

J S Battye Library of West Australian History
Private Archives – Collection Listing

MN 2403
Acc. 6404A

McKERN, James Gordon

Born 7 July 1888, at Hurstville, Sydney, NSW, the son of James McKern [1854 – 1941] and his wife Mary (nee Tebbutt) [1856 – 1943], the sister of Ernest Tebbutt, the founder of the law firm E.H. Tebbutt & Sons, still in practice in Sydney. James McKern senior retired in 1919 from the position of Auditor General for NSW, then known as Chief Inspector of Public Accounts.

EDUCATION:

Primary Schools, Summer Hill and Ashfield.

Secondary Schooling: enrolled 1901 at the age of 13 at Newington College, Stanmore, Sydney, where he had a brilliant academic record: Dux of every year: won a Wigram Allen Scholarship, Council Scholarship, Schofield Scholarship; appointed Senior Prefect; won the Old Boys Prize; finished school career as Dux of the school. At the Junior Public Examination conducted by the University of Sydney won both the French Medal and the School's Best Pass Medal in 1905; whilst at the University's Senior Public Examination of 1907 won First Class Honors in Greek and in Latin.

University: In 1908 was an undergraduate in the Department of Mining Engineering, winning the Levy Scholarship's for Chemistry and Physics. Graduated 1912 as B.E., Mining & Metallurgy with First Class Honors. During his studies he worked during the long vacation in various mines in order to gain practical experience; at Harden, NSW [gold]; Cobar, NSW [copper]; Wellington, NSW [copper]; and for 10 months at the Silver Peak Mine, Yerranderie, NSW, [silver- lead]

PROFESSIONAL CAREER

- 1913 Broken Hill, NSW: Zinc Corporation
- 1913 – 1914 Sandstone, Western Australia, Black Range West Gold Mine.
- 1914 – 1916 Youanmi, W.A. Youanmi Central Gold Mines Ltd as Surveyor and Plant Hand
- 1918 – 1919 Riverina, Western Australia, Riverina South Gold Mine, Surveyor, Assayer and Storekeeper
- 1919 - 1920 Youanmi Gold Mine Ltd, W.A.
- 1920 – 1923 Celebration W.A. : Hampton Celebration Gold Mine Ltd. Surveyor, Underground Manager and Acting General Manager.
- 1923 – 1924 Petrologist, NSW Geological Survey, Mines Department of NSW.
- 1924 – 1953 Vacuum Oil Company Pty Ltd, later Mobil: Lubrication Engineer, then Manager and Supervisor, Technical Services; finally Industrial Sales Manager
- 1953 Retired

J S Battye Library of West Australian History
Private Archives – Collection Listing

MILITARY SERVICE

- 1916 – 1917 Served with the Australian Imperial Force in the First World War in France with the tunneling Company with the rank of Lieutenant.
1917 Invalided Home

CONSERVATION WORK (in retirement)

After retirement he devoted himself to the nature conservation movement; President, Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia, Chairman, Nature Conservation Council for NSW, State Vice President, National Parks Association, He was a volunteer worker with the Fauna Protection Panel which later became the National Parks and Wildlife Service. See obituary notice in The National Parks Journal, September /October 1975, pp 5 – 6

MARRIED

- 1916 Edith Hamlet [1890 – 1967] daughter of William and Ada Hamlet of Mosman [William was Government Analyst for NSW 1887 – 1915]
Children : Howard [b. 1917] ; Marguerite Shaw [b.1919]; Sheila Simpson-Lee [b.1924]

The Papers

The papers were donated by Mrs. Sheila Simpson-Lee on 17 December 2004 (Acc 6404A)

Holdings = 0.04m

Access

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Summary of Classes

ARTICLES
ASSAYS
CERTIFICATES
CORRESPONDENCE
MAPS
MINERS RIGHTS
NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS

PHOTOGRAPHS
PLANS
PRINTED MATERIAL
PROGRAMMES
REFERENCES
TELEGRAMS

J S Battye Library of West Australian History
Private Archives – Collection Listing

6404A/1		ARTICLES May 1922 Page 289 of London Mining Magazine referring to Mr. Gordon McKern of Celebration Mine , Hampton Plains .	
6404A/2		ASSAYS n.d. Assays in pencil taken from Riverina South mine	4 pages
6404A/3	OSM	CERTIFICATES 2 July 1921 Certificate of membership of "Institute of Mining Surveyors"	
6404A/4	OSM	28 September 1949 Authorised Mine Surveyors Certificate	
6404A/5		CORRESPONDENCE 26 August 1913 Letter from "Black Range West Gold Mining Company" re acceptance opposition with company	
6404A/6		28 December 1919 Letter to his father in law William M Hamlet [NSW Govt. Analyst]	
6464A/7		25 February 1974 Letter to Margie and Bill signed 'Dad'	Photocopy
6404A/8		1920? Letter to his Father in Law [NSW Govt. Analyst]	1 st page missing
6404A/9		16 September 1920 Letter from Mines department re Hampton Plains plans	
6404A/10	CHARTS	MAPS 193-1924 Map of Western Australia with areas coloured by pencil	
6404A/11		MINERS RIGHTS 13 March 1919 Miners Right issued to James Gordon McKern	
6404A/12		17 March 1920 Miners Right issued to James Gordon McKern	

J S Battye Library of West Australian History
Private Archives – Collection Listing

		NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS	
6404A/13		n.d. Newspaper cutting re “Jewellers Shop” reef at ‘Black Range West’ gold mine	
		PHOTOGRAPHS	
BA1678 (Pictorial Collection)		48 photographic prints, and 27 negatives including images of Youanmi, Celebration, Mt Sir Samuel and Riverina gold mines.	
		PLANS	
6404A/14	CHARTS	n.d. Hampton Celebration [W.A.] Ltd Geological Plans 1,2,3,levels	Cloth
6404A/15	CHARTS	November 1918 Plan of layout of mine	
6404A/16	CHARTS	10 June 1919 Yuanmi GML Ltd, P shaft workings showing position of main dykes	Cloth
6404A/17	CHARTS	28 November 1919 Yuanmi GML Ltd, Geological Cross Sections, No. 7 Level	Cloth
6404A/18	CHARTS	7 January 1920 Yuanmi Gold Mines Ltd, Isometric Plan of Main Shaft Ore Bodies	Cloth
6404A/19	CHARTS	24 March 1920 Yuanmi G.M. Ltd, Geological Plan an Section of No. 6 & 7 levels	Cloth
6404A/20	CHARTS	9 September 1919 Yuanmi Gold Mines Ltd, Isometric Plan of P shaft Ore Bodies	Cloth
6404A/21	CHARTS	n.d. Black Range West G.M.Co Ltd, Water Softening Plant filter	Cloth
6404A/22	CHARTS	9 September 1919 Yuanmi Gold Mines Ltd, Isometric Plan of P shaft Ore Bodes	Blue print
		PRINTED MATERIAL	
6404A/23		31 May 1915 Publication: Wood fuel for Assaying by H.R. Edmands	
6404A/24		n.d. Index pages from Geological Survey publication	

J S Batty Library of West Australian History
Private Archives – Collection Listing

- 6404A/25 PROGRAMMES
15 September 1915
Programme for Patriotic Concert and Dance at the
AWA Hall, Sandstone
- 6404A/26 REFERENCES
8 February 1916
Reference from Bewick Moreing & Co
- 6404A/27
12 December 1918
Reference from Riverina South G.M. Coy N.L.
- 6404A/28
15 March 1923
Reference from Hampton Celebration [W.A.] Ltd
- 6404A/29
16 April 1923
Reference from Western Australian Mines
Department
- 6404A/30 TELEGRAMS
17 April 1919
Telegram from Riverina South GM at Mallina
offering a position as Surveyor Youanmi Gold
Mine

11 January 2005