



# **Capt. James Gladstone Sweeney**



**Played with Adelaide University**



**Football Club – B Grade (1914)**

**Degree – MB BS (1915)**

## ***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 James Gladstone Sweeney. It is compilation of information and photographs collected from a variety of historical sources.***

## The AIF Project

<https://aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=293468>



### James Gladstone SWEENEY

Occupation	Medical practitioner
Address	Nottingham Terrace, Glandore, South Australia
Marital status	Single
Age at embarkation	22
Next of kin	Father, John Sweeney, Nottingham Terrace, Glandore, South Australia
Enlistment date	8 October 1915
Rank on enlistment	Captain
Unit name	11th Field Ambulance
AWM Embarkation Roll number	26/54/1
Embarkation details	Unit embarked from Adelaide, South Australia, on board HMAT A29 <i>Suevic</i> on 31 May 1916
Rank from Nominal Roll	Captain
Unit from Nominal Roll	Australian Army Medical Corps
Fate	Returned to Australia 3 July 1919

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## Service Record

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=8097384>

Information Sheet of Capt J G Sweeney XI Field ambulance

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

**AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.**

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

No. .... Name SWEENEY James Gladstone

Unit XI Field Ambulance

Joined <sup>AIF</sup> on 8/10/15.

**Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestment**

- What is your Name? ... 1. James Gladstone Sweeney
- In or near what Parish or Town were you born? ... 2. In the Parish of Clarence Park in or near the Town of Adelaide in the County of South Australia
- Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) ... 3. Natural born
- What is your Age? ... 4. 22 1/2 years
- What is your Trade or Calling? ... 5. Medical Practitioner
- Are you, or have you been an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? ... 6. no
- Are you married? ... 7. no
- Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) ... 8. (Father) Mr John Sweeney  
Nottingham Street  
Clarendon
- Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? ... 9. no
- Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incurable and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with disgrace from the Navy? ... 10. no
- 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 ... 11. Senior Cadet 1 year 1914 AAMC 4 years
- Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? ... 12. Yes
- Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? ... 13. no
- (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 to you in respect of your service beyond an amount which together with pay would reach 8/- per day? ... 14. Yes
- Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against smallpox and enteric fever? ... 15. Yes

I, ....., 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 <sup>two-fifths</sup> ~~three-fifths~~ of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife\*† wife and children

Date .....

Signature of Person Enlisted. [Signature]

\* This Clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 18 years of age  
† Two-fifths must be allotted to the wife, and if there are children three-fifths must be allotted

## RSL Virtual War Memorial

<https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/people/244373>

### SWEENEY, James Gladstone

**Service Number:** S45663

**Enlisted:** 9 December 1941, Wayville, SA

**Last Rank:** Captain

**Last Unit:** 11th Field Ambulance

**Born:** Springbank, SA, 9 January 1894

**Home Town:** Glandore, Marion, South Australia

**Schooling:** Not yet discovered

**Occupation:** Medical Practitioner

**Died:** Glenunga, 22 April 1977, aged 83 years, cause of death not yet discovered

**Cemetery:** Centennial Park Cemetery, South Australia  
23 April 1977 - Cremated at Centennial Park. 14 June 1977 - Ashes interred Queen Adelaide, Walk Rose 149, Position 001. Internment right number 248498 which expired 14 June 2002. Also interred in the same position is Mina Kathleen Sweeney 12 September 1982

**Memorials:** University of Adelaide WW1 Honour Roll Mitchell Bldg\*

### World War 1 Service

**31 May 1916:** Involvement Captain, 11th Field Ambulance

**31 May 1916:** Embarked Captain, 11th Field Ambulance, HMAT Suevic, Adelaide

### World War 2 Service

**9 Dec 1941:** Involvement Captain, SN S45663

**9 Dec 1941:** Enlisted Wayville, SA

**6 Dec 1943:** Discharged 2nd AIF WW 2, Captain, Australian Army Medical Corps

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## 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

### SWEENEY James Gladstone

MB BS

1894 - 1977



James Gladstone Sweeney was born on the 9th January 1894 at Springbank, Clarence Park, Adelaide. He was the son of John and Isabella Sweeney of Albert Park, SA. Sweeney had three brothers and two sisters. He was educated at Adelaide High School where he won a Bursary to the University of Adelaide where he studied medicine and graduated in 1915.

Sweeney enlisted in the AIF on the 8th October 1915 as a captain, aged 22 years, single, with three weeks experience as a resident at the Adelaide Hospital. His father, then of Nottingham Terrace, Glandore, was recorded as his next of kin. Previously he was a senior cadet for 1 year and in the Citizen Forces as Corporal in 19 AAMC for 4 years. He was 5ft 10ins, weighed 11st 4lbs, and could ride. He was allocated to 11 FdAmb with Michael Henry Downey as the CO. He embarked on the 31st May 1916 and arrived at Devonport, England and after 4 months proceeded to France on the 24th November 1916. He returned to England to hospital with bronchitis and after two weeks re-joined the unit as OC. He was transferred to 10 FdAmb in France on the 25th May 1917 but was wounded in action with a gunshot wound to the right loin on the 7th June 1917. He was taken to England for treatment and returned to duty with 11 FdAmb, in France, on the 6th October 1917. Sweeney was posted in the field to be the CO of 3 ADAC until the end of hostilities. He was recommended for a Military Cross for "*coolness and gallantry under fire and set a splendid example to his men*", however, it was not awarded. He was granted leave in England for 3 months and

returned to Australia on the *Zealand* on the 3rd July 1919 on duty as ships staff. He arrived in 4 MD in September 1919 with his appointment terminated on the 14th October 1919. Sweeney was issued with the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Following discharge from the Army he completed his residency at the Adelaide Hospital and then moved to Orroroo as a general practitioner in 1920 where Dr Ray Last (later Professor) was a partner. He married Mina Kathleen Ballantyne, the Matron of the Orroroo Hospital, on the 14th April 1926. They had five children, three of whom became doctors and two nurses. The family moved to Adelaide in 1935 where he practiced at Croydon until he retired. During the WW2 he served as a reserve medical officer at Warradale. In 1969 his address was 9 Sturt Place, Beaumont, South Australia. He was the President of the 11th Field Ambulance Returned Soldiers Club for 25 years. James Gladstone Sweeney died on the 22nd April 1977. The 11th Field Ambulance Returned Soldiers Club disbanded after his death and at their final meeting they allocated £20.00 to the War Veterans Home at Myrtle Bank and all matters of historical interest were handed to the RSL, Adelaide.

#### Sources

<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/scripts/Imagine.asp?B=8097384>

Photo; AWM

Personal family story from son Dr Don Sweeney

The register Adelaide 24th September 1915

## Additional Biography

### Early Life

James Gladstone Sweeney (Jim) was born on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January 1894 at Springbank, Adelaide, SA, the son of John Sweeney and Isabella Grant. Jim's father was a civil engineer from Belfast, Ireland and he had worked in New Zealand prior to coming to Adelaide.

### Schooling

Jim's was at the Sturt Street School in 1906 when he won an exhibition. He then attended Adelaide High School, passing his Junior Examinations in 1906, Senior Examinations in 1908 and Higher Public Examinations in 1909. He qualified for one of five Government bursaries worth £25 per year to study arts, science, law or medicine.

### Adelaide University

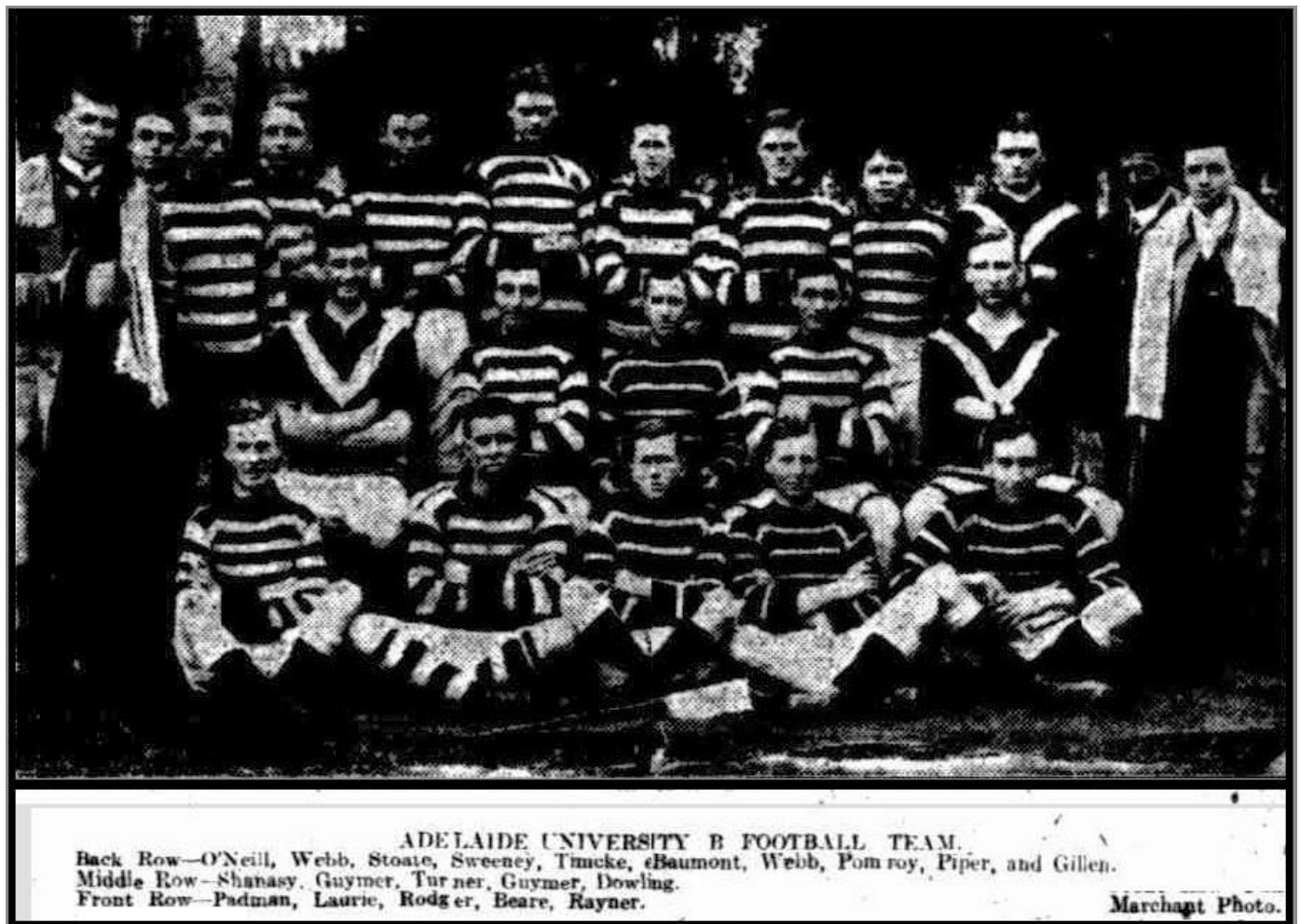
Jim commenced studying medicine at Adelaide University in 1911 and graduated MB BS in 1915.

### University Sport

#### *Football*

Jim played B Grade football for Adelaide University in 1914 and was a member of the premiership winning side that year.

### 1914 – Adelaide University B Grade - Adelaide Students' Association Premiers



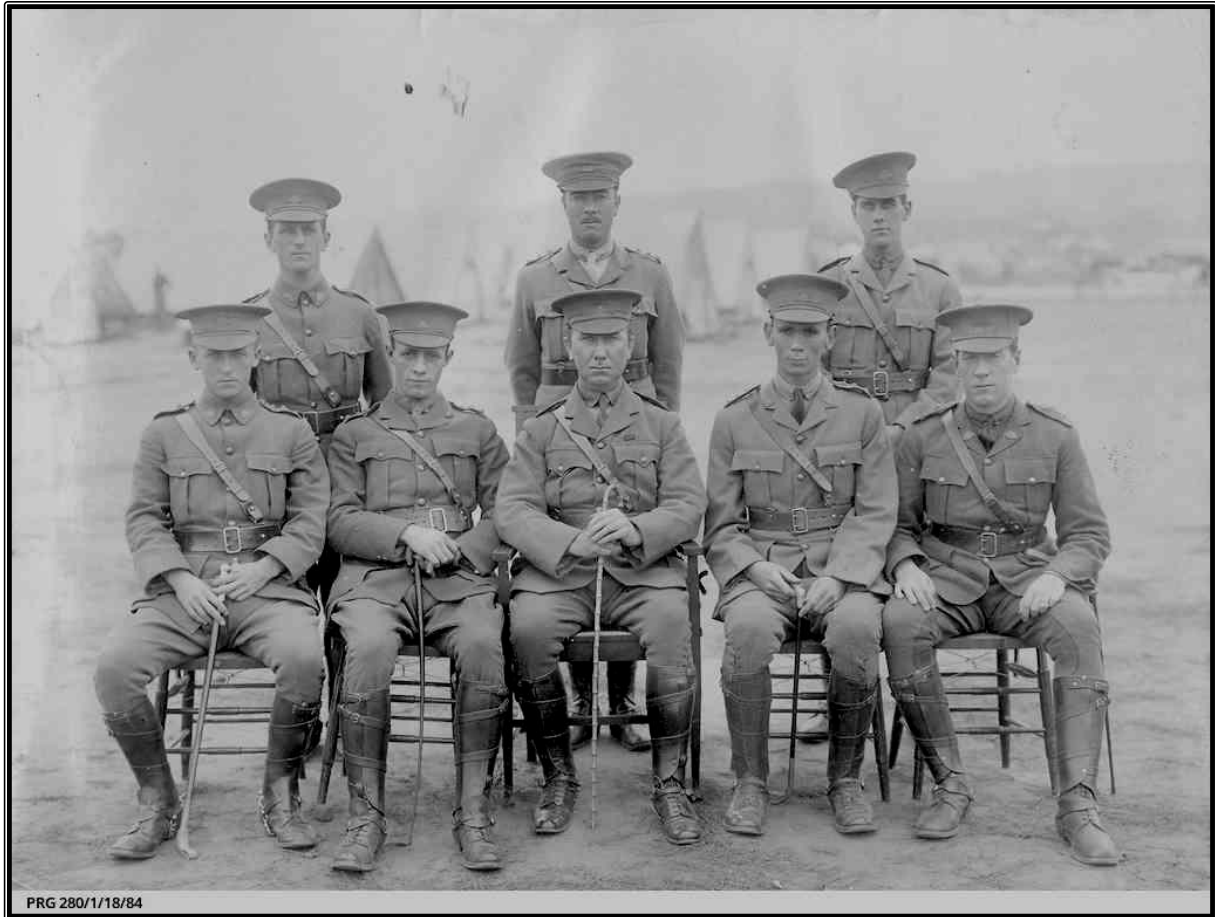
#### ***J.G Sweeney – Back Row – Fifth from Left***

(Note back row has 10 names for 12 people - Identification of Sweeney is based in part on the known position of Harry Pomroy – the shortest member of the back row)

## World War I

Immediately after his graduation Jim enlisted in the Australian Army Medical Corps and commenced working as a medical officer. He wrote to his father at the Carpa Waterworks Camp, stating that he intends to offer himself to the military authorities for medical service abroad. Jim's WWI story is well documented in the 'Blood, Sweat and Fear's' biography above.

### 11th Field Ambulance Officers at Mitcham Camp, South Australia, prior to embarkation.



*Captain J.G. Sweeney - Front row - Second from Right*

## Career and Family Life

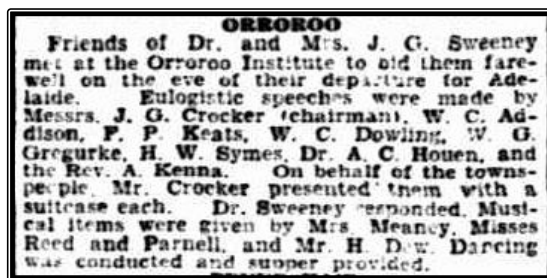
On his return to Adelaide, Jim commenced working as a medical officer at the Adelaide Hospital and he joined the State Branch of the Returned Soldiers League.

Jim moved to Orroroo and practised there until November 1934. When he transferred his RSL membership to the Orroroo Sub-Branch on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 1922. His address was 188 North Terrace, Orroroo. While at Orroroo, Jim played golf and in 1923 he purchased a 23.8 Dodge. In May 1924, Jim became a Life Member of the South Australian branch of the Royal British Nurses' Association and in October 1924 he was appointed Medical Officer for the Orroroo district.

Jim married Mina Kathleen Ballantyne at the Methodist Church, Woodville on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 1926. Jim and Mina had five children, John Gladstone (born 26<sup>th</sup> of January 1928, at Memorial Hospital, North Adelaide), Robert James (born 20<sup>th</sup> of December 1929, Orroroo Hospital), Jean (born 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1932, Orroroo Hospital), Donald Ballantyne and another daughter.

In December 1930 Jim was present at the AHS speech night and awarded several of the prizes. By 1932, Jim was Captain of the Orroroo Golf Club. Jim's brother, John Grant Sweeney (born in New Zealand) was a lawyer in practice at Port Pirie when Jim visited him in 1932. In January 1933, Jim, Mina and their children stayed at Del Monte, Henley Beach for their holidays. In November 1934, Jim sold his practice at Orroroo and took up practice in the city.





Jim transferred his RSL membership to the Hindmarsh Sub Branch on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1935, giving his address as Albert Park, Woodville. In March 1937, Jim was onboard the motor vessel 'Moonta' on a holiday trip on the gulf and he visited his brother John while the vessel was in Port Pirie.

By 1938, Jim and his family were living at Elizabeth Street, Croydon and they lived at that address until 1943. Jim and Mina took a cruise to Fiji in March 1939 and in September 1936, Mina and the children were visiting Mina's father at Taylorville, near Waikerie, SA.

Jim enlisted for WWII on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1941 (SN S45663), he was discharged on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 1943. According to the 'Blood, Sweat and Tears' biography above he was a Medical Officer in the Reserves at Warradale, SA, during this period.

In 1943, the family moved to 54 Barton Terrace, North Adelaide and later that year Jim's brother John Grant Sweeney passed away aged 58. John was survived by his wife and daughter and two brothers (Jim and Gordon) and two sisters. In June 1950 when John's daughter Kathleen Mary Sweeney married Sq-Ldr Harold Sutcliffe Nicholson, Jim gave away the bride and held the reception at his Barton Terrace home.

#### 54 Barton Terrace North Adelaide



All of Jim and Mina's children followed their parents into careers in medicine, the boys becoming doctors and the girls becoming nurses. Eldest son, John Gladstone Sweeney, passed his final examinations in December 1950 and graduated MB BS (1951).

In March 1951, Jim and Mina's two elder sons, John and Robert, were both required to give evidence at a court case when five senior medical students were charged with manslaughter. A first-year student drowned after being thrown into the River Torrens as part of an initiation ceremony. Robert had been at the event at the University boatshed taking photographs and John was one of a group of doctors at the Adelaide Hospital who tried in vain to resuscitate the student.

In January 1953, Jean Sweeney commenced nursing at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, and she was secretary of the South Australian Student Nurses' Association in 1954.

Robert became engaged to Rosemary Stacy Brown, the daughter of Mr and Mrs E.J. Brown of Malvern in July 1953. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 1953, Jim transferred to the State Branch of the RSL.

Jim and Mina held a coming-of-age dance for their elder daughter, Jean in December 1953.

Robert James Sweeney graduated MB BS in 1953. Robert and Rosemary married at St Peter's College Chapel on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1954.

In 1954, Jim and Mina travelled to the UK. They returned to Australia onboard the *Strathmore* which left from London on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 1954.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of April 1961, Jim transferred his RSL membership to the Burnside Sub Branch, giving his address as 20 Brandreth Street, Tasmore.

Donald Ballantyne Sweeney graduated MB BS in 1963.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 1963 Jim transferred his RSL membership to the State Branch, his last known address with the RSL was at 19 Sturt Place, Beaumont.

## Death

James Gladstone Sweeney passed away on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 1977, aged 83 and his ashes are interred at Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide. His last abode was at Glenunga. Mina Kathleen Sweeney passed away on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 1982, her ashes are interred at Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide. Her last abode was at Myrtle Bank.

Robert James Sweeney passed away on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 2012 just before his 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

***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/>

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 – James Gladstone Sweeney)

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

Ancestry.com.au

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

State Library of South Australia

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+280/1/18/84>

<https://www.centennialpark.org/>