnibuses ran on set routes from the city to the suburbs and back, using set timetables and charging a fixed fare, as described by Jeff Atkinson, President Carlton Community History Association in his article in *Inner City News*, September 2021.

The establishment of this new company led to a series of government acts to regulate its growth and operations. One of these was the Melbourne Tram and Omnibus Company Act of 1883 which set in place an eight hour day and allowed for paid overtime. It also limited working hours, including paid overtime, to no more than sixty hours per week for MTOC employees. ([Horse-drawn buses pic](#)) (23)

By 1891 the company had introduced cable trams, also drawn by horses, to Melbourne's inner ring of suburbs. The horse-drawn omnibuses were retained until 1916, utilised to transport passengers to the cable tram terminus. ([horse drawn omnibus pic](#)) (21) At its height, the company had 470 employees, 178 omnibuses and 1600 horses. To ensure discipline among its drivers, passenger safety and care of the horses, the company put in place a list of 78 rules for the behaviour of employees, watering of the horses, passing other horse-drawn vehicles, negotiating curves, managing passengers, use and care of cash boxes, accidents, fares, tickets, and general work. (43)

In 1902, when John was foreman at the stables of the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company, he brought a legal suit against William Griffiths, an employee of the rival bus company "Favorite," for threatening him with physical violence. ([John Allan Age newspaper article 26 June 1902](#)) Details were published in a 26 June article in *The Age*, Mr Rose, J.P. finding for John Allan and binding Griffiths over for the sum of £10, with surety of another £10 to keep the peace for twelve months and £2/2/- in costs. Mr Rose commented that it was a majority ruling and the case should not have come to court as it was a matter of rivalry.

Living at 208 Lygon St in Brunswick in 1903, according to the Electoral Roll, John was working as a groom for the horses who pulled the omnibuses and trams. He had perhaps

been demoted from foreman for the notoriety he had brought to the company. He moved back to Cargerie that year and appears in that Electoral Roll as a labourer, with mother, Mary.

John never re-married, remaining at Cargerie between 1903 and at least 1936, according to the Electoral Roll, apart from a brief period in 1935, the year he made his will. In it, he lists Duncan's Road Werribee as the address of his mother, Mary and daughter, Ethel Brennan and states that Werribee is his current, but not usual, address. He left Mary £50, that sum, if she pre-deceased him, to go to his daughters, Mary Kilgariff and Ethel Brennan, along with his remaining personal estate.

John next appears in the Roll in 1949 and again in 1954, with Ethel and husband, Dominick, at 60 Station Street Werribee, but he was with daughter Mary at the White Hart Hotel in Longwood ([pic courtesy Trip Advisor 1970s](#)) when he died 26 May 1957, aged 89. The daughters apparently shared the care of their father in his later years.

John left his entire estate of £414/10/-, held at The State Savings Bank, Werribee branch, to his two daughters. Probate statement notes that the account was erroneously registered to John Allen Armstrong.

([Probate John Allan doc](#))

He is buried at Clarendon Cemetery with Mary Ann and John James, his plot purchased by son-in-law, Dominick. ([Gravestone John Allan pic](#))

Family John and Mary:

- Mary Agnes 1897 – 02/02/1974
- Ethel Isabella 1898 – 08/09/1977
- John James 04/08/1900 – 06/07/1901

In 1922 **Mary** (known as May) married James Michael Kilgariff, born 1892 to Michael Kilgariff and Ann Rogers.

James was among the first young Australians to enlist after Britain declared war on Germany 4 August 1914. He completed his Attestment Paper 19 September ([attestment form James Kilgariff](#)) and began his service 1 October in the Middle East and Gallipoli – an original Anzac. He was wounded 1 May 1915 and not long after, developed pneumonia. Within two months he had also contracted Enteric Fever and was sent home to Australia 17 September on the troop ship *Beltana*. He was formally discharged 17 January 1916.

Like many returned soldiers, James found it difficult to settle. He had gone home to his family at Kellalac to recuperate and is recorded there on the rolls of 1916 and 1921 as a farmer. After his marriage, he tried a number of other jobs. Sometime between 1921 and 1924 he had become a police constable in Northcote, but by 1925 he was a tram employee, living in Balwyn.

James, Mary and their family returned to the farm at Kellalac between 1931 and 1934 and remained there until sometime before 1949, when they are all recorded on the roll, back at Balwyn. James was then a Peace Officer. James and Mary remained there until sometime before 1957 by which time they had become hotel keepers at the White Hart Hotel. They stayed there until at least 1968. James died at Kew 10 March 1970 and Mary at Caulfield 2

February 1974. They are buried at Springvale Botanical Cemetery. (pics James Michael and Mary Agnes gravestone)

Mary and James had three daughters:

- Mary Joan, (known as Joan) (01/04/1923 – 24/11/2019) m. John Francis Joseph Healy (c.1923 -) in 1949. She is buried at Springvale Botanical Cemetery. They had five children:
 - Bernadette
 - Michael
 - Elaine
 - Colleen
 - Philip
- Elaine Margaret (– buried 06/03/1925). She is buried at Fawkner Memorial Park.
- Therese (known as Jackie) (19/12/1929 – 18/12/2000) m. Edmund David Marston (1923 -) in 1950. Jackie was cremated at Springvale Botanical Cemetery.

In 1930 **Ethel** married Dominick Brennan, born 1897 at Bannockburn, Victoria to John Edward Joseph Brennan and Margaret Hurley.

The Brennans remained in Werribee all their married life, mostly at 60 Station Street, although Ethel was also recorded at 60 Duncan's Road in 1935, 1957 and, with Dominick, from around 1972 until their deaths. The reason for the changes of residences is unknown, but perhaps the Duncan's Road address was close to medical aid, the Werribee Mercy Hospital having opened in nearby Synnot Street in 1935.

Ethel and Dominick appear to have stayed close to John Allan and Mary, caring for both as they aged. No children from this marriage have been found.

Dominick died 6 June 1976 and Ethel 8 September 1977. They are buried together at Werribee Cemetery. (Gravestone Ethel and Dominick)

Donald Alexander First Family

Unlike his older brother, Donald appears to have been eager to escape life in the country. At just 16 years and 6 months, he was accepted for employment as a Porter in the Victorian Railways 31 December 1886, having given an incorrect birth date of 10 April 1868.

Part of the Station Staff, a Porter was responsible for collecting and storing smaller items of passengers' luggage on overhead racks on board the train. Larger items of luggage, goods and parcels were placed on trolleys and wheeled to the Guard's van at the rear of the train. (Pics porters and big red trolley also letter re lad porter (32))

On 16 December 1891 at St John's Anglican Church, Brunswick West, Donald married Miriam Annie Fitnam, (photos Miriam and Miriam and Donald) born 30 January 1867 to William Fitnam and Eliza McDonald. She was wrongly recorded as Eliza, but the birth records of subsequent children confirm her as Miriam. (Miriam birth record, Donald and Miriam marriage certificate) At the time, they were both living in Peel Street North

Melbourne, he at No. 43 and she at No. 78. ([Map North Melbourne and Peel Street](#))needed?Three children were born between 1892 and 1896, before Miriam died of Tubercular Consumption 27 January 1900 at 65 Morrah St Parkville, three days before her thirty-third birthday. ([Miriam death cert](#))She was buried on her birthday at Melbourne General Cemetery. ([pic gravestone Miriam](#))

Family Donald and Miriam:

- Alexander McDonald 09/08/1892 – 29/10/1970
- William John 19/12/1893 – 31/08/1918
- Donetta Elizabeth Mary 26/08/1896 – 13/06/1973 ([Photo 3 kids](#))

Sometime between 1896 and 1899, Donald had become a Suburban Guard, first at Princes Bridge Station and later at nearby Flinders Street Station, riding in the last carriage of the steam-powered trains and earning 8/- per day by 1902. Guard duties included checking that passengers held the correct tickets, behaved appropriately and were comfortable, as well as signalling the “All Clear” to the driver that all passengers were safely on and off the train before it resumed its journey.

After Miriam's death, the three children were cared for by their maternal grandmother, Elizabeth (known as Eliza) and Miriam's sister, also Elizabeth, in the Fitnam home at 25 Arnold Street, North Carlton. ([pic Eliza Fitnam](#))The three held their Aunt Elizabeth in high regard for the role she played in their lives, Alexander sending money to his aunt right up until the time of his marriage in 1928. Donald was not far away though, living, in 1903, a couple of blocks away at 250 Richardson Street and, in 1907, at the Fitnam home. Miriam was remembered in Family Notices in 1911 and 1912 in *The Age*, as the wife of Donald, including his occupation and the phrase, “A faithful wife and good mother,” perhaps inserted by the Fitnams.

The Fitnams

William Fitnam, according to the birth records of his children, was born in Dublin, Ireland about 1815. Sometime before 1864, he arrived in Queensland. A saddler by trade, he was a widower when he married Eliza McDonald 28 April 1864 in Ipswich. ([pic marriage cert](#))She, according to her children's birth records and her death record, was born in Ennis, County Clare around 1837, to John McDonald, saddler and Ann Worrall. It seems likely she arrived, aged 26, on the *David McIvor*, with sisters Ann, aged 22 and Agnes, aged 23 on 9 July 1863. ([arrival possible eliza](#))The ship left Liverpool 19 March, its destination Hervey Bay. As reported in the *Maryborough Chronicle and Wide Bay Burnett Advertiser*, passengers were then transferred to the steamer *Queensland*, which took them to Maryborough. ([Arrival description](#))Eliza then made her way to Ipswich where, presumably, she met William.

Twins William and Anne were born 17 January 1865, but both were dead by 30 January 1867, when third child, Miriam Annie, was born. She was recorded as Eliza, then as Marion when sister Elizabeth was born 28 August 1868 and correctly as Miriam when brother Frederick Augustus was born 4 August 1870. Both Frederick and brother, Francis McDonald, born 1872, died aged around twelve months, but sister Florence, born 1875, survived to adulthood. ([Birth records Miriam Elizabeth Frederick](#))

William and Eliza moved to Melbourne sometime before 1867 and he is recorded in the

Melbourne Directory living in Chapel Street, Richmond in 1872. William infamously appeared in court March 7, 1878, charged with assaulting a lad. It seems a group of boys had run sticks along William's corrugated iron fence, enraging him. The boy he tried to strangle was an innocent by-stander and William was fined 10/-, plus costs of 42/-, as reported in *The Australasian Supplement* March 9, 1878. (Newspaper article re William Fitnam's court appearance)

The Fitnams had moved to 193 Latrobe Street, West Melbourne by 1882 and in 1884, both appear in the Directory, Eliza described as a "ladies' nurse", but no occupation was listed for William. He was about 69 then, so Eliza had become the breadwinner. Nine years later, William was confined to the Kew Lunatic Asylum 2 June 1893, where he died of Cancer of the Stomach and Pancreas 14 August. According to the Inquest, he had severe shrinkage of the brain as well, but a report from a Warder comments that his daughter was with him when he died and that he recognised her. (death cert and Inquest William) It could have been Elizabeth, a nurse, who was the daughter mentioned. He is buried in Melbourne General Cemetery, location unknown.

On 24 March 1897, Elizabeth Sarah Fitnam made her will. She was then living at 12 Martin Street, Albert Park with daughter, also named as Elizabeth Sarah, to whom she bequeathed her "residence at such address and the furniture therein" and all her personal and real estate. Elizabeth was also appointed executrix. (Will Elizabeth Fitnam) The house at Albert Park may not have been large enough to accommodate the three Armstrong children and, by 1905, the two Elizabeths and the Armstrong children were living at 25 Arnold Street, North Carlton.

William John left home in 1913 to teach in rural Victoria, Alex in 1918 to teach at Church of England Grammar School in Sydney and Ettie, when she married in 1922. It must have been quiet and lonely for the Fitnam women in the house at Arnold Street once they were all gone.

Eliza died of Carcinoma of the Stomach and Heart Failure 14 January 1929, aged 92 years and six months. She is buried with her daughter Miriam, the gravestone also remembering William John Armstrong. Elizabeth died at Sunbury Mental Hospital 5 June 1952 and she is buried with her mother and sister.

Florence married Richard Henry Martin and they spent some time in South Africa, where a son, Richard Andrew, was born 14 July 1907, before returning to Melbourne. A daughter, also Florence, was recorded on the 1937 Electoral Roll, with parents and brother Richard.

In early January 1950, Florence died and Richard Henry mid-July 1958. They were cremated and their ashes interred at Fawkner Memorial Park.

Alexander McDonald

Known as Alex to his family, Alexander McDonald was seven years and five months old when his mother died. Taken in by his Grandmother Fitnam and his aunt Elizabeth, he and his siblings lived in the Fitnam family home (pic Fitnam house) for the remainder of their childhood years.

It may be assumed that the children attended Princes Hill State School, which had opened in Arnold Street 2 September 1889, about a hundred metre walk from their home. (Princes Hill school 1906 princes Hill 4th class 1903 and teachers 1903pics Alex folder)
(9)Kindergarten grade was added in 1899, a couple of years before Donetta started. The

main focus of education was on the “Three R’s”. Rote learning and repetition built memory skills and neat handwriting was essential.

Alex was a good student and, towards the end of his final year of primary schooling he, probably encouraged and supported by his teachers, father, aunt and grandmother, sat the examination for and was successful in winning a scholarship to the prestigious Wesley College, opened in 1866. Government school options for secondary schooling were few and there was not a lot of demand, given schooling was only compulsory between the ages of six and fifteen, so a scholarship to a private school, which offered secondary school subjects through to matriculation, was the only option for him.

He began at Wesley in 1907 as one of “The Twenty”, a special form created in 1903, (Pa new boys 1 and 2 in Alex folder) so that boys on government scholarships could have the “fullest opportunity of making rapid progress in subjects new to them,” stated in Wesley’s quarterly school publication, *Chronicle* of December 1906. Subjects that may have been new to them included Algebra, Geometry, History, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Latin, German and Scripture. Sport was also a big part of the school’s program, especially Cricket, Football (AFL) and Rowing.

Government policy required all males to attend military drills from 1909. Private schools such as Wesley were able to meet this requirement through the Cadet Scheme, where school students participated in a basic form of military training. There were uniforms, weekly drills and shooting practice. The 1910 Defence Act, used to prosecute young men failing to attend such drills, reinforced in the public mind the roles of male citizens and their responsibilities to defend the nation when called upon. (36)

Importantly for a teenage boy, the school had opened its first Tuckshop the year before. It was a new building, run by Mrs Donald, the wife of Charlie Donald, the rowing coach for 40 years. (Pic Wesley tuckshop) Importantly for Alex’s studies, new Chemistry and Physics laboratories were built during his first year. These comprised a Laboratory for Practical Physics to accommodate 50 students, which was “large and splendidly lighted,” (*Chronicle* April 1907) a Lecture and Demonstration Theatre, a Practical Chemistry Laboratory to accommodate 60 students, a balance room and store rooms. (pic Wesleychem and physics labs)

1908 saw Alex gain distinction in two subjects in the Junior Public Examination, but he had to re-sit a further subject in February 1909 to complete State requirements. (Pa Junior 3 and 4) That year, he was in the “Remove” form, which was for students doing a mix of Junior and Senior subjects and also the start of preparation for University Matriculation. Alex’s Science Note Book, containing records of Chemistry experiments performed by him, under the supervision of Walter Trudinger, the Senior Science Master and presumably presented to the University as part of Matriculation requirements, has remained in the family. A thrifty man, Alex re-used the notebook to record his first year university Chemistry lecture notes. (Pa experiments in Wesley folder and Pa lecture 1 and 2 in Alex folder)

During 1910, his final year at Wesley, Alex was a member of the Honour VI form, as distinct from the Pass VI group, in which a certain R.G. Menzies appears in class lists for the first time. Alex’s work in the previous year earned him two Government “Exhibitions” - rewards to students for their achievements, such as highest marks in a subject. The Mining and Agriculture sector awarded ten Exhibitions in 1910. Four were granted to Wesley students and Alex was one of these. He was also one of ten Wesley students awarded a

Government Exhibition, an Open Scholarship, tenable for four or five years of study. The April 1910 *Chronicle* records the Exhibitions awarded to the hard-working Wesley boys. (April 1910 Chronicle)

Assessment for the final years at Wesley was two-fold. There were the school's assessments, conducted regularly throughout the year for most of the students and the Matriculation Examination, conducted by the University of Melbourne each summer. To be successful in this exam and gain entry into university, students must pass seven subjects, of which four must be mathematics and classics subjects. Eighteen students, of whom Alex was one, passed the Senior Public Exam and a further eleven had the option to re-sit one or two subjects. (Pa Senior) Alex's success and the granting of two Exhibitions must have been a source of great pride to the Fitnam and Armstrong families.

It is unknown why, two years younger than the other students, Menzies was in Form VI in 1910. Even though he passed Senior, he had to sit supplementary exams in two subjects, perhaps to meet matriculation requirements. He remained at Wesley a further two years before completing his secondary schooling. In his final year, 1912, Menzies won a £40 per year, tenable for four years, Education Department Exhibition. Wesley students earned four of the 25 that were offered that year. Alex didn't have much time for Robert. As quoted by two of his daughters Leonie and Miriam, Alex was fond of saying "the only person who thought highly of Menzies was Menzies." (wesley1910 class lists2)

At the University of Melbourne, Alex's choice was Agricultural Science, a Faculty created in 1906 but, while teaching had begun, there were no dedicated staff until 1911, Alex's first year. Alex struggled in that first year, only passing one of his three subjects, redeeming himself in March 1912, when he re-sat and passed the failed subjects. He settled in during his second year, passing three of his five subjects. Re-sitting the two failed subjects, he failed again. In December 1913, he re-sat four of the 1912 subjects, gaining a Pass with Honours in two of them, successfully completing the second year of his course with Third Class Honours. The third year was his most successful and he gained a Pass with Honours in three of his five subjects, only failing one, which he successfully re-sat in March 1915.

The University had become associated with Dookie Agricultural College in 1910 when Bachelor of Agricultural Science students were required to be exposed to the practical experience of farming at Dookie for one year as part of their studies. In 1915, Alex completed his final year at Dookie, passing four of his five subjects and, again, passing in the re-sit exams of February 2016 and he was awarded his Bachelor of Agricultural Science that year. Lying 27 km north-east of Shepparton, Dookie College is about 100km north-west of Whitfield where his brother, William, was living for a time, but it is not known if the brothers saw each other. The author is most grateful to the researchers at the University of Melbourne Archives for providing a copy of Alex's Student Record Card, which details the subjects studied and the results for each year, as described above. (Alex McD Graduation pic Dookie ag college 1918 pic, Uni Melbourne student card)

Agricultural Science Subjects University of Melbourne

1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year
Chemistry I	Agricultural Chemistry I	Economic Bacteriology and Patterns of Infectious Diseases	Practical Agriculture
Biology I	Comparative Anatomy and Physiology of Domesticated Animals	Agricultural Chemistry II	Principles of Agriculture

Natural Philosophy I	Agricultural Botany	Agricultural Bio-Chemistry	Agricultural Engineering
	Agricultural Zoology	Geology and Economic Geology	Surveying
	Physical Geology	Plant Physiology	Book-Keeping

Electoral Rolls place Alex at 25 Arnold Street, as a student in 1914 and 1915, and in 1917 as a Field Officer. Family lore informs that Alex had tried to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force, but had been rejected on medical grounds. It must have been difficult for him as pro-war fervour took over the city. Public spaces were constantly in use for war-related events. There were fundraising concerts, patriotic displays, enlistment drives and troops, including his brother, in 1916, marching along the streets towards the newly-built Princes Pier, to embark on troop ships off to the war. **(PROV re civilian life)(WWI patriotic sewers pic)** (36) Even applying for a job was fraught with undertones of the war. It was expected that young men should at least try to enlist as a soldier. If they were unsuccessful, any job applications they submitted would include reasons for their rejection. Alex was a Field Officer, perhaps as early as 1916, but it is not known in which area of the work force.

Family lore claims Alex had earned teaching qualifications and taught at Dookie on completion of his degree, which seems possible given the mass departure of men to the war, especially after the Gallipoli battle in 1915. Alex then moved north and in 1918, he was employed as a teacher at Shore, the Church of England Grammar in Sydney. **(email from Church of England Grammar Sydney)** In September of that year, he learned that brother William had been killed at the Battle of Mont St Quentin. It must have been devastating for him to be apart from his family at this time. He was only at the Grammar School for a year before he moved north again, this time to Queensland.

He successfully applied for the position of Science Master at what is now the Gatton Campus of the University of Queensland and was appointed 1 January 1920. The campus had opened as the Queensland Agricultural College in 1897 as a combination of agricultural college and experimental farm, established with the aim of boosting Queensland's agricultural production. **(Gatton College opening 1897pic (37) and Foundation Building 1899 pic early college classroom pic circa 1900)** (4)

At first the college was administered by the State Department of Agriculture. However, enrolments did not grow as hoped, partly due to the departure of eligible students to fight in the Boer War and World War I and by 1921, closure was on the cards. Luckily for Alex, the Department of Public Instruction, now the Department of Education, was directed to take over the college's administration in 1923. It was re-named the Queensland Agricultural High School and College, its programs part of the State's educational system and it flourished, weathering the Great Depression and agricultural problems such as the prickly pear and rabbit plagues. Looking to the future, the College also developed interests in scientific education and research. **(Gatton campus history)** (19)

Alex was a much-loved and respected teacher and an enthusiastic and skilled player of tennis and cricket. The Education Office Gazette, published annually, records his rise through the Department's ranks, tracking his initial Class 1 appointment through to 1928, when he reached the top – Class 1, Division 1. He loved his work and life at the College. **(Pa's promotions and the cartoon)**

Another plus for Alex was that Michael James Jordan had been appointed farmhand 7 January 1897 and put to work straight away. Using two single-furrow ploughs and nine draught horses, Michael, another farmhand and newly-arrived students ploughed the first paddock on the College. By 1920, when Alex arrived, Michael had become Farm Foreman, married Johanna Mary O'Shea and had six children.

The elder daughter, Margaret (Peg) Donnelly Jordan, born 16 October 1901, caught Alex's eye. His interest was reciprocated and, in his own words, at the wedding of his youngest daughter in 1962, he recalled "the January night some thirty-five years ago when I slipped a diamond ring on the third finger of a wee lass – an act that I have never regretted and I still love her." Alex and Peg married 15 December 1928 in St Mary's Catholic Church, Alex having received instruction in the faith from Parish Priest, Father Daniel Walsh, for whom he had great respect. Another priest, John Torpie, later a Bishop, also became a friend to Alex and they attended wood-working classes at Gatton High School in the 1930s. A fine example of Alex's skills is a roll-top desk with drawers and pigeon holes, originally Alex's work desk, later used as storage for Peg's sewing materials, which has reverted to its original purpose in the study of the author's home. [\(Alex and Peg wedding and wedding announcements pics\)](#)

Alex and Peg went by train to Melbourne and Sydney for their honeymoon so he could show off his new bride and introduce her to his family. Peg often told the story of Aunt Elizabeth, a staunch Anglican, locking the door of her home so Peg, an equally staunch Catholic, was unable to attend Mass. Despite the religious tensions, they were able to farewell Alex's grandmother Elizabeth, who died 14 January 1929.

As a married couple, Alex and Peg moved into a house on College grounds and they soon became a family. [\(Armstrong family house pic\)](#)

Family Alex and Peg (who called him Alec):

- Leonie Mary Beatrice 19/11/1929 -
- Miriam Margaret Therese 29/09/1931 -
- Joan Marie Elizabeth 04/05/1935 -
- Cecily Anne 16/12/1938 – 05/08/2020

Alex made a solo trip by train to Melbourne in the early 1930s and Peg wrote to him even before he had arrived. She tells him how much Leonie and Miriam are missing him and sends her "kindest regards to Aunt and all other relations." [\(Mama's letter two pages only\)](#) Peg stayed with her parents, who lived two houses away at the College, while he was gone. As she explained in the letter, the girls wouldn't go home because "our dear old Daddy is not there."

Leonie started school in 1935 at College View State School, on the College grounds, one of two students from the College, the other students being children from nearby farms. That year Alex bought his first car, a Chevrolet, named *Chevvie*. Two years later, according to Alex's daughters, *Chevvie* was called upon to ferry the Governor of Queensland, Sir Leslie Orme Wilson around the campus during an official visit. [\(Pic Governor visit 2, Pic Chevvie old\)](#) Alex kept *Chevvie* for over 20 years.

After two years, when Miriam was ready to start school, it was decided the girls would get the rail motor from the College rail stop at Lawes Siding into Gatton, to Our Lady of Good Counsel School. At the time, it was expected that Catholics should send their children to

Catholic schools if at all possible. Although Alex had been brought up an Anglican and was also a Freemason, he renounced his allegiance to both when he married Peg and agreed that any children would be raised as Catholics. Joan joined her sisters at school in 1941. (Jordan book pic of Alec Peg and four girls)

After World War II broke out in 1939, the Queensland Parliament quickly passed the Air Raid Warden's Act, which allowed the Police Commissioner to appoint Wardens to act in liaison with government authorities such as the police, fire and ambulance brigades and the Chief Medical Officer, to protect civilians in the case of an air raid. ARP (Air Raid Precautions) organisations established posts in various parts of the state, usually at railway stations and schools. Alex was one of the volunteers at the College and his daughters recall him going off to patrol his "beat" at night, ensuring black-out regulations were being observed. (Alex ARP badge)

Australia was at first relatively unaffected in terms of rationing and shortages, largely because of its large and well-developed rural production industry. However, in mid-1942, things changed. Strict rationing regulations were introduced to manage shortages and control civilian consumption, via a coupon system applied to clothing, tea, sugar, butter and meat. Each adult Australian citizen purchased a coupon book with 112 coupons, which could be used over a 12 month period to buy goods, the number of coupons needed depending on the item to be purchased. Used coupon books were exchanged for new ones annually. (ww2places.qld.gov.au/homefront/rationing site) (47) also see awm pics re rationing

Item	Date gazetted	Date abolished	Quantity per adult
Clothing	12 June 1942	24 June 1948	112 coupons per year
Tea	6 July 1942	July 1950	1 lb per 5 weeks
Sugar	29 August 1942	3 July 1947	2 lb per fortnight
Butter	7 June 1943	June 1950	1 lb per fortnight
Meat	14 January 1944	24 June 1948	2 lbs per week

The Armstrongs at the Agricultural College were fortunate, living in a farming community where food shortages were not such a problem. However the family's life was turned upside down 14 March 1942, when most of the College buildings were requisitioned to accommodate the 153rd Station Hospital and later the 105th General Hospital of the U.S. Army. In around three years, these hospitals hosted over 19,000 wounded servicemen, as well as 3,000 Army doctors, nurses and other service personnel. (Gatton College history site(19), Pic US army camp 1945)(Credit University of Qld Archives)

The family was given less than 24 hours to pack up their house and belongings and move into Gatton. All Sub-Diploma, Junior and Short courses were suspended, with only 23 Diploma students and one university student remaining. Teaching and domestic staff were greatly reduced. Alex was one of the teachers who remained at the College until the end of 1942, lecturing to the final year Diploma students. He was then transferred to the Brisbane Technical College, teaching Sugar Chemistry and Pharmacy. In 1965 the College became the Queensland Institute of Technology (QIT) and, in January 1989, Queensland University of Technology (QUT).

For almost three years Alex left Gatton early on a Monday morning and travelled by train to Brisbane where he stayed with the family of one of Peg's cousins. He would return mid-Saturday afternoon. Alex's two elder daughters joined him in the commute in 1945. Leonie had completed her Junior examinations at Gatton High School and enrolled in the Sugar Chemistry course at the Technical College and Miriam began Sub-Junior at All Hallows School in the city.

At the College, general farm work continued, with crops to be harvested and cattle, pigs and hens to be tended. The continuing war and rationing led to a push for more intensive crop and livestock production and the growing of opium poppies to make drugs. As well, many new buildings were constructed, to accommodate teaching and research activities and development continued throughout the war.

In September 1946, all the Armstrongs moved to Brisbane, having built a house at 64 Strong Avenue Graceville. That year Leonie was at the Technical College, Miriam completed the Junior Public Examinations at All Hallows and Joan and Cecily were enrolled locally at Christ the King Convent school. Leonie's children and some of her grandchildren also attended the school and some of her great-grandchildren are currently enrolled there. As well, Leonie, Cecily and many of Leonie's children were married in the church of Christ the King.

Alex remained teaching at the Technical College until his retirement in 1962, aged 70. He had stayed on past the official retirement age of 65, as he was the only person with both Agricultural Science and Education qualifications but, at 70, he decided that "enough was enough". Around the same time, Alex traded *Chevvie* for a Morris Major Series II and the author remembers him driving with a clothes peg securing the choke to keep it open. (The Choke was a knob, pulled out to help start cars, especially on cold mornings. It was gradually pushed back into place as the car warmed up– but not by Alex!) He and Peg celebrated the new car by taking a road trip to Victoria, with Joan as the photographer and alternate driver. (pics [Peg and Alex and Morris major](#))

Retirement was an enjoyable time for Alex, allowing him to indulge his love of reading, as well as working in the garden under Peg's direction. In 1960 Leonie, husband Orme and their family, moved next door, to #68. Grandson Michael was often left in his bouncer beside Alex (Pa to his grandchildren) as he sat under the house in a favourite chair, with a book – as a break for Leonie and a chance for Alex to "chat" with Michael, whom he called "Snowy", referencing Michael's red hair.

Alex died quietly in his sleep, Peg by his side, 29 October 1970, Miriam and Joan in their beds and the author on the couch in the lounge. His family had been sitting by his bedside for much of the night, as he slipped away, but he had sent Leonie home and the rest of us off to bed, not wanting to be a bother to anybody.

Peg died in the same bed 23 December 2002, having celebrated her 100th birthday the previous year. She had been proud to attend the first of her grandchildren's weddings, that of Ben O'Neill, the author's son, to Jennifer Lenske, two months earlier, on 19 October. (Ben and Jen wedding pic with mama)

They are buried together at Pinaroo Lawn cemetery. (Mama and Pa gravestone)

Alex and Peg's girls (pics 4 sisters – young and older)

Leonie had wanted to get into the Pharmacy course taught by Alec, but an apprenticeship with a pharmacist was a requirement and preference was given to returned soldiers. Instead she began his Sugar Chemistry Course but, after 18 months, practical work at a sugar mill was a requirement, involving moving away from home, which Peg forbade.

Leonie then took up the position of Laboratory Assistant at the Department of Agriculture and Stock, Division of Animal Industry, Animal Health Station at Yeerongpilly 18 October 1946, where she remained until her marriage. ([Leonie appointment Yeerongpilly doc](#)) She married Ormonde Davidson Gauld (18/12/1926 – 22/07/1984) on 11 April 1953 ([wedding pic](#)) and they had eight children:

- Janita Kathryn 30/01/1954 -
- Roger David 20/04/1955 -
- Neill Alexander 09/01/1957 -
- Donna Margaret 07/06/1958 -
- Marion Joan 23/04/1960 -
- Michael Robert 08/05/1962 -
- Ann-Louise Mary 19/02/1964 -
- John Francis Gordon 12/05/1967 -

For the first seven years of their marriage they lived at 75 McConaghy Street Mitchelton, before moving to 68 Strong Avenue, where they remained. When Orme became ill, soon after retiring, Leonie cared for him at home until he died.

As she'd wanted to travel as her sisters had done, in 1989 she took off for an extended holiday in the U.K. and Europe on her own, has been to Canada with family for nephew Tim's wedding and has since travelled within Australia to Western Australia, Tasmania, South Australia, the Northern Territory and Norfolk Island.

Leonie has kept busy with her family; her many and varied needlework and craft projects and with her garden. She also worked for a time at Reception at Canossa Hospital and Aged Care and as a Supervisor for the University of Queensland exams. As well, she has worked, in both a paid and voluntary capacity, in the office at Christ the King Parish, in the organising of post-funeral receptions and in the rostering of parishioners, including herself, to participate in the Liturgy at Mass for many years. Leonie still lives at #68. [Add pics from 90th](#)

After completing her Junior year, **Miriam** left All Hallows and gained employment in the Administration Section of the University of Queensland at St Lucia as a stenotypist. Taking leave she, Joan and cousin Judy Jordan, travelled to the UK and Europe on a working holiday for 18 months. On her return in 1962, she became Secretary to the Department of Biochemistry, where Edwin Webb (21/05/1921 – 17/01/2006) had been appointed the first Professor. Miriam, bitten by the travel bug, took many holidays, often with Joan, completing short cruises to places like Japan and Fiji, also taking Donna to Fiji after Donna broke her leg. Miriam remained Edwin's secretary throughout his career at the university, during which time he became President of the Professorial Board, and in 1970, Deputy Vice-Chancellor. She took extended leave that year, travelling by air for the first time, to London and touring for three months. When Edwin became Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie University in 1976, Miriam moved to Sydney as well, as his Personal Assistant.

Edwin and Miriam retired in 1986, moving to Townsville and married 5 May 1988. ([Wedding pic](#)) The travelling didn't stop for Miriam though. Edwin published books on

Biochemistry in various languages and was much in demand as a speaker to conferences on the subject in many countries.

Miriam, too, loved her needlework. Like Leonie, she completed many cross-stitch and tapestry pieces, as well as knitting various items for Cecily's charitable groups. She is also a keen gardener. After Edwin died, she moved back home to Graceville in 2011, becoming Joan's carer from around 2015, when Joan was diagnosed with Dementia. In June 2021 Miriam moved to the Retirement Living section of Aveo, Durack, then in July 2024 to Sinnamon Village Aged Care. **Add pic 3 sisters**

In 1950, **Joan** left All Hallows after completing her Junior year, becoming a machinist in the Pay Section of the then Royal Brisbane Hospital for many years. She had the travel bug as well and has flown and cruised to many countries in the world. In 1983 she was appointed Confidential Clerk to The North Brisbane Hospitals Board. **(Joan Appt letter)** The Board Manager, Tom Tolhurst, was impressed by her skills and, when he was appointed in 1986 to manage the new Right of Private Practice Scheme, Joan worked with him again. The Scheme allowed Senior Medical Officers the right to treat public patients who elected to be treated privately at a public health facility. Joan's experience in the Pay Section was invaluable in ensuring the doctors were paid what they were owed according to their agreement with the hospital, either being paid an allowance or taking a portion of the private fees charged. The Scheme also limited the amount the doctors could earn privately while they remained in the public employ. It was a big job and more employees were necessary to input the data. Joan was able to obtain employment for sisters Leonie and Cecily for a period of time to assist with data entry.

Joan was a member of the Catholic Women's League for many years, elected to both the State Treasurer and President's roles at various stages. Those roles allowed her to travel as well, both in Australia and overseas, representing the CWL. **(pics of travel and with CWL folk)** She, too, has been a keen needlewoman, but with the crochet hook, the tatting pins, the knitting needles as well as the sewing machine, to make her own clothes.

She never married, but her best friend, Alan Herbert Randall, became a much-loved member of the Armstrong, Gauld, Webb and McMahan families. Alan died 24 December 2010. Joan remained at #64 until June 2021, when she moved into Aged Care at Aveo, Durack. **(Mim and Joan pic from behind at Aveo and Sisters pic. Add pics)**

Cecily also went to All Hallows until her Junior year. She soon gained employment at the Queensland Radium Institute, attached to the then Royal Brisbane Hospital. At the time, the use of sun cream as a preventative to skin cancer was being developed and many a jar of thick, white ointment came home to be used by the Gauld children when on holidays.

She married Edward Warren McMahan (10/10/1936 – 04/09/2022) 03 March 1962 **(wedding pic)** and they had four children:

- Timothy Edward 22/03/1963 -
- Kathryn-Louise 18/06/1964 -
- Marianne 20/01/1966 -
- Gerard Armstrong 27/09/ 1973 -

Cecily and Ed travelled to the U.K. and Europe for their honeymoon and, although they did some further travelling, Cecily was a nervous flyer, becoming even more nervous as she grew older. Instead, she used her skills as a needlewoman to create beautiful pieces,

including the dresses for the author's bridesmaids, clothing for her children, quilts and dolls, as well as beanies and other items for those in need. Cecily and Ed are buried together at the Mt Gravatt Cemetery.

William John

Will, as he was called by his family, probably also attended the Princes Hill State School before progressing to the Melbourne Continuation School in Spring Street, the first state secondary school in Victoria, which offered a two-year teacher preparation course for £6 per annum. (13)Victorian Teacher Record Books, created and maintained by the Board of Education, provide a history of Will's teaching career, beginning at the Continuation School in 1908. He was registered, with the wrong birth year of 1892, at the end of 1909, with the Registration Number 16827 and appointed to Preston State School in Melbourne, as a Junior Teacher, 3rd Class on Probation, in 1910, having only just turned 16 and presumably still living with his aunt, grandmother and siblings in North Carlton. (Will teacher record 3)

Teachers were assessed four times a year and written reports provided to the Board of Education. Will's reports ranged from "Not a complete failure" in his first year, to "approaching the very good standard" in February 1913, to being fined £2 for "serious neglect of duty, censured and warned" in July 1916. However, the general consensus was that he had the makings of a good teacher.

Promoted to 2nd Class in January 1911, Will was transferred to Camberwell, Melbourne, 30 September, still as a Junior Teacher. In 1912 he was promoted to 1st Class and transferred 5 March 1913 to the schools of Glenmore, Whitfield and Degamero, (later named Cheshunt) north-east of Melbourne, as Head Teacher. In 1914 he was then moved to Edi Upper, Hedi and Boggy Creek and King Flat and Boggy Creek schools in the Upper Murray Region. It is unknown how the day to day arrangements for teaching at three schools were managed. (school numbers pic)Electoral Rolls place Will at Whitfield, close to Edi in 1915. However, by 1916, according to the Roll, after another transfer, to Howquadale and Delatite schools, he had move to Piries. Half-day classes were conducted at the two schools, the teacher moving between the two. Delatite was made a full-time school from 1 August 1916.

While at these schools, Will became involved in the social life of the area, the *Mansfield Courier* reporting in February 26 1916 that he had contributed 5/-to the Mansfield hospital Nurses' Quarters Building Company and March 18 attended the Tolmie Picnic and Sports Day, noting he had won the "Go As You Please" race and assisted with the music at the dance at the Athanaeum that evening. Newspaper clippings found in his diary reflect an interest in horse racing also.

Will is next recorded as being "on leave with the Australian Imperial Force from 16 October 1916," his attestation papers completed 24 October at Castlemaine, Service Number 6276.(Pic William 1)

While living at Whitfield, probably from about 1913 – 1915, Will had made the acquaintance of the Macklan family, especially Irene and Albert, with whom he became friends. The Macklan family was involved in horse racing and presumably the clippings were sent to him to keep him up to date with events at home. Irene and Will became more than friends, perhaps even betrothed, as she was his allottee, the person to whom a regular payment was made from a serviceman's pay. Another indication is an inscription, written by Will in his diary, titled "Mizpah". It reads,

The Lord keep watch

'twixt thee and me
the time that I'm away.
Then "Mizpah" let our watchword be
forever & for aye.

Originally the Hebrew word for "watchtower", Mizpah came to signify an emotional bond between people separated, physically or by death. It is believed the diary that Donald donated to the Australian War Memorial was given to Will by Irene who had affixed her photo to it. (pic Irene)

Will embarked from Melbourne on the A20 *Hororata* 23 November 1916, arriving at Plymouth, England 29 January 1917. From Plymouth, a Military Light Railway took the soldiers to Larkhill Camp in Wiltshire, for further training 30 January. (Pic Larkhill Camp) After Will was hospitalised for Appendicitis at nearby Fargo Military Hospital 3 May, a letter from the AIF to Donald was sent, but returned, undelivered. The army then contacted Irene, as his Allottee, 29 May, to request Donald's address. (William 16) She wrote to Donald to apprise him of the news and back to the army, with the address, (William 10) which was (William 9) confirmed by Donald. Will was transferred 16 June, to Bulford Manor to recuperate for five weeks and not released for duty until 20 July.

Training at Larkhill continued until 14 November when Will was posted to France, arriving at le Havre the next day as part of desperately needed reinforcements for the 24th Battalion. (pic William 2) The 24th played an important role in turning back the German offensive in April 1918, fighting in the Battles of Hamel and Amiens.

Will records in his diary of writing to and receiving letters from family and friends, of seeing the sights of London and Paris describing sports competitions between the Companies and Brigades and he makes special mention of finding old friends among the ranks. He notes cabling Irene to send him £5 to spend while on leave in Paris in early August, when he twice visited the Folies Bergere. (pic Folies) There is little mention of the war, except for a few notes such as "a little machine gun fire which was too close to be pleasant" and "Fritz shells heavily" but many solemn record of friends who died, including Albert Macklan .

William John Armstrong was killed around 6pm 31 August 1918 when a High Explosive Shell landed in or near a trench during the Battle of Mont St Quentin, alongside between 11 and 14 other soldiers and officers. (pic William 7) He is buried in the Peronne Communal Cemetery Extension, Ref. IV. A. 7.

The author and her husband have visited the grave twice, in 2008 and 2018. On both occasions, we left small Australian flags at his grave. The first time we also left eucalyptus leaves and on the second, a laminated story of Will's life, with his photo as well as poppies, hand-made by four of his nieces, the author, representing 12 great-nieces and nephews, her son, Ben, representing 33 great-great nieces and nephews and Ben's daughter Abby, representing 16 great-great-great nieces and nephews. (pic of grave with poppies) In 2018 the author and her husband were honoured to attend ceremonies of the 100th anniversary of the battle in 2018 in Peronne and at the Australian Memorial on the city's outskirts.

Will's death was recorded in *The Argus*, Melbourne 21 September 1918 and the *Wangaratta Chronicle*, Wednesday 25 September 1918 and In Memoriam notices appeared in *The Argus* on the anniversary of Will's death, placed by his family until 1923. (pics death and In Memoriam)

On April 13 2014, three generations of William John Armstrong's family gathered at the War Memorial in Canberra to witness the Last Post Ceremony, which, on that day, remembered him. Four of his five nieces – Leonie Gauld, Miriam Webb, Joan Armstrong and Cecily McMahon, one of his six great-nieces, the author and one of his many great-great-nieces, Abby O'Neill, made the trip from Brisbane. Abby's father, Ben, had planned to attend as well, making four generations, but work commitments made the trip impossible on the day. (pic four nieces plus)

More detailed information about Will and his time in the AIF is freely available at <https://www.paulandjanita.com/o-neill-family-history-copy>. There are three titles – *William John Armstrong “Uncle Willie Who Died in the War”*; *As the Boat Broke Away, the WWI diary of William John Armstrong*; (a transcription of the original) and *Mont St Quentin, where three paths crossed*, which is the tale of three of the soldiers killed, who may have been standing together when the shell exploded over the trench.

Notes on Irene:

Irene Gladys and Adeline Victoria Macklan were born 1 July 1897 to Mary Ann (Cook) and Isaac Macklan, a farmer. They followed Albert James, born 1896 and preceded Evelyn Doris, born 1904.

Remaining in Whitfield until at least 1925 according to the Electoral Roll, Irene married John Leslie Lowden, born 1898, in 1928 and they moved to Melbourne. John died 22 May 1985 and was cremated. Irene died 1 September 1997. She, too, was cremated and her ashes stored with John's in the Fawkner Park Garden of Remembrance.

Donetta Elizabeth Mary

Known as Ettie, the only daughter of Donald and Miriam, probably attended the Princes Hill State School like her brothers and definitely attended the Melbourne Continuation School, which had been re-named Melbourne High School by 1911 when she began there.

Ettie remained at Arnold Street, Electoral Rolls placing her there in 1919. She was appointed Junior Teacher, 3rd Class on Probation, to King Street Primary School in West Melbourne 3 March 1913, (pic King St Primary school)(35)her Registration Number 18142. The school was originally built to accommodate 1100 children in eight large and seven small classrooms. From her first assessment 12 June that year, she was recognised as being “very attentive to her school duties” and being a “bright and active young teacher.” (Ettie teacher record)

These positive assessments continued through her teaching career. From 1 January 1914 she was promoted to Second Class and described as “an active & earnest young teacher, shows interest her work and prepares lessons well.” The following year, from 1 April, Ettie was promoted to First Class. Comments from that year include “A willing and and active young teacher with a pleasant manner, gives good lessons and keeps the interested attention of her class.” Continuing to improve her skills, Ettie was appointed Officer in Charge 2 May 1917, remaining at King Street School. She was appointed Head Teacher 31 October 1919 and transferred to Quambatook North West School.

Here she met William Frederick Murdoch, a farmer who, after enlisting 12 July 1915, (Will war record 1 in Donetta folder) Service Number 1436, embarked from Australia 15 November. He suffered from severe pneumonia and was admitted to Cairo hospital 24

February 1916. Discharged 15 March, he returned to duty and was sent from Alexandria to France 2 June, disembarking at Marseilles. (Will war record 10) He was a Bombardier, with a rank of Corporal, responsible for igniting the cannon fuse. After being gassed in Belgium 18 September 1917, he developed Gas Enteritis and was sent to Camiers Hospital 20 September. (entrance to hospital, row of wards Camiers hospital Donetta)

William then developed Trench Fever, a disease spread by lice causing severe headaches and debilitating muscle pain. Serious depression was a complication and up to 80% of infected soldiers remained unfit for duty for up to three months. (46) (William war record 11) William was transported to England 30 September for treatment, but remained weak, developing pleurisy and was sent home to Australia 16 March 1918 to recover. He arrived 22 May on the H.S Kanowna. (Will war record 13) (pic H S Kanowna)

Ettie resigned 31 July 1921 and she and William married 19 January 1922. She moved to the farm where William and his four brothers, James Robert, Eric Gordon, Andrew Keith and Neil David, all worked at various times until around 1946, after which, presumably, the farm was sold, as no family members appear on the Electoral Roll there after this date. The Murdoch parents, Andrew and Hester Eliza, had moved to Oakleigh, in Melbourne, around 1939 and their daughters, Hannah Ada, Lorna Elizabeth Marion and Hester Jessie had all married and left home. By 1949, William, Andrew and Neil, at least, had moved elsewhere, so perhaps working the farm was no longer a viable proposition.

William and Ettie had four children:

- Joan Elizabeth 15/06/1924 – 18/12/2021
- Geoffrey William 03/06/1926 - 13/10/2014
- Sheila Beverley 03/09/1931 – 03/1960
- Alexander Douglas 20/12/1940 – 26/03/1974
(Dougie)

They moved to Melton, about 40 km north-west of Melbourne around 1946. Their home was named “Braemar”, perhaps a nod to their Scottish heritage and family members lived there until at least 1972. William died about 3 September 1958 and his ashes were interred at Springvale Botanical Cemetery.

In the 1940s and early 1950s, Alex would visit his sister and her family every couple of years, accompanied by one of his daughters when they were in their teens or early twenties. After William died, Ettie and Geoff reciprocated the visits and the author remembers being excited to see Auntie Ett and Geoff when they came to visit. She was a tiny, animated woman, while Geoff was a quiet man, like his uncle.

Ettie died 13 June 1973 and her ashes are buried at Altona Memorial Park.

Joan Elizabeth married Robert Alick Robson (05/01/1927 – 03/11/2021) in 1953. (pic Joan and Rob Robson) She and Rob had three sons:

- Mark
- Brett Geoffrey
- Craig William (pic 3 murdoch boys also Sheila pic)

Joan and Robert were cremated at Northern Suburbs Crematorium.

Geoff never married. His ashes were collected from Altona Memorial Park.

Sheila married George Neill Yeoman (17/04/1925 – 27/06/1997) in 1953. Sheila was cremated 21/03/1960 and her ashes scattered at Springvale Botanical Cemetery. George was cremated and his ashes buried, also at Springvale Botanical Cemetery.

Alexander Douglas, wrongly recorded as Douglas Alexander, was cremated and his ashes are buried with Ettie's.

Donald Alexander Second Family

Life changed again for Donald when he married, 25 November 1910, Emily Clairellen Walch, born 1876 to Garnet Walch and Ada Kate Sophia Mullen. They lived with her parents and siblings at “Rubra”, 60 Mont Albert Road, Surrey Hills and their four children were born there. About 1928, the family moved to 11 Inglisby Road Mont Albert, where they remained.

Family Donald and Emily:

- George Garnet
- (known as Garnet) 03/06/1913 – 28/08/1994
- Donald Crosby 02/09/1914 – 14/03/1991
- Viola Walch 06/01/1917 – 29/09/2010
- June Mary 25/06/1919 – 14/09/2010

The half-siblings were not close, probably because of the age differences. Yet a photo of Donald, Alexander and June, taken about 1928 ([pic Don Alex June](#)) and a visit to Alexander's family by Donald Crosby in the 1980s indicate the half-siblings at least knew of each other's existence.

Early in the twentieth century, plans were put in motion to electrify the suburban network and in 1919 the first public service of electric trains began. Electrification was completed April 15 1923. There were two types of carriages, the first being the “swing-door” which had been modified to fit the new system. These carriages had around ten compartments with full-width bench seats facing each other, each compartment accessed by an outward-opening “swing” door. ([Pic swing door donald a](#)) (42)

The second type were the “Taits”, named after Thomas Tait, a Victorian Railway Commissioner and purpose-built for the new, electrified system. The Tait model had bench seats only at the front and rear of each carriage, while the remainder of the carriage was divided by a central aisle, allowing movement within the space and more comfortable standing room when the train was crowded. Access was via a sliding door, often left open when the train was moving – airy, but not very safe! ([Pic Tait carriage](#)) (42)

After Donald completed the required training, he became an Electric Suburban Guard around 1926 and was earning 17/3d per day in 1929. While Donald remained on the Electoral Roll as a Railway Guard until 1943, it is likely he retired, aged 65, in 1934.

Life was not all about work, however. Donald was actively involved with cricket, probably earlier, but at least from the early 1920s with the local cricket association, which formally became the Mont Albert Cricket club in 1930. His love of cricket was passed on to all four of his sons. Alexander and William both played the game, although not with the Mont

Albert Club. Garnet and Donald Crosby, as well as the elder Donald, feature in team photos on the wall at this club. (photos 2 donalds and a garnet) Donald, his two younger sons and his two sons-in-law were all awarded Life Membership of the club between 1939 and 1977 for service to the club, Donald's being the first name on the list. As well, Donald was Vice-President of the club from at least 1935 probably to around the time of his death. ([Cricket team pics](#))

The club competed in the Box Hill Reporter And District Cricket Competition in its early years, switching, in 1937 to the Eastern Suburbs Cricket Association. The Club's website proudly boasts that "Four Mont Albert players have been awarded Life Membership in the Eastern Cricket Association – Geoff Mair (1959), Ron Hodge (1988); Garnet Armstrong (1993) and Richard Barker (2006). Three players have had Eastern Cricket Association Grade Competition Shields named after them – Garnet Armstrong (C Grade Turf), Geoff Mair (E Grade Turf) and Richard Barker (Under 12)."

Donald was justifiably proud of the cricketing achievements of his younger sons and sons-in-law, but he also honoured his second son, Will, placing In Memoriam notices in *The Argus* every year between 1919 and 1923, at least.

As early as 1916, Charles Bean, the Official War Correspondent, after witnessing the horrors of Gallipoli and the early French battles, envisioned an Australian War Memorial so that the ordeals of Australian soldiers would never be forgotten. He lobbied hard for its creation. As a result, the Australian War Records Section was created in 1917 to ensure Australia would have its own collection of records and relics of the great war currently being fought, both official and personal. Official war diaries recorded operations and activities daily, Red Cross officials took statements from survivors and witnesses of battles and other officials went out into the field to collect relics or material evidence of conflicts. Soldiers were also ordered to collect these items.

Artists and photographers were appointed to provide visual evidence and Bean insisted that the images should not whitewash what was happening, but instead show it truthfully. John Treloar, a Gallipoli veteran, was the other main driver in the creation of the Memorial, which opened as the Australian War Museum in the Exhibition Building in Melbourne, Anzac Day 1922. It closed 1925 and moved to Sydney, where it remained until 1935. Treloar was the Memorial's Director from 1920 until his death in 1952. (6)

The current Australian War Memorial opened in Canberra on Remembrance Day 1941. Donald Armstrong also recognised the need to preserve historical documents and donated his second son's diary, which also contained saved newspaper articles and photos, to this Memorial in 1928, contributing to the records and relics which bring to life the experiences and reflections of an ordinary soldier in extraordinary times. The author's husband discovered its existence when researching William John Armstrong's life in 2012 and we have since visited the Memorial and turned its pages, just as Will once had.

Donald died 17 August 1945 of a Coronary Thrombosis at 11 Inglisby Street. Emily died 25 May 1952 and she is buried with Donald at Box Hill Cemetery. Donald's funeral notices omit any mention of his first family. ([Funeral notices](#), [Box Hill Cemetery map and gravestone Don and Em](#))

George Garnet (known as Garnet)

Garnet most likely attended Mont Albert Central School, situated 21-23 Inglisby Road, gaining the Merit Certificate required to enter high school. He left school on completion of his Intermediate year.

Sharing his father's love of cricket, Garnet features prominently on the Honour Boards ([pics Team pics 1935-6; 1937-8; 1938-9; 1939-40; 1948-9](#)) and Team photos at the Mont Albert Cricket Club, as Team Captain and successful batsman. Two books have been written by Dr Greg McKie about the Mont Albert Cricket Club and Garnet's contribution to it, *Garnie's Army* and *Garnie's Second Innings*.

In 1937, Garnet married Enid Rae Wilson, born 11 March 1915 and they lived at 288 Mont Albert Road, Surrey Hills for a time, moving to 17 Inglisby Road, near his parents, sometime before 28 January 1942, when he was mobilised in the Citizen Military Forces, a Shipping Clerk at the time. ([George G war record 1](#)) He commenced full time duties 21 March and two days later, transferred to AHQ Signals at Ringwood as Acting Grade III Clerk. In September he was transferred to the AIF at Albert Park, Service Number VX110076, promoted to Acting Corporal 1 October and Corporal 18 February 1943. In October that year he was transferred to 15 Australia High Speed Wireless Section, moving 29 October 1944 to South Melbourne and was promoted to Sergeant 27 March 1945. ++++

On 15 May 1945, the adoption process of twins was completed ([George garnet war record 3](#)) and Garnet was transferred to the General Details Depot 5 September after the cessation of hostilities three days earlier. His discharge from the AIF was completed 10 September. ([Garnet war record 7](#)) Garnet did not receive his War Medal immediately or even after the introduction of the Australian Service Medal in 1949. In fact, it was not until 3 October 1979 that he applied for any "service ribbons or medals which may be due to me." ([Garnet war record 5](#)) The response came quickly and on 2 November, both medals were dispatched to him. ([Garnet war record 6](#))

Garnet and Enid had two (adopted) children:

- Peter (01/10/1944 – 01/01/1997) He was cremated at Springvale Botanical Cemetery and his ashes collected.
- Fay (01/10/1944 – 16/04/2017) m. Graham Wilson Davies (31/12/1947 – 07/07/2018) on 01/03/1969. They were cremated at Fawkner Memorial Park and their ashes collected.

Fay and Graham had four children:

- Justin
- Travis
- Trent
- Nicole

Garnet died 24 August 1994 and Enid Rae 15 June 1995. Their ashes are interred at Templestowe Cemetery. ([Pic gravestone George Garnet](#))

Donald Crosby

Donald most likely also attended Mont Albert Central School. He then completed his Intermediate Certificate and also had a Technical qualification according to his Attestation

Form of 20 March 1942. (pic Donald C war record1) Employed by Pope Products of 349 Flinders Lane in Melbourne as a Commercial Traveller, he was living at 17A Westminster Street, Balwyn, with wife Mary Treleaven Macro, born 23 March 1911, whom he had married 30 December 1937. She had previously been married, in 1930, to Knowles Alfred Bennett. They had a daughter, Mary Elizabeth, known as Peg, but divorced in 1936.

Cricket and the Mont Albert Club were also important to Donald and he was made a Life Member in 1951. He also features in Team photos and Honour Boards at the club. (Pics Mont Albert cricket1935-6;1937-8;1939-40;1948-9) It was at the club that he met Mary, it can be assumed, as her father, Charles Alfred Macro, was Club President for many years.

Donald, a Commercial traveller, was mobilised 8 January 1942 into the Citizen Military Forces and appointed 23 March with his older brother to the Signals Division. He completed a Clerk Course 29 August and was graded Group III Clerk. Transferred to the AIF, Service Number VX131527, he was sent to Brisbane, Queensland 21 December. He was appointed Lance Corporal, then promoted to Acting Corporal 9 April 1943, relinquishing his Group III Clerk status. The rank of Corporal was confirmed 2 June and he rose to Lance Sergeant 31 July, Sergeant 20 January 1944 and Acting Staff Sergeant 16 May. However, that role was not for him and he requested and was granted a return to Sergeant 2 August 1944.

Returning to Victoria, he was sent to Balcombe Camp on the Mornington Peninsula 9 August before being attached to the Records Office in Melbourne 29th of that month, where he stayed until 26 September. Returning to Signals at Balcombe Camp for about six weeks, he was then sent back to Brisbane. From there, he embarked on the *Gorgon* 19 November to Papua New Guinea, arriving 29 November and remaining three months before being sent to Morotai Island, then part of the Netherlands East Indies, 2 March 1945, where he remained until 21 November, promoted to Acting Warrant Officer II 10 April, confirmed 25 June. Donald would have been a witness to the formal surrender of the Japanese 2nd Army to General Thomas Blamey at Morotai 9 September 1945. (pic Donald Crosby Japanese surrender Morotai pic) (6) He left Morotai 10 November, returning to Melbourne General Details Department until his discharge was approved. (Pic Donald C war record 4,5,6,7)

After 965 days inside and 368 days outside of Australia, Donald was discharged 6 December 1945. According to his request for Demobilisation Priority in October 1945, he had four dependants, three under 16 and Mary. The dependants were Peg and two sons, Charles William (known as Bill) and James Donald, who appear in the Electoral Roll of 1963 as students. The third dependant, Peg, had married Keith Albert Fenton ten years earlier.

Returning to civilian life at Balwyn, Donald resumed his position as Commercial Traveller and continued in the role until about 1972, when he and Mary were living at 86 Gipps Street East Melbourne, both in Sales. By 1977, they had returned to Westminster Street and are listed as Retailers.

Donald and Mary's three children were:

- Mary Elizabeth (Peg) (29/11/1931 – 30/11/1997) m. Keith Albert Fenton (01/06/1930 – 12/08/2003) in 1953.
- Charles William (03/10/1938 -) m. Margaret Frances Webb (05/02/1937 – 10/08/2005) and they had sons Peter, David, Gregory and Christopher.

- James Donald (1940 -) m. Elaine Joyce Culbert (02/11/1943 – 10/09/2007) and they had children Simon, Karina and Grant.

Mary died 8 March 1981 and Donald 14 April 1991. They are buried together at Templestowe Cemetery. (pic gravestone Donald Crosby)

Viola Walch

It is unknown to what level Viola was educated, but it was at least until the age of fifteen, in compliance with Victorian Education Department rules. She married Geoffrey David Mair, born 19 November 1913, in 1940. He was an avid cricketer like his brothers-in-law and was made a Life Member of the Mont Albert Club in 1946. He also appears in several club photos of winning teams. (pics G or J Mair in groups, 1935-6;1937-8;1948-9)

Geoffrey, an Auditor, was mobilised 29 May 1942 in the Citizen Military Forces and 5 June was detached to the Army Trades Training Depot to complete Course 41. On completion, he was transferred to Land Headquarters Heavy Wireless Section in Albert Park 11 September and graded Group I Radio Mechanic 28 October. (Geoffrey war record 1)

On May 18 1943, Geoffrey was transferred to the AIF, Service Number VX126328. Five days later he was promoted to Acting Corporal and remained in that role until 2 June 1944 when the rank of Corporal was confirmed. By 4 August he had been promoted to Acting Sergeant and then to Sergeant 23 November. He was transferred to the Leave and Transit Depot of Lines of Communication for discharge 13 December 1945 and discharged 21 December. (pic Geoffrey war record 6,7)

Returning to civilian life Geoffrey appears from 1949 to 1968 in the Electoral Rolls, as a clerk, living in Balwyn.

Viola and David had two children:

- Susanne Judith, (13/01/1943 -) m. John William Millard, (04/04/1940 – 30/09/2020) on 24/09/1965 and had children Melinda, Geoffrey and Matthew.
- David Donald, (28/08/1947 -) m. Denise Mary Gannon, (1950 -) and had children Adam, Kate and Martin.

Geoffrey died 16 June 1970 and Viola 29 September 2010. Their ashes were scattered at Springvale Botanical Cemetery.

June Mary

June would also have been educated up to the age of fifteen at least. She married George de Tarczynski, born 15 February, 1915, on 2 November, 1939. They presumably also met at the Mont Albert Cricket Club as George's brother, Stan, was often in the same teams as June's brothers. George also had a keen interest in the club and was made a Life Member in 1977.

George was mobilised 26 July 1940 and transferred to the AIF 2 September 1942, (Pic George de T 1) in the Army Ordinance Corps, by which time he had been promoted to Sergeant, his Service Number VX100221. By trade he was a Motor Mechanic and he completed various courses during his time with the AIF, improving his skills, including a two month course at the Electrical and Mechanical Engineering School. (Pic George de T 6) He stayed in Victoria until the end of 1942, when he was sent to New South Wales for six months before moving to Townsville, Thursday Island and Horn Island in Queensland.

Stationed in Queensland for twelve months, he was promoted to Staff Sergeant and then Warrant Officer II. George was then moved to Wewak, in New Guinea, 1 June 1945, where he remained until 1 December 1945 (Pic George de T 11) when he embarked on the *Duntroon* to Brisbane. He was then returned to Melbourne, before being discharged, two days after Geoffrey Mair, 15 December 1945. (Pic george de T 8).

June never left the family home at 11 Inglisby Road, Mont Albert, possibly because Donald and Emily needed her help and also because George enlisted mid 1940. After they died, the provisions of her parents' wills may have allowed her to remain. Electoral Rolls between 1943 and 1980 place June (Home Duties) and George (Engineer) at that address.

June and George had six children:

- Juliana Mary, (1940 -) m. Grahame Thurstun Ling (28/09/1938 – 16/02/2003) in 1959 and had children Catherine, Anthony, Michael.
- Margaret Rose, (05/10/1941 -) m. Graeme Maxwell Benham (12/07/1939 – 31/05/2000) and had children James and Joanne. Graeme is buried Pakenham Cemetery.
- Marie Lucille, (1943 -) m. Leslie Keith Crisp and had child Sean Leslie.
- Cecelia Anne, (1950 -) m. Michael Bulner and had daughters Sharon Mary and Sally Anne. She then married Joseph Hilton Molder and had son Hilton Joseph.
- Peter George, (13/01/1952 -) m. Ivy May Murray (24/06/1955 – 21/11/2019) on 07/12/1974 and had children Jessica Mary and Nicholas George.
- Donald Alexander, (1958 -) married Lynette Kay Stewart and had children Rebekah J. and James Gordon.

George died 24 September 1999 and June, 14 September 2010. They were both cremated at Springvale Memorial Cemetery and their ashes collected.