

Reginald Donald Joshua McLean

Corporal Reginald McLean

17th Battalion, AIF

Service Number: 4492

Born: 23 October 1895, Liverpool, NSW

Died: 15 April 1917, Lagnicourt, France

Reginald Donald Joshua McLean was born on 23 October 1895 to Police Sergeant Samuel and Colina (nee Burgess) at Liverpool NSW. He attended Penrith Superior Public School and after successfully completing the Bankers Institution Examination, McLean was employed by the Government Savings Bank of NSW. He worked at the Head Office and at the Penrith branch when it first opened, before relieving at various branches across the state. Sergeant McLean was posted to Emu Plains Police Station and later Penrith. The family lived at Emu Plains. McLean enlisted on 3 January 1916 and was allocated to the 17th Battalion. Prior to leaving for the front he was presented by the officers and staff at Head Office (Savings Bank) with a wristlet watch (suitably inscribed).

McLean embarked on the *HMAT Nestor* on 9 April 1916. One of his companions was Vic Magrath, who served with McLean in the trenches. McLean was appointed acting corporal and after a period of time in Egypt was posted to the 5th Training Battalion at Rollestone, England. In September 1916, McLean was posted to France and joined his battalion and spent his 21st birthday in the trenches. The battalion had recently moved from Pozieres to a position on the Western Front. The *Nepean Times* published a letter from Mclean on 30 September 1916 in which he commented on a young Belgian girl. He wrote 'the plight ... that left her homeless, are enough to make one's heart break in a manner. It affected me in that way. I thought about my own dear little sisters at home, safe and happy in Australia, and saw the difference in the hapless state of this little girl, separated by the cruel hand of war from home and kindred... So I have come to the conclusion that anyone who is fit and able to fight, and does not join in and do his bit for his fellows and the Empire, is made of very poor stuff...'

On 6 December 1916, McLean was admitted to hospital in Amiens with influenza and was later transferred to Camiers. In March 1917 he rejoined his battalion which was advancing on German forces that had retreated to the Hindenburg Line. The Germans launched a counterstroke in the Lagnicourt area at dawn on 15 April. It was during the counterattack that McLean was killed in action.

Memorial Details:

- Villers-Bretonneux, France
- War Memorial, Emu Plains
- Honour Roll, Emu Plains Public School
- Honour Roll, Presbyterian Church, Penrith
- Honour Roll, Commonwealth Bank, Martin Place, Sydney

Sources:

- [National Archives Australia](#): B2455, MCLEAN R D J
- [Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau File no 1950106](#)

- Australian War Memorial First World War Nominal Roll
- [Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour](#)
- Penrith City Library Biography files

TROVE:

- [Nepean Times 30 September 1916, pg. 1, Col. 3](#)
- [Nepean Times 19 May 1917, pg.3, Col. 2](#)
- [Nepean Times 2 June 1917, pg.1, Col. 6](#)