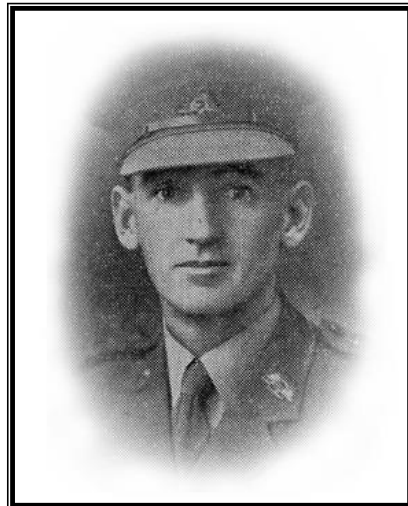




# **Major Ernest John Keith Harbison**



**Played with Adelaide University**



**Football Club: 1918-1921**

(Intervarsity 1919 & 1920)

**Cricket Club: 1921/22-1923/24**

(Intervarsity 1921-24)

**Other Sports: Lacrosse & Athletics**

Triple Blue: Football (1919), Cricket (1924) & Lacrosse (1924)

**Medical Student: 1917 - 1924**

**Degree Obtained: MB BS (1924)**

## **Background**

***Coinciding with the Centenary of Anzacs our incentive behind the series of biographical publications is the Adelaide University Football and Cricket Club's desire to honour our players who served in the Great War (1914 - 1918). These brave men put on hold their academic, professional and sporting careers for King and Country in the name of peace and freedom. The AUFC/AUCC WW1 Memorial Committee is endeavouring to identify every one of our players who served and prepare life stories on all. This is to ensure their sacrifices and further contributions to society will be recognised by future generations.***

***On Anzac Day 2015, the Centenary of the Gallipoli landing, a memorial plaque was unveiled on the Adelaide University Oval Pavilion and this was followed by the erection of a picket fence between the pavilion and the scoreboard with each picket bearing a plaque with the name of an AUFC/AUCC player who served.***

***The following documentation relates to the life of Ernest John Keith Harbison. It is compilation of information and photographs collected from a variety of historical sources.***

# Service Record

## RSL Virtual War Memorial

**HARBISON, Ernest John Keith**

**Service Numbers:** Officer, SX10937

**Enlisted:** 11 September 1918

**Last Rank:** Major

**Last Unit:** Not yet discovered

**Born:** Wallaroo, South Australia, 2 September 1898

**Home Town:** Jamestown, Northern Areas, South Australia

**Schooling:** Prince Alfred College, Adelaide University, South Australia

**Occupation:** Doctor

**Died:** Illness, Australia, 5 March 1945, aged 46 years

**Cemetery:** Brisbane (Lutwyche) Cemetery  
Sec. 74. Grave 5.

**Memorials:** Adelaide 2 WW II Wall of Remembrance\*, Jamestown HB01 -WW II District Honour Roll\*

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=4245454>

A.M. Form A. 5 (a).

**AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.**

**AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.**

**Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.**

No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name (Surname) HARBISON  
in full (Christian Name) ERNEST. JOHN. KEITH  
Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
Joined on SEP 11 1918

**Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.**

You are hereby warned that if after enlistment it is found that you have given a wilfully false answer to any question set forth in this Attestation Paper, you will be liable to be tried for the offence.

1. What is your Name? Ernest John Keith Harbison
2. In or near what Town were you born? Wallerawang  
In the State or Country of South Australia
3. Are you a natural-born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) Natural Born
4. What is your Age? (Date of birth to be stated) 2/9/98
5. What is your Trade or Calling? Medical Student 24 years
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? No
7. Are you married, single, or widower? Single
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address and relationship to be stated) (Father) HARBISON, WILLIAM. HENRY ST.  
LYDIA. TCE. WALLAROO  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
9. What is your permanent address in Australia? University Adelaide  
South Australia
10. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge yes, see Card No. 78 Supp.
11. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? Yes
12. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? No
13. Have you ever suffered from—
  1. Consumption, tubercular disease, or chronic cough? No
  2. Fits of any kind? No
  3. Rheumatism or asthma? No
  4. Mental or nervous disease? No
  5. Has any member of your family suffered from any of the above diseases? If so, state particulars. No
14. (For married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who are the sole support of widowed mother)—  
Do you understand that no separation allowance will be issued in respect of your service beyond an amount which together with pay would reach ten shillings per day? Yes.
15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox and enteric fever? Yes.

I, Ernest John Keith Harbison do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allot not less than two-fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Date SEP 11 1918 Signature of Person Enlisted. E. J. Harbison

\* This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 16 years of age.  
† Two-fifths must be allotted to the wife, and if there are children three-fifths must be allotted.

D. 1180/7.18—G. 1925—706.

# Biography

**"Blood, Sweat and Fears", ISBN: 978-0-64692-750-3, Medical Practitioners and Medical Students of South Australia who served in WW1**

## **HARBISON Ernest John Keith**

MB BS



1898 - 1945



Ernest John Keith Harbison was born in Gladstone, South Australia on the 2nd September 1898. His parents were Dr William Henry and Nellie Adelaide Harbison. He had served for four years as a senior school cadet. He was educated at Prince Alfred College and studied medicine at the University of Adelaide.

Harbison was a medical student at the time of his enlistment on 13 September 1918. His father was given as his next of kin and his address was Lydia Terrace, Wallaroo South Australia. He was 5ft 6ins and weighed 145lbs. He was described as having a medium complexion with brown eyes and dark hair and gave his religion as Methodist. He was posted to B Company at Mitcham Camp from where he was discharged on 18th November 1918 due to the ending of hostilities.

Harbison returned to his medical studies at the University of Adelaide and graduated MB BS in 1924. He married Violet Mary Richards on the 1st July 1925 whilst he was still living in Wallaroo. They later lived at Toorak Gardens, South Australia. He re-joined the AAMC in WW2 at the rank of major and was posted to 4 Camp Hospital in Brisbane Queensland. Ernest John Keith Harbison was a casualty of WW2 and died from illness on the 5th March 1945. His name is on the honour roll at the Australian War Memorial and is located at panel 87 in the Commemorative Area. He is buried at Brisbane (Lutwyche) Cemetery. He was survived by his wife Violet.

### **Sources:**

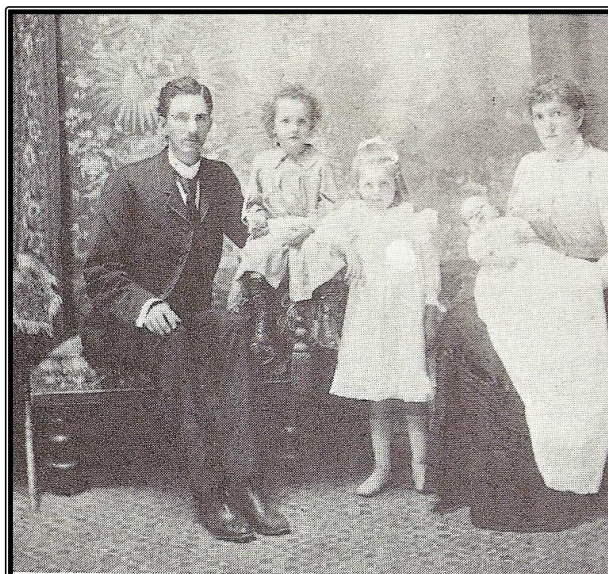
The Adelaide Advertiser 3rd Jan 1914  
The Register Adelaide 16th Dec 1924  
The Register Adelaide 1st July 1925  
<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/NameSearch/Interface/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=4245454>  
<http://world-war-2-casualties.findthebest.com.au/l/9934/Ernest-John-Keith-Harbison>  
[http://www.awm.gov.au/research/people/roll\\_of\\_honour/person/R1704586/](http://www.awm.gov.au/research/people/roll_of_honour/person/R1704586/)



## Additional Biography

### Birth

Ernest John Keith Harbison was born on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1898 to Dr William Henry L.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., and L.M., Edin. (1891) and Nellie Adelaide (nee Jordan) at Gladstone, SA. He was one of five children – Mabel Mary (1897), Ernest John Keith (1898), Alan Thomas (1902), Jean Elsie (1904) and William Arthur (1907).



FAMILY PHOTO OF DR. & MRS. HARBISON & CHILDREN.: Family photo of Dr. William Henry Harbison & wife Nellie Adelaide nee Jordan and their children possibly Mabel, Ernest & Alan.

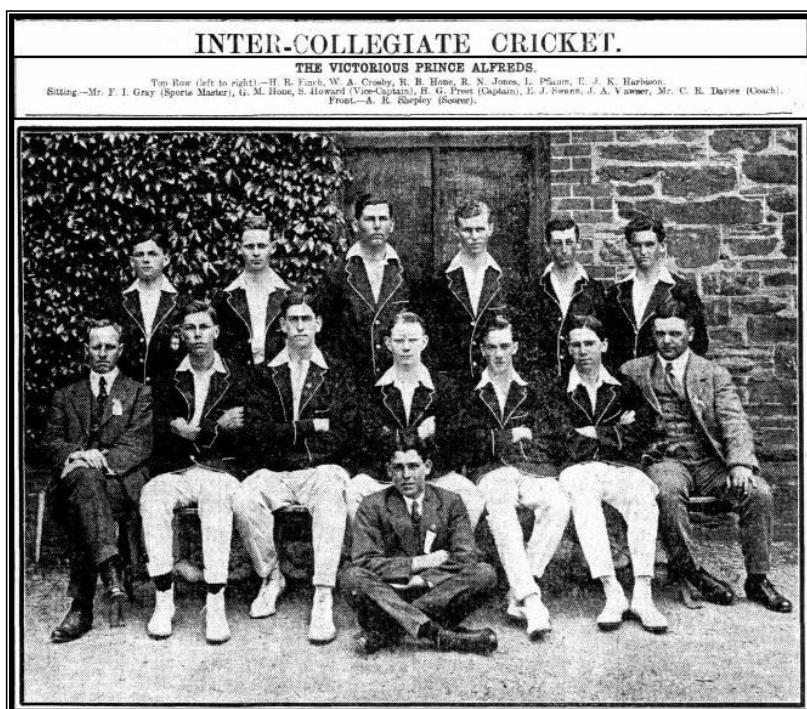
*(Taken from the book Carrieton in the Gum Creek Country by the Carrieton Centenary Book Committee)*

### Schooling

Ernest's early schooling was at Wallaroo on Yorke Peninsula (where his father had a medical practice). In 1912 Ernest passed his primary Examinations in seven subjects and in 1913 he was Dux of the Wallaroo Mines District High School and passed his Junior Examinations in English, History, Latin, Arithmetic, Algebra and geometry.

Ernest's final three years at school were completed at Prince Alfred's College where he passed Senior Public Examinations in 1914 and 1915 and his Higher Public Examinations in December 1916.

For PAC he played Intercollegiate football in 1915 & 1916, Amateur League Football in 1916, Intercollegiate Cricket and SACA B Grade Cricket in 1916. In the 1916 PAC Sports he was second to Stanford Howard in the Senior High Jump.



1916 PAC team – E.J.K. Harbison back row – far right

## University

Ernest studied medicine at Adelaide University from 1917-1924. He graduated MS BS in November 1924. His brothers also graduated from Adelaide university, Alan (MB BS 1927) and William (BE 1938).

## University Sport

### Football

Ernest played his first game for the Blacks in a patriotic match against the colleges in 1918. He then played in the 1919 & 1920 A Grade teams and represented the University at the 1919 and 1920 Intervarsity matches. He was awarded a Blue for Football in 1919.



## 1919 Intervarsity Football Team

(Held in Melbourne - won by Melbourne)



Ernest Harbison seated 3rd from left

## Cricket

Ernest played cricket for the Blacks from 1921-1924. He represented the University in Intervarsity matches in 1921, 1922, 1923 and 1924. He was awarded a Blue for Cricket in 1924.

### 1921 Intervarsity Cricket Team

(Held in Adelaide - won by Sydney)



Back row: J.Howlett (caretaker), W.M.C.Symonds, W.R.G.Colman, L.T.Gun, A.B.Barker, R.T.Smith, E.J.K Harbison, J.C. Haines (scorer)  
Front row: J.F.Astley, L.V.Pellew (vice capt), G.E.Jose (capt), H.M.Fisher, T.D.Finey

### 1922 Intervarsity Cricket Team

(Held in Adelaide - won by Melbourne)



Back row: R.T.Smith, A.B.Barker, J.C.Haines (scorer), E.J.K.Harbison, R.V.Pridmore.  
Front row: J.F.Astley, H.M.Fisher, H.G.Prest (vice capt), L.V.Pellew (capt), G.E.Jose, T.D.Finey, L.T.Gun.



## 1923 Inter Varsity Cricket Team

(Held in Melbourne - won by Melbourne)



**Back row: D.L. Boucaut, R. Krantz, L.T. Gun, T.D. Finney, E.J.K. Harbison, M.W. Bednall, S. Krantz.**

**Front row: A.E.C. Treloar, G.R. Fuller, P.A. Ohlstrom (vice capt), H.G. Prest (capt), D.G. McKay, M.A. Blake.**

### Lacrosse

Ernest played Lacrosse for the Blacks in 1923 & 1924 (winning Premierships in A grade in both years) and represented the University at Intervarsity Lacrosse in both years. He was awarded a Blue for Lacrosse in 1924. His brothers Alan Thomas (MB BS 1927) and William Arthur (BE 1938) gained their Lacrosse Blues in 1924 and 1930 respectively.

## 1923 Inter Varsity Lacrosse

(Held in Melbourne - won by Adelaide 4-3)



**Back row: G. Schroeder, E.J.K. Harbison, C.J. Glover, B.S. Muecke, F.R. Wicks (emerg), J.S. Kessel, A.T. Harbison, W. Cole.**

**Front row: G.H. Howard, H.M. Rees, D.A. Dowling (vice capt), J.R. Gordon (capt), B.G. Johnston (sec), L.B. Mathews, L.M. Formby.**



## 1924 Inter Varsity Lacrosse

(Held in Adelaide - won by Melbourne 6-3)



*Back row: E.J.K.Harbison, A.T.Harbison, H.G.Prest, B.S.Muecke, M.S.Joyner, C.J.Glover, N.H.Munday.  
Front row: M.L.Formby, H.M.Rees (vice capt), J.R.Gordon (capt), B.G.Johnston, L.B.Mathews.*

### *Athletics*

Ernest competed in the University Sports for at least the period 1921-1924. He won the Pole Vault in 1921. *The Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929)* described the event as follows: "One of the most delightful events was the pole vault, which was won by E. J. Harbison, one of the most graceful and artistic vaulters ever seen. His method is perfect, and he had no difficulty in winning by several inches with an 8 ft. 11 in. vault, which the athlete could have improved on considerably had he cared to go on." In 1922 & 1923 he was Joint secretary of the Sports. He may have won the Pole Vault in 1922 although some papers gave the win to his brother Alan. In 1923, Ernest won the Pole Vault, his younger brother, Alan, coming third in the event. In 1924 he won the Field Games Cup and is pictured below winning the Pole Vault. He represented the University Team at the SA Amateur Athletics in 1921 winning the Football Kicking and coming Second in the Pole Vault; and in 1922 winning the Pole Vault. He represented SA in the Australasian Championships in December 1921 coming third in the Pole Vault. Ernest represented the University at the Intervarsity Sports in 1923.



### World War I

Ernest enlisted on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1918 but was discharged just over a month later as hostilities had ceased.

### Between the Wars

On the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1925 Ernest married Violet Mary Richards, the daughter of Albert Henry Richards at St John's Church, Adelaide. Shortly after his marriage Ernest was appointed as Health Officer at Terowie in the mid north of SA. Ernest and Violet's son John Henry was born on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1926 at Wallaroo, followed by a second son Peter Alan on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1929 at Terowie. While practicing in Terowie, Ernest was actively involved in the community. He was an Official at the Terowie Railway Sports and Picnic, played cricket for 'The Terries' in the Golden Valley Cricket Association (Captain in 1928), President of the Terowie Golf Club and was appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1930.

In late 1930 the family moved from Terowie to Jamestown. Ernest's activities in Jamestown included played golf, tennis and electric light lawn bowls, he was also on the Jamestown School Council and president of the Swimming Club.

Life for the Harbison family would change dramatically with the advent of hostilities in Europe in 1939.

### World War II Service

Ernest was appointed an honorary captain in the AAMC Reserve of Officers in November 1939. In December 1939 he attended the wedding of his brother Bill's wedding. In March 1940 both Ernest (SN - SX10937) and his brother Alan (SN - SX10304) were in camp.

Dr. E. J. Harbison of Jamestown, is at present in the Military Camp at Gawler, where he is carrying out duties as Regimental Medical Officer. His brother, Dr. A. T. Harbison, of Moonta holds the same position in the Military Camp at Wayville.

Ernest's WWII records are not yet available digitally, but we know that he was playing cricket in Egypt in 1941. He served for two years in the Middle East then in New Guinea. On his return to Australia Ernest was based in military hospitals in Queensland. In late 1943 he was promoted to the rank of Major. Tragically on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1945, aged 46, Ernest died of illness and is buried in Brisbane.

## Commonwealth War Graves Commission

<http://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/2243141/HARBISON,%20ERNEST%20JOHN%20KEITH>

Rank: Major

Service No: SX10937

Date of Death: 05/03/1945

Age: 46

Regiment/Service: Australian Army Medical Corps

A.I.F. 4 Camp Hospital.

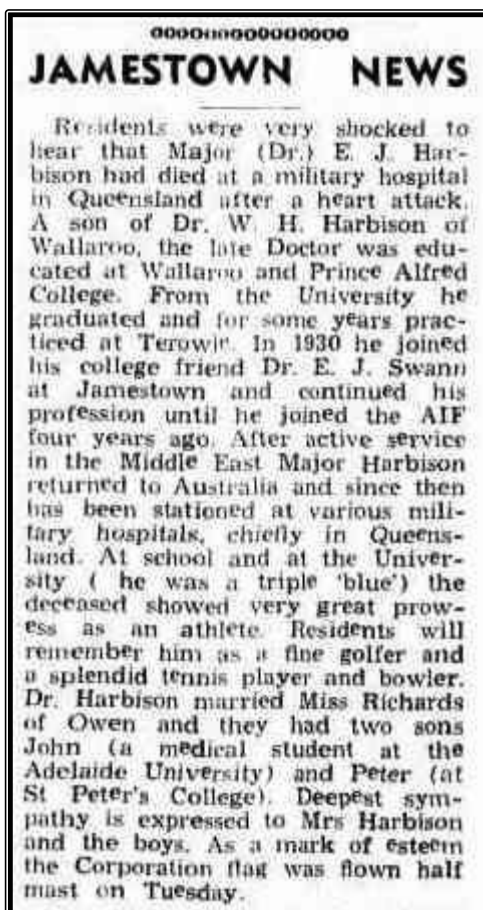
Grave Reference: Sec. 74. Grave 5.

Cemetery: BRISBANE (LUTWYCHE) CEMETERY

Additional Information:

Son of Dr. William Henry Harbison and Nellie Adelaide Harbison; husband of Violet Mary Harbison, of Toorak Gardens, South Australia.

Ernest was remembered by the people of Jamestown and Wallaroo in the newspaper articles below.



### Family Tradition

Both of Ernest and Violet's sons attended Adelaide University, John Henry Harbison graduated MB BS, 1949 he gained a Double Blue (Athletics Blue 1946, Lacrosse Blue 1948) and Peter Alan MB BS 1953 who represented the University at Lacrosse and gained an Athletics Blue in 1949.



**Profile Compiled by: Beth Filmer  
AUFC/AUCC WW1 Memorial Committee**

RSL Virtual War Memorial <https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/>

The National Archives of Australia <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/>

The Adelaide University <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/records/archives/>

The National Library of Australia <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>

(Trove Newspaper articles tagged – Ernest John Keith Harbison)

SA State Library – Prince Alfred’s College Chronicle

Commonwealth War Graves Commission <http://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/2243141/HARBISON,%20ERNEST%20JOHN%20KEITH>

“Blood, Sweat and Fears”, ISBN: 978-0-64692-750-3, Medical Practitioners and Medical Students of South Australia who served in WW1

SA Genealogy <https://www.genealogysa.org.au/resources/online-databases.html>

