McKell, Victor Cleveland.

A.S.C. (Britten)

Rank: Lieutenant

Unit: 1st Battalion

Date of death: 4 October 1917

Cemetery or memorial details: Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

Date of embarkation: 18 October 1914, Sydney

Joined up 17/8/14, Newcastle. Single 26, Bank Clerk. C of E Next of Kin father T.C.K. McKell Stipendiary Magistrate, Newcastle. Was in Headquarters of battalion and had previous military experience in 26th Battalion A.M.F.
"Many men carried their civilian connections into their military lives. In the 1st Battalion under Colonel Dobbin were: Sergeant Ernest Clarence Harris, a 20-year-old law clerk of Paddington; Frederick Warren Muir, a 21-year-old law student from Unanderra and Lieutenant Geoffrey Austin Street, a 20-year-old law student from Elizabeth Bay. Street was one of those unusually young commanders noted by Charles Bean, but he was to perform his duties with great courage and skill and survived the war. One of the men in Dobbin's headquarters group was Victor Cleveland McKell, the 26 year old son of Thomas Charles Kerr McKell, a stipendiary magistrate from Newcastle."

(19) Some shelling was experienced during the approach of several units. Lieuts. V. C McKell (1st Bn.) and J. T Maguire (8th) were thus killed and Lieut. A. E. Ballard (42nd.) mortally wounded. (McKell belonged to Waverley, N.S.W-----.)

Extract 1st Bn War Diary: "4-10-17 Bn. took part in attack on Passchendaele Ridge. Consolidated on 2nd Objective from D29 a 45 to JJ b 57. Following officers killed- Lt. V.C. McKell & Lt J.N. Bennett."
Bean has the Battle as: **THIRD STEP-BROODSEINDE**

The importance of the Battle of Broodseinde, the third consecutive step in this series, has never been fully recognised except by the commanders and forces that took part. For the general public, accustomed to over- or under-emphasis in the press, there was little in the published news to indicate that this blow counted for more than others. But on the actual field both British and Germans were aware that the events of the 4th of October, 1917, were big with possibilities of decision. (p.833)

Note letter below. 1 year late! 11/12/18/

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**Dear Madam,**

With reference to the report of the regrettable loss of your son, the late Lieutenant V. C. McKell, 1st Battalion, I am now in receipt of advice which shows that he was killed on 4th October, 1917, whilst leading his platoon into Anzac Ridge, by a shell which landed a few yards away and pieces of shrapnel struck him in the head and parts of the body, killing him instantly. He was buried in the vicinity of Anzac Ridge.

The utmost care and attention is being devoted where possible to the graves of our soldiers. It is understood that photographs are being taken as soon as is possible and these will be transmitted to next-of-kin when available.

These additional details are furnished by direction, it being the policy of the Department to forward all information received in connection with deaths of members of the Australian Imperial Force.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. I. McKell,
16 Killarney Street,
MOSMAN,
He was killed at Anzac Ridge two days after we came back into the line— it would be Oct. 4.  We were in support and the 1st Batt. were going up on our left to relieve another Batt. There was a block as they were going up the 'Jabber' track and a single shell wounded six and killed seven together in a shell-hole on the track. I bandaged the six as well as I could and buried all the seven together in the one shell-hole. I did not know Lt. McKell but I took off his disc and gave it to a S/S of the 1st Batt. that they called Monty who was helping with the wounded. Lt. McKell was just a young man and clean-shaven.

It was the first shell-hole immediately to the left of where the Jabber track crossed the first support trench on 28th 17; and the reference on the Message—map would be J45 42 2 between Polygon Wood and Zonnebeke.

I told another man of the 1st Batt about it a fortnight later.

Inf:— Gaskell, L/C W S. 694 S/B 10. A I F.
A T 'Stad Antwerpen'
Calais. 21st 17. CR

Lieut. McKell was killed on 3.10.17 whilst leading his platoon into Anzac Ridge as a shell landed a few yards away and pieces of shrapnel struck him in the head and parts of the body, killing him instantly.

He was buried by the 1st Pioneer Battalion in the vicinity of Anzac Ridge. Map reference sheet 28 D 27.
**Casualty Form—Active Service.**

Regiment or Corps: **1st Battalion A.I.F.**

Regimental No.: 49  
Rank: Lance Corp.  
Name: McKell V.C.

Enlisted: 17-8-14  
Terms of Service:  
Service reckoned from:  
Date of promotion to present rank:  
Date of appointment to lance rank:  
Numeral roll:  
Extended:  
Re-engaged:  
Qualification:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>From whom received</th>
<th>Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, etc., during active service as reported on Army Form B. 112, Army Form A. 10, or in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30-8-15</td>
<td>Divl. Orders. To be 2nd Lieut.</td>
<td>Gallipoli Peninsula, 6-8-1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23-8-15</td>
<td>C.O. Mex. Struck off Strength.</td>
<td>Max. 27-8-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9-15</td>
<td>C.O. 1st. Battn. Joined Battalion.</td>
<td>Mudros West. 5-9-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-10-15</td>
<td>Divl. Orders. Reported for duty &amp; taken on strength of Div. Peninsula. 3-9-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-12-15</td>
<td>C.O. 1st. Batt. To be Lieutenant.</td>
<td>1-1-15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-12-15</td>
<td>1st. Aust. Div. To Hospital (Sick)</td>
<td>13-1-15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-12-15</td>
<td>C.O. 1st. Batt. To Hospital (Eye trouble)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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* "Caledonia" Disembarked. Mudros. 15-12*
Note short period of service 53rd Bn.

Note form below. “Got knocked over by shell; no loss of consciousness no injury; no enteric or dysentery. Developed headaches in July; 1915. Astigmatism aggravated by Shell Shock.”
DETAILED MEDICAL HISTORY OF AN INVALID.

[Formal headings and details filled in]

Date 13. 8. 16.

2. Regimental No. Lieut.

4. Age last Birthday 25

6. Former Trade or Occupation Bank Clerk.

NOTE.—The answers to the following questions are to be filled in by the Medical Officer by whom the soldier is brought forward. As the object of these questions is, in the event of the man being invalided, to put the authorities of the Military Forces of the Commonwealth in possession of the most reliable information grounded upon the opinion of those best capable of judging, so as to guide them in deciding upon the man's claim to compensation, clear and decisive answers must in all cases be given. ALL QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWERED.

Disease or Disability

In answering the following questions the Medical Officer will carefully discriminate between the man's unsupported statements on his case, and recorded evidence furnished by his documents, medical and medical. He will also carefully discriminate cases entirely due to nontial diseases.

Nov 1915.

Date of Origin of Disability

Place of Origin of Disability

Give concisely the essential facts of the history of the disability, noting entries on the Medical History Sheet bearing on the case.

(a) Give your opinion as to the causation of the Disability

(b) If you consider it to have been caused by active service, climate, or ordinary military service, explain specific conditions to which you attribute it. (See notes on page 3.)

What is his present condition?

(diseases: no rash: no abnormality: normal. Headaches now disabling.)

About 2 months later he had recovered from "SS" (shell shock) with "headaches disappearing."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station and Hospital where finally disposed of.</th>
<th>Arrived from</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.H. R. C., 14.5.16</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Date:** 14.5.16

<table>
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<tr>
<th>If Admitted.</th>
<th>If under Treatment.</th>
<th>Disease.</th>
<th>How finally Disposed of.</th>
<th>Date of Discharge,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Index No</td>
<td>From 14/16</td>
<td>To 14/16</td>
<td>Shell Shock</td>
<td>14/16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of causes of invaliding, or remarks as to remand to Regiment or Station

Recovered from SS
Headaches disappearing
Return to duty

**CONFIRMED**

Signatures:

**Date of final Medical Board, or decision:** 13.9.16

Principal Medical Officer:

14.1.17. O.C. 1st Inf. Puncheon in from overseas

Embarked... Sydney

Disembarked... Devonport

15.1.17. P.O.C. Proceeded overseas France England

15.1.17. P.O.C. Proceeded overseas France England

15.1.17. P.O.C. Proceeded overseas France England

End of record.
Information has been received that Lieutenant Victor Cleveland McKell, A.I.F., was killed in action on October 4. Lieut. McKell who is the youngest son of the late T.C. Kerr McKell, formerly Stipendiary Magistrate, Newcastle, and Mrs. Isabel McKell, 16 Killarney Street, Mosman. Left at the outbreak of war with the first contingent as a driver in the Tramway Section 1st Battalion. He gained his two stars at Gallipoli. After being invalided from Egypt to Australia for six months, he went across to France in February last. Lieut. McKell,
Information has been received by Dr. Hollywood that Lieutenant Victor Cleveland McKell was killed in action on October 4, 1917. Lieutenant McKell was the youngest son of the late Mr. T. C. Kerr McKell, formerly police magistrate at Maitland and late stipendiary magistrate at Newcastle, and Mrs. Isabel McKell, 16 Killarney-street, Mosman. He left at the outbreak of war with the first contingent as a driver and gained his two stars at Gallipoli. After being invalided from Egypt to Australia for six months suffering from head trouble he went across to France in February last. Lieutenant McKell prior to the war was accountant in the Randwick branch of the Australian Bank of Commerce. For some time prior to that he had been ledger-keeper in the Maitland branch of the bank. He was a fine type of young man, and was esteemed by all with whom he came in contact.