



# **Pte. Walter Frederick Swanton Webb**



**Played with Adelaide University**



**Football Club: B Grade (1914)**

**Medical Student (1911 – 1914 & 1916 – 1918)**

**LRCP & S Edinburgh & Glasgow (1920)**

## ***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 Walter Frederick Swanton Webb. It is compilation of information and photographs collected from a variety of historical sources.***

## The AIF Project

<https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=317331>




### Walter WEBB

Regimental number	120
Place of birth	Armadale, Victoria
Religion	Church of England
Occupation	Medical student
Marital status	Single
Age at embarkation	26
Next of kin	Father, Fred Webb, North Terrace, Adelaide, South Australia
Enlistment date	23 November 1914
Rank on enlistment	Private
Unit name	1 Australian General Hospital (November 1914)
Embarkation details	Unit embarked from Brisbane, Queensland, on board Transport A55 <i>Kyarra</i> on 21 November 1914
Rank from Nominal Roll	Private
Unit from Nominal Roll	No 1 Australian General Hospital
Fate	Returned to Australia No date of fate entered on Nominal Roll
Other details	Medals: 1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal

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# Service Record

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=8377461>

**A 49372** **AUSTRALIAN**  **MILITARY FORCES.**

**AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.**

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 120 Name Webb Walter  
Unit First Australian Trench Hospital  
35 Joined on Nov 23, 1914

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name ? ... 1. Walter Webb
2. In or near what Parish or Town were you born ? ... 2. In the Parish of Armidale in or near the Town of Armidale in the County of Bourke NSW
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) ... 3. Natural Born British
4. What is your age? ... 4. Twenty six
5. What is your trade or calling? ... 5. Medical Student
6. Are you, or have you been an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period ? ... 6. No
7. Are you married ? ... 7. No
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) ... 8. Frederick Webb  
N. Terrace  
Adelaide
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power ? ... 9. No
10. 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
11. 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. Belonged in First Australian Expeditionary Force; withdrawn for University Exams
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service ? ... 12. Yes
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds ? ... 13. No
14. (For married men and widowers with children)—Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be issued to you either before or after embarkation during your term of service ? ... 14. No

I, Walter Webb 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 Nov 23, 1914 (Sgd) Walter Webb  
Signature of person enlisted.

\* This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 18 years of age.

## RSL Virtual War Memorial

<https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/people/325734>

### WEBB, Walter Frederick Swanton

Service Number:	120
Enlisted:	23 November 1914, Keswick, South Australia
Last Rank:	Private
Last Unit:	1st Australian General Hospital
Born:	Armidale, Victoria, date not yet discovered
Home Town:	Adelaide, Adelaide, South Australia
Schooling:	University of Adelaide
Occupation:	Medical Student
Died:	Glenelg, South Australia, 29 September 1963, cause of death not yet discovered, age not yet discovered
Cemetery:	Centennial Park Cemetery, South Australia
Memorials:	Adelaide Holy Trinity Church Honour Board 2, WW1*, University of Adelaide WW1 Honour Roll Mitchell Bldg*

**NOTE:** Actual name was **Walter Frederick Swanton Webb**, however, he enlisted under the name of [Walter Webb](http://www.awm.gov.au) ([www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au)).

The son of Rector Frederick Webb, the senior pastor at Holy Trinity Church Adelaide and Emma Webb he lived in Adelaide.

Walter Frederick Swanton Webb enlisted at Keswick, South Australia on 23 November 1914. As he was studying to be a doctor at the University of Adelaide at the time he was allocated to the 1st Australian General Hospital with the rank of private. He embarked for overseas service with the same unit at Melbourne on 5 December 1914 and arrived in Egypt in early 1915.

It would appear, however, that at this time Walter Webb had a change of heart and decided he wanted to return to Australia so he could finish and graduate from his degree at Adelaide University. Thus, he returned to Australia and was discharged in Adelaide on 31 July 1915. Afterwards, he resumed his study at university and finished his degree in 1917 (*sic – this is incorrect see details in Walter's biography below*), however, he did not re-enlist in the AIF.

...

Walter Webb, for most of his life, lived in West Croydon, Adelaide. He died in 1963.



## Biography

"Blood, Sweat and Fears" ISBN: 978-0-64692-750-3 Medical Practitioners and Medical Students of South Australia who served in WW1. 2014

### WEBB Walter Frederick Swanton

LRCP&S Edin LRCP&S Glas

1888 - 1963



Walter Frederick Swanton Webb was born in Armidale, NSW, in 1888. He was the son of Reverend Frederick and Emma Jane Webb and was the brother of John Newton Webb. His family moved to South Australia for his father to take up a post at Holy Trinity Church, North Terrace Adelaide.

Webb enlisted in the AIF on 23rd November 1914 at Keswick, South Australia after passing his third year medical degree examinations. He was 5ft 7ins tall, weighed 128lbs of fair complexion, blue eyes and fair hair. His next of kin was given as Frederick Webb, his father, of Trinity Church, North Terrace Adelaide. He embarked from Melbourne on the *Kyarra* on 5th December 1914 as a Private to join 1 AGH in Egypt. He returned from Egypt and was discharged on 31st July 1915, at his own request, to complete his medical degree. He was issued with the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. He had completed 242 days service.

He was registered with the Medical Board of South Australia in 1920 with the qualifications of LRCP and S Edinburgh and LRCP and S Glasgow 1920. He married Winifred Myrtle Western, who was the 30 year old daughter of George Western and Caroline nee Shearing, on 4th August 1920, at Holy Trinity Church, Adelaide. Walter Frederick Swanton Webb died on 29th September 1963 at Eastwood, South Australia.

#### Sources:

National Archives of Australia  
<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/NameSearch/Interface/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=8377461>  
World War I Pictorial Honour Roll of South Australia  
Adelaide Advertiser 1920  
South Australian Indexes of Births Deaths and Marriages

**Note – Walter was born in Armadale, Victoria**

## Additional Biography

### Early Life

Walter was born on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 1888, to the Reverend Frederick Webb and Emma Jane (née Barnes). John's father was an Anglican Minister from Armadale, Armadale, Victoria. His birth registration (Victoria No 8120 of 1888) gives his name at birth as Frederick Walter Swanton Webb, however for the remainder of his life he used the name Walter Frederick Swanton Webb. The Rev Frederick Webb was incumbent at St Albans Church, Armadale, at the time of Walter's birth.

son.  
**WEBB.**—On the 10th inst., at 250 Malvern-road,  
 Armadale, the wife of the Rev. F. Webb—a  
 son.

The Rev. Frederick Webb moved to South Australia with his family in November 1895 to continue his ministry at Holy Trinity Church, Adelaide. Other members of the Webb family were, Victoria Emma Jane Webb (1892), John Newton Webb (1893), Arthur Liddon Webb (1898) and Dorothy Mary Webb (1901).

### Schooling

Walter initially had attended Kyre College (which later became Scotch College in 1919), according to a 1915 newspaper article listing Kyre Old Boys who were serving in WWI. By 1903, Walter (aged 15) was attending St Peter's College where he won a prize for Scripture. In June 1905, aged 17, Walter travelled by Sailer to England,. He stayed with relatives at Andover, Hampshire. It was thought that he planned to stay in England for some years, but his plans were indefinite.

Walter returned to Australia some time before December 1909 as he passed his Senior Examinations in English Literature, Modern History, Latin and German in December 1909 and Special Senior Examinations and Special Senior Examinations in Literature, Modern History, Latin, German, Arithmetic and algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry (under private tuition) in March 1910. He may have undertaken further studies for the Higher Public Examinations in 1910, however records to support this assumption have not been located.

### University

In November 1911, at 23 years of age, Walter passed subjects in first year medicine and by December 1914 had completed third year. Walter had enlisted for WWI in November 1914 but returned to Australia in July 1915 to complete his medical degree. Walter passed fourth year in 1917 and undertook fifth year in 1918. He is described as "non-graduating" in the portrait of the 1918 Medical Graduates below.

### Faculty of Medicine Graduates, 1918



*Standing – Left to Right- J. McNeil, W.K. Collins, H.R. Pomroy, R. Cilento, C. Gurner, K.W. Bollen,  
 Sitting – Left to Right J. Keipert, B. Shanasy (non-graduate), L.A. Wilson, P. McGlew, D.R. Wallmann, P.S. Messent, R.L.T. Grant,  
 Front (left to right): W. Webb (non-graduate), L.W. Linn*

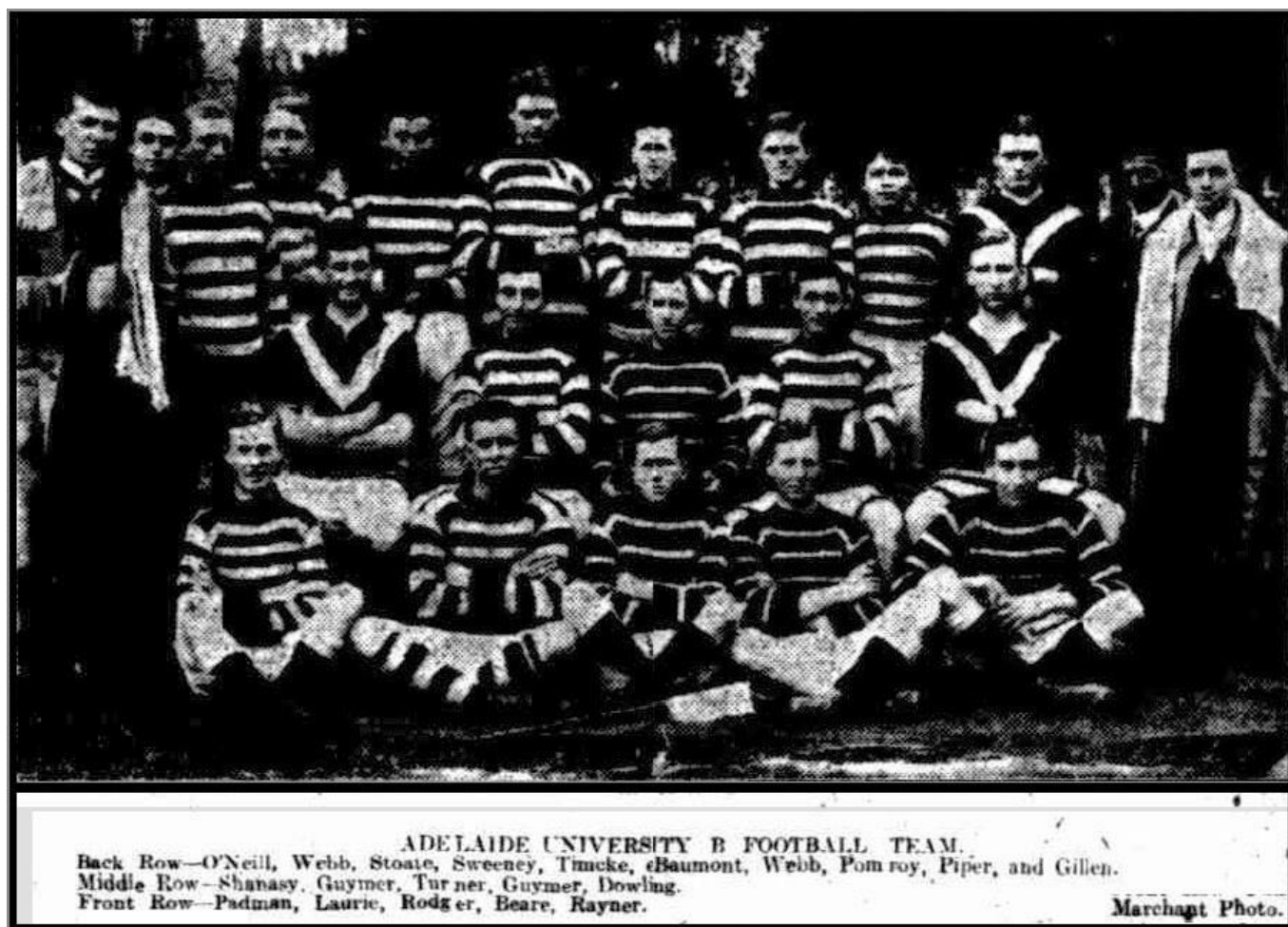
After the end of WWI, Walter travelled to the United Kingdom and completed his studies in Scotland. He qualified LRCP and S, Edinburgh (Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons) and LRCP and S, Glasgow and was registered as a fully qualified medical practitioner in South Australia in April 1920.

## University Sport

### Football

Walter played B Grade football for Adelaide University in the Adelaide Student's Association. He was a member of the team which won the 1914 Premiership playing alongside his brother John Newton Webb.

### 1914 Adelaide University Football Club - B Grade



*W.F.S. Webb – Back Row – Third from Left and J.N. Webb – Back Row Fifth from Right*

*Note: there are 12 men in the back row but only 10 are named*

*Walter and John have been identified by comparison with other photographs and by the known positions of Timcke and Pomroy*

## World War I

Walter Webb was a 26-year-old medical student when he joined up on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 1914. He was 5'7½", 128 lbs, with a fair complexion, blue eyes and fair hair. He embarked for overseas service as a private with the 1st Australian General Hospital at Melbourne on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 1914 and arrived in Egypt in early 1915.

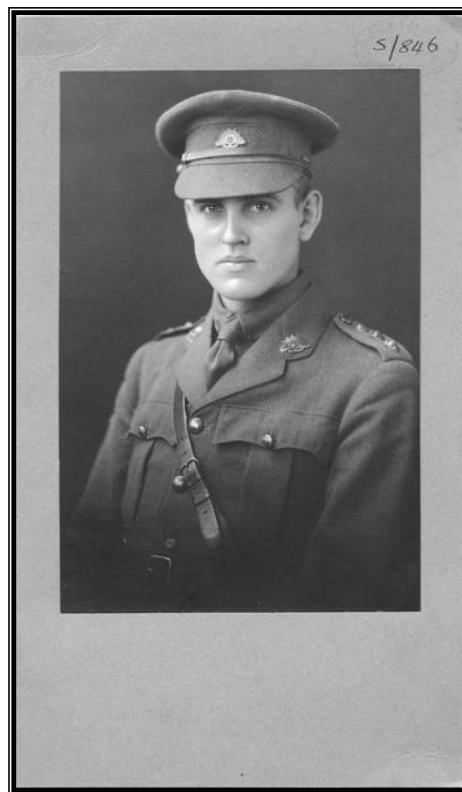
He returned from Egypt at his own request to continue his medical studies and was discharged in Adelaide on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July 1915. The exact date of his arrival in Adelaide and the boat he returned on is not recorded on his WWI service record.

Walter's brother John Newton Webb, qualified MB BS in 1917 and enlisted on the 12 February 1918.





*W.F.S. Webb*



*J.N. Webb*

### **Career and Family Life**

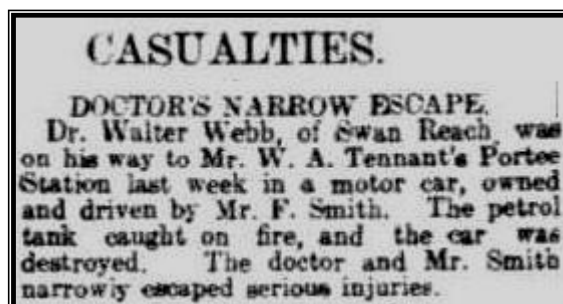
Walter returned from his overseas studies in March 1920 and was registered as a fully qualified medical practitioner in South Australia in April 1920. In May 1920, Walter arrived in Streaky Bay, SA, to commence his medical practice. He also consulted at Wirrulla (60 kms from Streaky Bay). By September 1920, Walter was Honorary Surgeon to the Streaky Bay Racing Club.

—Dr W. F. S. Webb has arrived at Streaky Bay and commenced practice. At the end of next week the doctor will be in the usual doctor's residence now under repairs. Residents in the district will be pleased to know it is the wish of the doctor to remain among them, but until he becomes conversant with the roads, he thinks it best for those who require his services, to provide the necessary conveyance.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1920, Walter married Winnifred (or Winifred) Myrtle Western the daughter of Mr and Mrs George Western of Marion SA, at the Holy Trinity Church, Adelaide.

**WEBB—WESTERN.**—On the 14th August, at Holy Trinity Church, Adelaide, by the father of the bridegroom, assisted by the Rev. David J. Knox, Dr. Walter Webb, eldest son of the Rev. and Mrs. Fredk. Webb, Holy Trinity, Adelaide, to Winifred Myrtle, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Western, "Aldane," Marion, South Australia.

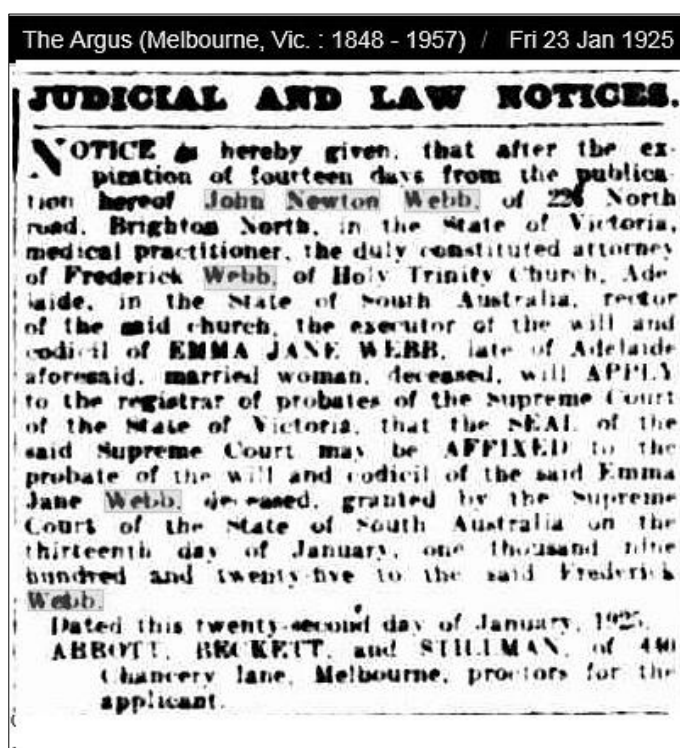
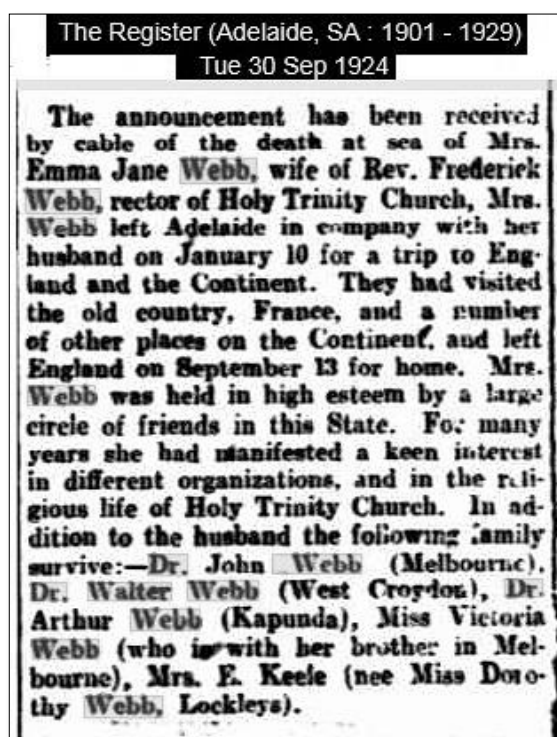
By July 1921, Dr. and Mrs. Webb had moved to Swan Reach on the Murray River, SA. In October 1921 Walter had a narrow escape when he was in a car and the petrol tank caught fire.



By August 1922, Walter was Secretary to the Swan Reach Agricultural Society, however he then left Swan Reach for Sydney in October 1922. It is not clear if Walter practiced in NSW or was there to undertake further studies, however by July 1923 he was practicing at Croydon in South Australia where he assisted after an accidental shooting.




In September 1924, Walter's mother passed away at sea on the return journey from a trip with her husband to England and the Continent. His brother, John, acted as Executor of her will.



In 1925, Walter and Winnifred welcomed a daughter, Emmaline Nancy (known as Nancy) Webb. Less than a year after the passing of his mother, Walter lost father, the Rev. Frederick Webb in March 1925. Winnifred's father, Mr George Western had died a month earlier in January 1925.

Observer (Adelaide, SA : 1905 - 1931) / Sat 14 Mar 1925 / Page 27 / OBITUARY.

**Rev. Frederick Webb.**  
 The death is announced of the Rev. Frederick Webb, who was in the thirtieth year of his incumbency of Holy Trinity Church, North terrace, Adelaide—formerly the Anglican pro-Cathedral. Mr. Webb was widely esteemed for his personal qualities and as a friend of the poor and needy, was the fourth rector of the church in its 88 years of history. He came from Armadale (V.), where he founded the parish of St. Albans, to succeed the Rev. Richardson Reid (who resigned on account of ill health in 1895, after a pastorate of 38 years). Originally Mr. Webb threw a great deal of energy into open-air mission work, but threatened loss of voice obliged him to give up that branch of his activities. As preacher and pastor, however, he devoted himself wholeheartedly to the oversight of his congregation and to ministering to the spiritual needs of an extensive neighbourhood. He was broadminded in outlook, and claimed the friendship of ministers and leaders in other communions. Mr. Webb was particularly interested in the Sunday school and temperance work as feeders to the church. The historical interest of Holy Trinity—whose foundation was coeval with that of the province of South Australia, and whose archives contain the names of thousands who were baptized and married in the church—made an intense appeal to Mr. Webb, during whose incumbency many additions and improvements to the church property were effected. For a number of years annual parades of railwaymen, trades unions, and other organizations were held at Holy Trinity; and for the convenience of numerous visitors unfamiliar with the Prayer Book, the Rector compiled a special continuous "Form of Service," the use of which was sanctioned by Bishop Harmer. During his period as rector, Mr. Webb twice visited England, and only recently he returned from his second trip to the motherland. Mrs. Webb died on the return voyage from England.



THE LATE REV. F. WEBB.

There are three sons—Dr. Walter Webb, of West Croydon; Dr. John Webb, of North Brighton, Victoria; and Dr. Arthur Webb, of Kapunda—and two daughters, Mrs. E. Keele, of Lockleys, and Miss Victoria Webb, of Adelaide.

In September 1926, Walter again had the misfortune to be in a car which burst into flames. This time it was his car which had only been on the road for three weeks.

**Motor Car Alight**

While proceeding along the road near the subway at Kilkenny at 9.30 o'clock this morning a motor car owned and driven by Dr. W. F. Webb burst into flames. Owing to the prompt arrival of an engine from Hindmarsh Fire Station the blaze was extinguished before much damage had been done. The hood was burned. The car had been on the roads only three weeks.

Walter's brother, Dr Arthur Liddon Webb, was in London from 1926 and in December 1929, where he passed his final examinations for the fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons, London.

By 1931, Walter was a keen listener to short-wave radio. He was among the residents of West Croydon who complained about the quality of the water supplied to them from the Millbrook Reservoir in January 1923, stating that the odour of the water was "sewer-like".

Odors have been wafted through taps at West Croydon, according to Dr W F. Webb, who today brought a sample into "The Mail" Office. He described the smell as "sewer-like."

"If water were a saleable product no salesman would be able to dispose of it when it is like this," said the doctor. "It would be interesting to know what tests are made. There may be bacteriological examinations at Millbrook, but are tests ever made at the exit—the people's water taps?"

By November 1932, Walter was a Division IV Lawn Bowler, playing for Brighton in the SA Bowling Association Pennant competition. In January 1933, he was one of the 208 men who entered the Lawn Bowls State Singles Championship. In February 1936, Walter described the anticipation when holding of a ticket (in the Lottery) as "a mental tonic which brightened life, especially for the despairing poor".

The family were residing at 68 Dale Avenue, West Croydon from at least 1937 when Walter made his view on Car Parking facilities in the city of Adelaide the subject of a letter to 'The Advertiser'.

**CAR PARKING FACILITIES**  
**HARASSING REGULATIONS**

To the Editor

Sir—Motorists are very disappointed at the lack of constructive thought given to the provision of car parking facilities in this city. These public facilities are apparently being reduced in step with the increase in car registrations. The rents, rates and taxes paid by business and professional people in our main streets should entitle them to parking space for their clients. No class of the community is more harassed by rules and regulations than the motorist here today. He is not, however, of a spiteful nature, and so does not question the business acumen of those responsible for installing "out of date" signal lights, and then calmly telling us that the most up-to-date system has been in other States for some time. Apparently, again the poor old public pays. One day I am hopeful of seeing the whole Government House allotment a city parking area and circular quay combined.—I am, Sir, &c.,

W. F. S. WEBB.  
68 Dale avenue, West Croydon.

Walter's wife was actively involved in Fighting Forces Comfort Fund during WWII, with a particular interest in the knitting of "Warm Woollies" for the troops. Walter was (by July 1945) the honorary surgeon of the Kilkenny Football Club.

Walter and Winnifred's daughter Nancy obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree from Adelaide University in April 1949.

Walter was still being thanked for his role in the delivery of babies in 1954.

Most South Australian newspapers are only available in digital format up to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1954, leaving a gap in Walter's story from that date until his death.

## **Death**

Walter passed away on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 1963 and his ashes were interred at Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 1963.

Winnifred Myrtle Webb passed away on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1975, aged 84 and Walter and Winnifred's Daughter Emmaline Nancy Webb passed away on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 1998, aged 73. The ashes of both Winnifred and Nancy were also interred at Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

***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/>

1918 Medical Students <http://hdl.handle.net/2440/39525>

(Trove Newspaper articles tagged – Dr Walter F.S. Webb)

Birth Notice 'The Argus', Melbourne - <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article6120428>

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

Ancestry.com.au

"Blood, Sweat and Fears" ISBN: 978-0-64692-750-3 Medical Practitioners and Medical Students of South Australia who served in WW1. 2014

Centennial Park Cemetery <http://www.centennialpark.org/memorial-search/>

State Records South Australia - Photographs of Soldiers in Uniform

Walter SRSA Ref GRG26/5/4/847

John SRSA Ref GRG26/5/4/4/846