

Baverstock War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



4581 PRIVATE

W. C. G. M. McKELLAR

29TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

16th APRIL, 1917 Age 44

He Left His Home, His All,

To Serve

At His Country's Call

Perfect Peace

William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKELLAR

William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar was born on 16th March, 1873 at St. Kilda, Victoria to parents Peter & Barbara Mcbeath McKellar (nee Meiklejohn). He was a 44 year old, single, Farmer from Meereek, Apsley, Victoria when he enlisted on 4th September, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 29th Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 4581 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his brother – Robert McKellar from Meereek, Apsley, Victoria. (Parents were both deceased – father died 1910 & mother died 1913).

Pte William Charles Gordon Meiklejohn McKellar embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Medic (A7)* on 16th December, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 18th January, 1917.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

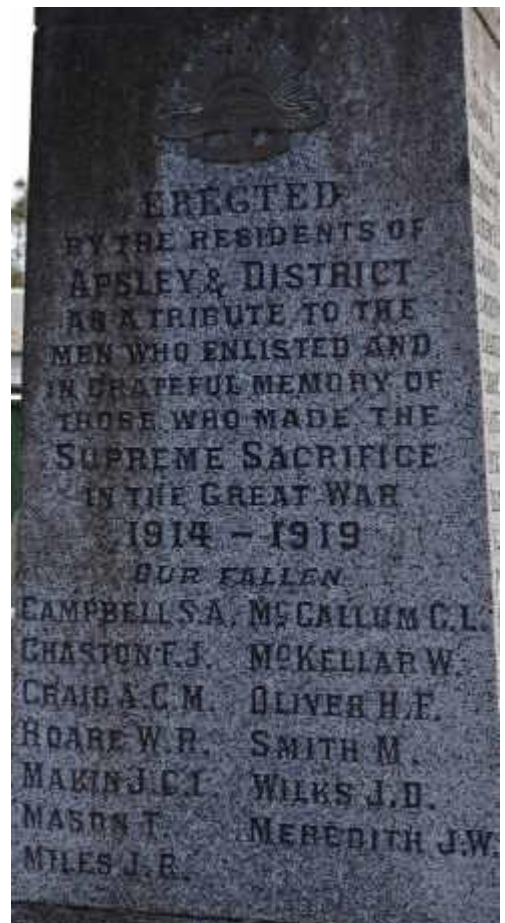


(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



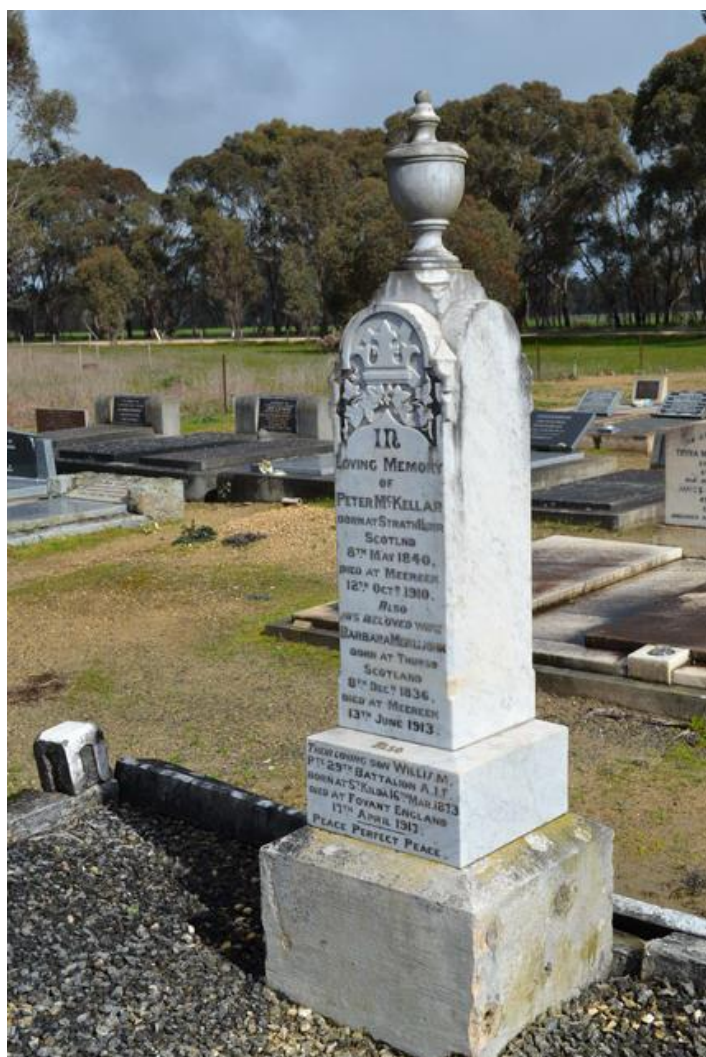
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Pte W. McKellar is also remembered on the Apsley War Memorial in Victoria.



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

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



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



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

Pte W. C. G. M. McKellar was entitled to British War Medal only. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte McKellar's eldest brother (even though there was a sister older)–Mr Robert McKellar (July, 1921 & January, 1923)

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

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

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

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Newspaper Reports

FOR FREEDOM'S CAUSE

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

One of the best.

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

THE 290th CASUALTY LIST

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private W. C. McKellar, Apsley

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

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

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

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

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

A letter dated 24th May, 1919, from Officer in charge of Records to Officer in charge Base Records reads:

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

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

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

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



St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire.

(Photo from CWGC)

Photo of Pte W. C. G. M. McKellar's CWGC Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey 2012)