## **McCALL, David Robert**

David McCall was born in 1860, the son of David and Agnes McCall, in the district of Sydney.1

He joined the Police Department in 1876 as a constable.2

In 1886 David McCall married Catherine P. Webster, in the district of Leichhardt.3

On 28th June, 1895, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. McCall was born at their residence, “Bronte”, Albert-road, Strathfield.4

In June 1897, David, then living in Beecroft, was the purchaser of a block of Crown land in Beecroft.5

In 1898 he was secretary of the Beecroft Progress Association. At the following January meeting Mr. McCall was praised for the energy and ability which was attributed almost wholly the success achieved by the Association. He then became a committee member.6

He remained a participating member of the Association for several more years.

In April 1900 it was reported that David McCall, chief clerk in the Department of the Inspector-General of Police, who has been a resident of Beecroft for four years or more, was about to leave the district.7 However this did not happen.

In August 1900 he was elected a vice-president of the Kennedya Lawn Tennis Club.8

In 1901 a large bungalow was built for David McCall at 148 Copeland Road, which showed many Federation features.9

In November 1902 he was elected an auditor for the ensuing half-year for the Debating Society.10

Regular services of the Presbyterian Church commenced in April 1903 following a meeting at David McCall’s residence in Copeland Road. This meeting, held on 7th March 1903, was called “to consider what steps should be taken for the foundation of a Presbyterian Church in Beecroft”. David McCall would play a very important part in establishing the church.

On 28th April 1903 David was inducted as an elder of the church. Initially the congregational meetings were held at the McCall’s residence but from October 1903 were held at the Ravenhurst School Hall.11

In 1904 he was gazetted as a trustee of the reserve at Beecroft for the School of Arts site.12

In 1906 his occupation is given as a civil servant in the Department of Public Instruction, first appointed 7th August 1876.13

In May 1907, after an absence of between two and three years, he returned to Beecroft and took up his abode in Copeland-road again.14

In 1908 he was gazetted as a trustee for the Mechanics’ Institute site.15

In 1911 he is referred to as secretary to the Inspector-General of Police, and accountant.16

In 1913 the proposal to make David McCall a superintendent of police was not met with approval in police circles due to his lack of policing experience, so this proposal was rejected.17

In 1913, at the Scotch Collie Club’s Show, he and his daughter won numerous prizes. The following year he presided at a meeting of the Australian Scotch Collie Club.18

Also in 1913 he was involved in presenting sailing prizes won during the 1912-13 season of the Snail’s Bay Amateurs. In 1914 he was a vice-president, along with two others, of the Snails Bay Amateurs Club.19

In June 1915 his appointment as trustee of the Beecroft School of Arts was declared vacant, and Henry John Little was appointed as a new trustee.20

In 1916, having left Beecroft several years earlier, he returned to Beecroft, taking up his abode at his new home in Copeland-road, Beecroft. This new home was called “Lindisfarne.”21

In 1918 his daughter Flora was married at the Beecroft Presbyterian Church. In 1919 his daughter Colina was also married there.

In 1919 his daughter Flora (Rogers) was delivered of a son at Lorne House Private Hospital, Beecroft. In 1920 his daughter Agnes (Kirby) was delivered of a son at “Lindisfarne,” Beecroft.22

In December 1920, after 44 years in the Police Department, Mr. McCall retired on 15th December. He joined the service in 1876 as a constable, being transferred to the clerical staff of the public service in 1878, and for the past 19 years he held the post of secretary of the department, having served under four inspector-generals. In early 1921, at his retirement presentation, he was presented with an illuminated address, and a wallet containing over £100 in notes from the officers and men connected with the force, and civil servants. All spoke of Mr. McCall in terms of eulogy. “If ever any difficulty arose it was always left to Mr. McCall to find out the safest and surest way out,” said one. “My first impression of Mr. McCall,” remarked another, “was that of an officer who worked 8 hours during the day and 16 hours at night.” “He always showed singular common sense, with a rapid and correct perception of the right thing to do,” summed up a third. Mr. McCall suitably replied.23

In April 1922 he won several rose awards at the Beecroft Flower Show.24

David Robert McCall died at his residence in Beecroft [“Lindisfarne,” Copeland Road] on 28th December 1933, aged 74 years. The following remarks referring to Mr. McCall’s public service were placed under record by the Chief Secretary’s Department: “the moment is appropriate to place upon record recognition of the fact that, in a department where the activities are always important and often concerned with matters of delicate and extremely confidential character, his long service has always been characterised by capacity, zealous care, and pronounced loyalty to the government authorities.”25

On 20th April 1936, his wife, Catherine Porter McCall, died after an accident at her Beecroft home, in her 73rd year, leaving behind four children – David, Colina, Flora and Agnes.26

**Bibliography**

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3 Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages

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9 Beecroft and Cheltenham The Shaping of a Sydney Community to 1914, page 137

10 The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 1 Nov 1902

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12 The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 19 Mar 1904

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25The Sydney Morning Herald, Sat 30 Dec 1933; The Labor Daily, Tue 6 Feb 1934

26 The Sydney Morning Herald, Tue 21 Apr 1936; The Maitland Daily Mercury, Tue 21 Apr 1936; National Advocate, Tue 21 Apr 1936; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Thu 23 Apr 1936

**NOTE**: Additional information contained within Beecroft Cheltenham History Group book ‘Beecroft and Cheltenham, The Shaping of a Sydney Community to 1914’.