



# **Major Cyril Frederick Pitcher**



**Played with Adelaide University**



**Football Club: 1907 and 1911**

**Degree: MB BS (1911)**

## ***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 Cyril Frederick Pitcher. It is compilation of information and photographs collected from a variety of historical sources.***

## The AIF Project

<https://aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=241996>



### Cyril Frederick PITCHER

Date of birth	14 June 1887
Place of birth	Adelaide, South Australia
Religion	Church of England
Occupation	Surgeon
Address	Victor Harbour, South Australia
Marital status	Married
Age at embarkation	26
Next of kin	Wife, Mrs I D E W Pitcher, Mulder's Vlei, Cape Colony, South Africa
Previous military service	Australian Army Medical Corps Reserve
Enlistment date	20 November 1914
Rank on enlistment	Major
Unit name	
Rank from Nominal Roll	Major
Unit from Nominal Roll	Australian Army Medical Corps Details
Promotions	Captain Unit: MED LH2 Fld Amb Promotion date: 19 October 1914 Major Unit: MED 2nd Aust Cas Clr Stn Promotion date: 14 November 1916
Fate	Returned to Australia 25 February 1919
Other details	War service: Promoted to Captain, 19 October 1914; attached to 2nd Light Horse Field Ambulance 20 November 1914. Attached to 3rd Battalion, 8 August, 1915; to 5th Light Horse 30 August 1915; to 1st Australian General Hospital 28 January 1916; Promoted to Major 14 November 1916. Attached to the 20th Casualty Clearing Station 25 November 1916; returned to Australia 10 September 1917. Re-embarked 5 January 1918; attached to 7th Field Ambulance 19 October 1918; attached to 6th Field Ambulance 22 November 1918. Returned to Australia 25 February 1919. His brother, 1195 Sergeant R.C. Pitcher, served with the South African Medical Corps.

# Service Record

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=8017770>

*English Dictionary Force* *2nd LH 7 Amb*

C.M. Form A. 22.  
(Revised 1.5.13.)

## AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

Application for a Commission in the *2nd Light Horse Field Ambulance*

No.	PARTICULARS.	
1.	Surname ... Other names (in full) ...	<i>PITCHER.</i> <i>CYRIL FREDERICK.</i>
2.	Educational Qualifications (Certificate to be attached for notation at District Headquarters.)	<i>Batchelor of medicine &amp; surgery.</i> <i>Adelaide 1911</i>
3.	Military Qualifications (previous Military Service, if any, to be stated) (Attention is directed to third sub-para. of C.M. Regulation 66.) If serving, present rank and corps to be stated.	<i>Captain of Light Horse Field Ambulance</i>
4.	Present Civil Employment	<i>Medical Practitioner Victoria Harbour</i>
5.	Date of Birth and Age ... (Certificate of Birth or Statutory Declaration to be attached for notation at District Headquarters.)	Date of Birth. <i>June 14. 1887</i> Age. <i>27</i> Years <i>3 1/2</i> Months
6.	If a British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject (In the case of the latter, date and place of Naturalization to be stated.)	<i>British subject</i>
7.	Married or Single	<i>Single</i>
8.	Postal Address ...	<i>23 Erskine St. Goodwood Park</i>
9.	Next of Kin ...	<i>Ronald Owen Pitcher (brother)</i>

Date *19.22.10.14* (Signature of Applicant) *C.F. Pitcher.*

NOTE.—Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces are required to attach a satisfactory certificate of moral character, or, if they are serving in the Permanent or Citizen Forces, to be recommended by their Commanding Officer. They are also to state on the back of this form the subjects in which they desire to be examined in Part II., and where exemptions are claimed for educational subjects, the authority for same is to be stated, and where necessary to be supported by certificates.

### MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.

In the cases of Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces, Proceedings of Board, in accordance with the "Instructions for the Physical Examination of Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Military Forces of the Commonwealth," will be substituted for this Certificate; such Board, however, will not be assembled until after the nomination of the Candidate to undergo examination has been approved by the Military Board of Administration.

I, *Samuel Ray Smith* do hereby certify to the correctness of the following particulars respecting the above-named applicant. I further certify that the applicant is not ruptured, and is capable of bearing the fatigue incident to the performance of military duty.

Height *6ft 1 1/2 in* Weight *14 st.*  
Chest Measurement *39 in* Eyesight *R 9/10 L 6/6*

Signature of the Examining Medical Officer *Samuel Ray Smith*

### RECOMMENDATION AND CERTIFICATE OF COMMANDING OFFICER.

(Not required in the cases of Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces.)

I recommend that the Candidate above-named be appointed a *Captain* in the Corps under my command, and I certify:—

- \* (a) That such appointment will be within the authorized establishment and provision on the Estimates for the current year, or
- \* (b) That such appointment, although not within the authorized establishment and provision on the Estimates for the current year, will be within the number of supernumerary officers permitted under C.M. Regulation 56.
- † (a) That the provisions of C.M.R. 60 have been fully complied with, or
- † (b) That the provisions of U.T. Reg. 33 have been fully complied with, or
- † (c) That the provisions of U.T. Reg. 139 have been fully complied with.

On appointment the candidate will be posted to *2nd* Squadron, Battery, or Coy., &c.

Date *28/10/14* Commanding *W. Shepherd & Co. Ltd.* Regt. or Corps.

### RECOMMENDATION OF DISTRICT COMMANDANT.

Recommended, candidate considered suitable.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Commanding C.M. Forces \_\_\_\_\_ Military District.

\* Sub-para (a) to be struck out if (b) applies, and vice versa. † Sub-para. not applicable to be struck out.  
N.B.—Record of War Service (if any) to be shown on back of Form.  
Seniority of Candidates to be stated when two or more applications are forwarded on the same date.

cp8795

## RSL Virtual War Memorial

<https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/people/263064>

### **PITCHER, Cyril Frederick**

Major

Sea Transport Staff

AIF WW1

### **World War 1 Service**

**5 Jan 1918:** Involvement Major, Sea Transport Staff

**5 Jan 1918:** Embarked Major, Sea Transport Staff, HMAT Borda, Adelaide

**Date unknown:** Embarked Captain, 2nd Light Horse Brigade Field Ambulance

**Date unknown:** Involvement Captain, 2nd Light Horse Brigade Field Ambulance

<http://unleyww1.weebly.com/p.html>

### **PITCHER, Cyril Frederick**

Major

**2nd Light Horse Field Ambulance**

Born 14 June 1887 at Medindie, SA

Son of John Garlick PITCHER and Mary nee BUTLER

Brother of Ronald Owen PITCHER

Of 23 Erskine Street, Goodwood Park, SA

Occupation prior to enlistment Medical Practitioner

Enlisted 19 October 1914

Served in Gallipoli, Egypt and France

Returned to Australia 11 April 1919 per 'Balmoral Castle'

Died 12 May 1955 at Adelaide, SA

Aged 67 years

Resided Medindie, SA

Buried North Road Anglican Cemetery

"Blood, Sweat and Fears"

ISBN: 978-0-64692-750-3

Medical Practitioners and Medical Students of South Australia

who served in WW1





## Published Biography

Blood Sweat and Fears: Medical Practitioners and Medical Students of South Australian who Served in World War 1,  
C Verco, A Summers, T Swain & M Jelly. July 2014

### PITCHER Cyril Frederick

MB BS



1887 - 1955



Cyril Frederick Pitcher was born at Medindie, South Australia on the 14th June 1887, the third son of Rev John Garlick Pitcher J.P. and Mary, nee Butler. She was the sister of a Premier of South Australia Sir Richard Butler and the aunt of Sir Richard Layton Butler who also became Premier of South Australia. Pitcher was educated at St Peter's College and graduated in Medicine from the University of Adelaide in 1911. He served in the militia as a captain in the Light Horse Field Ambulance in 1912 and the Reserve in 1913. At the time of his enlistment in the AIF he was a medical practitioner at Victor Harbor.

He applied for a commission in the AIF on the 19th October 1914, a 27 year old single graduate living at 23 Erskine St, Goodwood Park. He stood 6ft 1ins tall, and weighed 14st. His brother Ronald Owen Pitcher was his next of kin, later Mrs. Isabel Warren Elizabeth Pitcher, his wife, c/- W Gilchrist Esq, "Marindalk", Mulders Vlei, Cape Colony, South Africa. He embarked from Brisbane with 2 LHFdAmb in December 1914. He did not go to Gallipoli with 2 LHFdAmb when it first landed in May, but remained at Mudros. He went with the second landing on the 3rd Aug 1915, but was immediately detached to 3 Bn for three weeks and then to 5 LHR for 10 days. Pitcher was evacuated to Egypt in September 1915 with sciatica, a condition with which he had suffered prior to enlistment. This was followed by jaundice. He was declared unfit for general duties for six months, and served with 1 ASH from March to August 1916. He was promoted major on 14th November 1916 and posted to 2 ACCS at Trois Arbres, France. Soon after the Battle of Messines, Pitcher developed renal disease, and was sent back to England. He rejoined his unit in August, but soon became ill again and was sent back to Australia in September 1917. He returned to England on the *Borda* in January 1918, but disembarked in Cape Town to spend 2 months

with his older brother Richard Charles Pitcher who had enlisted in the South African medical corps as a private soldier. His brother had been in the 4 FdAmb with a short active service from February 1916 until he was diagnosed with carcinoma of the tongue from which he died on the 18th May 1919. Pitcher reached London in April and, in October 1918, was posted to 3 AAH. He returned to France and joined 7 FdAmb. All five Australian divisions were then in the Fourth Army rest area around Abbeville, and in the first week of November moved up towards the front line again. They were spared further combat by the Armistice. Pitcher returned to London in January 1919, and sailed for Australia in February with his AIF appointment terminated on the 16th June 1919. Pitcher was issued with the 1914-15 Star, The British War Medal, and the Victory Medal.

Pitcher set up practice at Hindmarsh, South Australia on his return. He was appointed as Hon Medical Officer to the Mareeba Babies' Hospital, with Drs Helen Mayo and Frederick Neill Le Messurier in 1923 and they made a lifelong association. They contributed to important advances in the care of sick and particularly premature babies. He subsequently became Chairman of the Board of the Babies Hospital. He lived at Dutton Terrace, Medindie, South Australia. Cyril Frederick Pitcher died in 12th May 1955 in Adelaide.

#### Sources:

<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/scripts/Imagine.asp?B=8017770>  
Likeman R., "Gallipoli Doctors", Slouch Hat Publications 2010  
Letter to the University of Adelaide 1916Photo: Adelaide  
University Archives Graduate 1911  
Adelaide Advertiser 5th January 1903  
Adelaide Advertiser 14th December 1911  
The Register Adelaide 15 March 1923

## Early Life

Cyril Frederick Pitcher was born on 14<sup>th</sup> of June 1887, the son of the Reverend John Garlick Pitcher and Mary Butler at Medindie, Adelaide, SA. His birth was registered (SA Birth Registration 99/468) as Frederick Cyril Pitcher and he was baptised under that name at St. Andrew's, Walkerville, SA on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 1887.

## Schooling

Cyril attended St Peter's College, Adelaide where he passed his Junior Examinations in 1902 and Senior Examinations in 1904. In March 1905 Cyril passed Special Senior Examinations having studied with the Tutorial College.

## Adelaide University

Cyril commenced studying medicine at Adelaide University in 1906 and his MB BS was conferred in December 1911.

### 1906 – Adelaide University Medical Faculty



*C.F. Pitcher Third Row from Front – Second from Left and slightly obscured  
(Photograph is incorrectly labelled C.D. Pitcher)*

1st row - N.Shierlaw, S.Catchlove, Miss M.George, Miss Delprat, Miss M.Moffat, R.A.Goode, St.John Poole, C.Yeatman, E.C.Black, S.L.Corry, E.J.R.Holder.

2nd row - J.Dyer, Thomas, J.J.O'Grady, D.M.Steele, Drew, E.A.Arnold, H.M.Jay, W.Ray, G.R.West, L.G.Muirhead, J.Leon, H.Powell, E.B.Jones, W.D.Rosengarten, N.E.Seppelt, W.R.Reynell, T.H.Donnelly, R.Trudinger, Everard.

3rd row - H.Elkan, C.D.Pitcher F.E.McAree, E.H.Lewis, J.L.Jona, E.A.H.Russell, G.Harvey, W.H.Stevenson, C.E.Dolling, W.A.V.Drew, W.Jacobs, T.G.Fleming, M.Erichsen, R.J.Verco, L.O.Betts, L.W.Jeffries.

4th row - E.J.McGlashon, H.Fry, P.T.S.Cherry, R.Plummer, H.W.D.Stoddart, D.R.W.Cowan, Sinclair, D.Parkhouse.

## University Sport

### Football

Cyril played football for the Adelaide University side in the Adelaide and Suburban competition in 1907 and in the Amateur League in 1911.



*C.F. Pitcher – Back Row – Far Left (In Suit)*

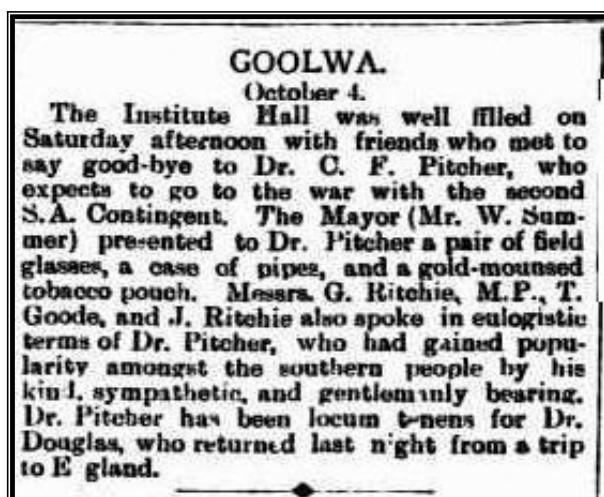
## Early Career

After graduation Cyril was a resident medical officer at the Adelaide Hospital and a provisional Captain in the Australian Medical Corps (October 1912).





In early 1914 Cyril became acting quarantine officer at Port Victor (Victor Harbor) and locum tenens in the absence of Capt. F.J Douglas. On Douglas' return in October 1914, Cyril was given a farewell at Goolwa.



## World War I

Cyril enlisted on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 1914 and his war service is well documented in the 'Blood Sweat and Fears' biography above. The photograph below shows the interior of Captains William Angus Fraser and Cyril Frederick Pitcher's dugout at Gallipoli in 1915. Both men were medical officers with the 2nd Light Horse Field Ambulance. The image is from the collection of Major David Gifford Croll, also of this unit.



In October 1915 Cyril was considered unfit for general duties and returned from Egypt to Australia.

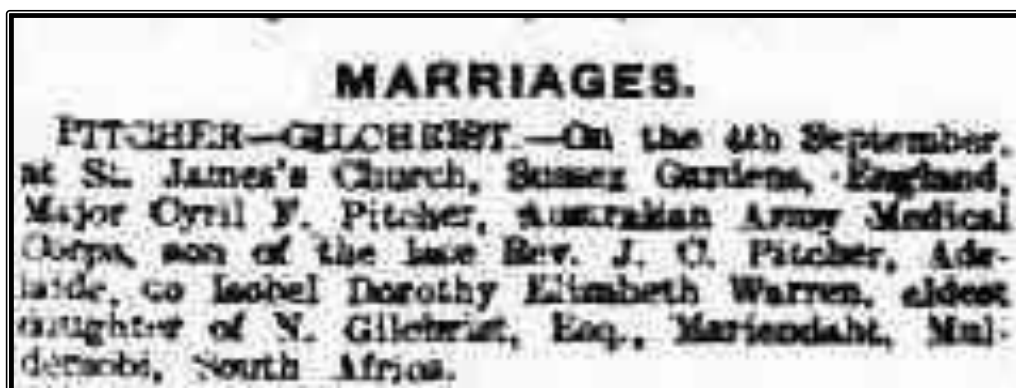
While in Melbourne on 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1916, Cyril was photographed with a group of other South Australian returned servicemen and hospital staff at Luna Park.

### South Australians at Luna Park



*Capt. C.F. Pitcher – Second row from Back – Fourth from Left*

Cyril returned to active service overseas but fell ill again in 1917. While in England recovering his health, Cyril married Isobel Dorothy Elizabeth Warren Gilchrist at St James's Church, Sussex Gardens, England on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 1917. Isobel was the daughter of Mr N Gilchrist, of South Africa.



Cyril returned to Australia, departing from England on 10<sup>th</sup> of September 1917 and then re-embarking for England again on 5<sup>th</sup> of January 1918.

Cyril finally returned to Australia on 11<sup>th</sup> of April 1919 onboard the *Balmoral Castle*, and he was accompanied by his wife on the final leg of the journey from Capetown, South Africa. Isobel's address was Mulder's Vlei, Cape Colony, South Africa.

### Career and Family Life

In July 1919 Cyril purchased a two seater Ford car and in August 1922 when at Manton St, Hindmarsh he purchased a 10.4 FIAT.

**Dr. C. F. Pitcher, of Hyde Park, has purchased a two-seater Ford car. It is painted light cream colour with cream-coloured hood and green upholstery. The body is a full streamline with bulged sides. The bodywork and tasteful colouring give the car an air of distinction.**

Cyril and Isobel's daughter Sonia Helen Pitcher was born on 10th of May 1923 and their son, John Warren Gilchrist Pitcher was born on 13th of June 1925.

In March 1923, Cyril was appointed an honorary medical officer at the Mareeba Babies Hospital (established in Woodville in 1917 to look after sick babies) and from 1933 he was appointed to the hospital's advisory committee.

By 1928 Cyril was a golfer and he played in the doctor's golf tournament at Seaton that year.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 1935, Cyril left onboard the *Ormonde* to "inquire into and report on infant and child welfare in the United Kingdom and Europe". Cyril and Isobel were away from Adelaide for about 10 months. They returned from Liverpool, England on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 1935 onboard the *Ascanius* (Blue Funnel Line), bound for Adelaide.

**Going Abroad**

ADD to the already long list of those who are going abroad this year the names of Dr. and Mrs. C. F. Pitcher, of Dutton terrace, Medindie, who will sail on February 7 for London for a stay which will last until October. Mrs. Pitcher is not certain where the trip will take them, for their route will depend on the state of the Continent when they arrive. They hope to go to Norway and Sweden and perhaps to Russia.

To simplify the last few days of packing up, Mrs. Pitcher is leaving her home on February 1 to stay at the Pier Hotel, Largs Bay, with her children, who are, of course, to remain behind. John will be a boarder at Saints and Sonia will stay with Mrs. Ken Hamilton in Medindie.

Mrs. Pitcher is looking forward eagerly to the trip, as she has not been to England since 1919. She regards it as her home, although, as she laughingly said, she is cosmopolitan by birth. She was born in South Africa and went to England to live at the age of three months, returning to South Africa when she was a schoolgirl, and finally coming to South Australia to settle down.

In 1936, Cyril had the misfortune to be called to a patient's home and as a consequence, he had to appear as a witness in a murder case.

Cyril was appointed to the Medical Council of the Mothers and Babies Health Association of South Australia in April 1938. Sonia and John both played in the Age Tennis Tournament in December 1938.

## **World War II**

Cyril was 52 at the outbreak of WWII and he continued with his medical practice in Adelaide throughout the war.

Sonia attended Woodlands CofE Girls Grammar, passing her Intermediate examinations in 1939. In March 1941 it was reported in the papers that Sonia Pitcher, the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. C. F. Pitcher, of Medindie is planning to nurse at the Royal Adelaide. Until she is called up she is filling her days with V.A.D. (Volunteer Aid Detachment) work, helping at the Cheer-up Hut and sewing for the Red Cross. Sonia enlisted in the Air Force (SN 96612) on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May at Adelaide. She was a W.A.A.F transport driver and was discharged on 6<sup>th</sup> of October 1943. In 1945 Sonia was a munitions transport driver and she became Miss City Red Cross in August that year.

Tragically for the family, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 1943, Isobel Dorothy Elizabeth Warren Pitcher (born 1896) passed away, aged 47.

John was undertaking studies in elementary wool classing at the School of Mines in 1943. Days after his mother's death, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 1943, aged 22; John Pitcher enlisted as a Private in the A.I.F. (SN SX33130). He was discharged on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 1946.

Sonia and John's WWII records are not yet available to the public.

## **Post World War II**

In January 1947, Sonia became engaged to Kenneth Brice McMichael. The couple married in 19<sup>th</sup> December 1948 at St Peter's College Chapel. Sonia passed away on 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2017, aged almost 94.

John became engaged to Joan Valmai Brewster, the daughter of Mr and Mrs J. Brewster of Kapunda in October 1948, they married in November 1949 at St Peter's College Chapel. The couple lived on a property near Yankalilla, SA.

## **Death**

Cyril Frederick Pitcher passed in hospital in Adelaide aged 67 on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 1955; his last abode had been at Medindie. He is buried at the North Road Church of England Cemetery, Nailsworth.

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

**Sources**

The AIF Project <https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/>

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

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

Australian War Memorial <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/>

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1288160>

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

<https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/handle/2440/27201>

<https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/handle/2440/27205>

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

(Trove Newspaper articles tagged – Cyril Frederick Pitcher)

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

Blood Sweat and Fears: Medical Practitioners and Medical Students of South Australian who Served in World War 1,

C Verco, A Summers, T Swain & M Jelly. July 1914

<http://unleyww1.weebly.com/p.html>

Ancestry.com.au

SA Birth Records, Baptismal Records,

<https://www.findagrave.com/>