## **McDONALD, Duncan Joseph**

Duncan McDonald was born on 15th March 1872, at Nimmitabel (near Cooma) N.S.W., the son of Alexander & Catherine McDonald.

In 1901 he married Annie Elizabeth Scott in Sydney.

Annie was born in 1875, in Sydney, the daughter of John & Margaret Scott.

The only child of the marriage was Roy Alexander Robert, born 27th January1906, at Railway-crescent, Beecroft [died 1975].**1**

In January 1906 Constable McDonald, then stationed at Hornsby, replaced first-class Constable Wade at Beecroft, who would replace first-class Constable May at Hornsby, who had retired, owing to illness.**2**

In July 1906, at Hornsby, ‘Constable McDonald, who stands about 6ft. 6in. in his socks noticed a “wanted” man coming out the back yard of the Royal Hotel. He addressed him by name in that polite and engaging manner of his, wishing him “good day,” but the wayfarer “smelt a rat,” and denied his name (Foster). The constable, however, assured him that his name was Foster, and that there was a warrant out for his arrest. “Then you’ll --- well have to get me,” said Foster, and off he went, like greased lightning, along Station-street, in the direction of the bush. He is a professional runner, and was wearing sandshoes at the time, so thought all he had to do was to put on the pace, and lose the constable. McDonald had also been a noted sprinter, and though handicapped by the regulation boots he was wearing at the time, contrived to get so close to the runaway that, when he ventured to look around to ascertain if the constable was still in sight, he got the biggest surprise he’d ever had in his life. The constable was not only in sight, but near enough to operate in such a manner that Foster first of all found himself all of heap on the soft ground.

It appears that he had succeeded in evading the police for two years, and Constable McDonald has to be congratulated upon a clever capture.’3

In August 1906 ‘A Chinaman ran amuck in the Hornsby district, and, before he was secured, he had caused the death of two persons. The murderer is Charlie John Tye (36), and he was recently employed as a market-gardener by Thomas Hughes, of Dundas.

In a struggle Constable MacDonald, of Beecroft, sustained injuries, but not of a serious nature. Tye was eventually overpowered and taken to the Ryde lockup.

The only explanation he gave for his sudden madness was that he had to kill three persons before he could get to heaven.’**4**

In October 1906 ‘Two prisoners, George Chambers Ward and William Thorn, escaped from the Gosford lock-up shortly after 1 o’clock on Tuesday morning, but they were recaptured near Cowan at 6.30 p.m. by Senior-Constable Wade, of Hornsby, and Constable McDonald, of Beecroft.’**5**

In July 1912 ‘The cottage which has hitherto been used as a police station for Beecroft was recently purchased by Mr. Green, who has given the policeman notice to quit, as he wishes to reside there himself. Constable McDonald is consequently in a quandary, as there is no other cottage available.’

In August 1912 ‘Owing to the policeman's residence having been sold, and there not being another suitable cottage available to shelter the guardian of the law and his family in the beautiful village, Constable McDonald is under orders to remove to Thornleigh. A number of influential Beecroft residents have been trying to induce the Police Department to erect a dwelling, but the Department do not take kindly to the idea. The rent allowed is too small to offer an inducement to a private speculator to erect a police station, and so Beecroft, after having the comfort of a vigilant officer for so many years, is to lose him. The inspector states that the population here is so law-abiding that it doesn't need a resident policeman, whilst the fact that there are two hotels at Thornleigh and Pennant Hills calls more for a resident officer there.’**6**

In November 1913 ‘Constable McDonald, who is in charge of Thornleigh and Beecroft, went on holidays this week.’

‘Proposed Police Station. – Mr. H. O. Holcombe, president of the Beecroft Progress Association, reported to the members that he had interviewed the secretary of the Police Department, who had informed him that plans had been prepared and approved for the erection of a fine police station at Beecroft, on the Crown land adjoining the post office. The buildings, which include a residence and lock-up and all necessary offices, will be erected as soon as funds are available.’**7**

By October 1916 there had been no police station erected at Beecroft, and ‘the name of the Police Station at Beecroft has been changed to Thornleigh.’**8**

In March 1918 ‘After spending the whole of the night on guard in the bush in the vicinity of Beecroft and “beating” all over the mountainous country in that neighbourhood, Detective Barclay and Thornley, Inspectors Donohue and Bradley, of the Customs Department, Constable McDonald, of Beecroft, and half a dozen searchers succeeded on Thursday in finding £600 worth of opium cleverly hidden in a cave.

The find was made late in the afternoon, when the parcel was located under a pile of rubbish in the corner of the cave, which is about a mile from the township.’**9**

In April 1920 Constable D. J. McDonald, after 14 years’ service in the Beecroft-Thornleigh district, was instructed to “move on” to Cootamundra and to don sergeant’s stripes.**10**

In July 1931 Sergt. Duncan McDonald, retired from the police force after 31 years’ service, eleven of which were spent in Cootamundra. It was stated that ‘during that time he had never been other than a genuine officer of kindly disposition.’**11**

In January 1932 it was reported that ‘Ex-Sergeant D. McDonald has put on a stone weight since his retirement from the force. He lives at South Kensington, with his son, Constable McDonald, and bathes at Maroubra.’**12**

Duncan’s wife, Anne Elizabeth, died at Katoomba, in 1975.

Duncan Joseph McDonald died at Randwick in 1937.**13**

**Bibliography**

1 Ancestry.com; N.S.W. Births, Deaths & Marriages; Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW: 1883 - 1930), Saturday 3 February 1906, page 5

2 Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 13 Jan 1906; Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 20 Jan 1906

3 The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 14 Jul 1906

4 The West Australian (Perth, WA), Thu 16 Aug 1906

5 The Murrurundi Times and Liverpool Plains Gazette, Fri 19 Oct 1906

6 The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 27 Jul 1912; Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate (Parramatta, NSW: 1888 - 1950), Saturday 24 August 1912, page 8

7 Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate (Parramatta, NSW: 1888 - 1950), Saturday 15 November 1913, page 8; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 22 Nov 1913

8 New South Wales Police Gazette and Weekly Record of Crime, Wed 25 Oct 1916

9 Daily Examiner, Mon 25 Mar 1918

10 The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 24 Apr 1920

11 Cootamundra Herald (NSW: 1877 - 1954), Monday 6 July 1931, page 4

12 Cootamundra Herald (NSW: 1877 - 1954), Monday 25 January 1932, page 2

13 Ancestry.com