Stories from the Honour Boards

Stories of those who served and are remembered on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew’s Uniting Church

Booklet Number 34

MACTAGGART BROTHERS

WALTER SCIPIO
1886 - 1953

DAN ERIC
1896 - 1956

This booklet remains the property of Saint Andrew’s Uniting Church. Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.
Front Cover:
Walter Mactaggart and his wallaby at Mena Camp, the Australian training ground in front of the pyramids in Egypt. Chaplain Ernest Merrington took the photograph. Mrs Meg Row of the Gold Coast said that it was a photograph of her dad who was in the Light Horse and had taken the wallaby to Egypt with his horse.¹

Mactaggart Family

The names of Lieutenant Walter S Mactaggart and Lieutenant Eric Mactaggart are printed in gold lettering on a Saint Andrew’s Presbyterian Church Honour Board at Saint Andrew’s Uniting Church. They were respectively the eldest and youngest children of Daniel and Florence Rosalie Mactaggart of Ascot in Brisbane. The other four children were girls - Jeannie, Florence, Marjorie and Dora. They all attended Saint Andrew’s.

Daniel Mactaggart was a pioneer in the beef fattening industry in the Burnett and Mary Valleys and founder in Maryborough of the stock and station agency which still bears his name. He took a strong interest in the sport of rowing in Maryborough. When Maryborough was linked by rail to Brisbane, Daniel Mactaggart and his brother opened a branch of Mactaggart Brothers Limited in the capital where the firm prospered.

Mrs Mactaggart came from Victoria and her marriage took place in Maryborough, Queensland before the family moved to Markwell Street, Ascot in Brisbane in 1892. A home and garden lover, the cares of her family of four daughters and two sons were her principal interest though she was a keen supporter of the Presbyterian Church. Through her husband she became closely identified with the pastoral interests of the State. Their sons, Walter and Dan returned from service in Europe though both suffered the harmful effects of gassing. Daniel Mactaggart was Governing Director of Mactaggart Brothers Limited when he died in 1924, aged 71 years. Mrs Mactaggart died fourteen years later.
Lieutenant Walter Scipio Mactaggart

Eldest son of Daniel and Florence Rosalie Mactaggart, Walter was born in Maryborough on 5 October 1886. While attending Brisbane Grammar School from 1900 till 1904, Walter Mactaggart was a member of the First IV Rowing Team, the Empire Cup Shooting Team and the School Cadets.

He spent several years in a bank before entering the stock department of the growing Mactaggart concern. Along with their parents, Walter and his sisters Jeannie, Florence and Marjorie were listed as members of Saint Andrew’s Presbyterian Church in 1912. His was a very early enlistment in the Australian Imperial Force on 21 August 1914. With regimental number 6, he joined 9th Infantry Battalion, was promoted to the rank of Sergeant a week later and sailed from Brisbane on HMAT Omrah on 24 September 1914 for service at Gallipoli, France and Belgium. His battalion was training at Egypt before the Gallipoli campaign when the photograph on the front cover was taken. He received a commission on 13 December 1916 and was promoted Lieutenant. He was injured in 1918, gassed and in hospital in France.

On 12 March 1919 Lieutenant Walter Mactaggart married Edith Audrey Cowen of Redcliffe in a service at Saint Andrew’s Presbyterian Church conducted by the Rev Hubert Robertson. Sadly, Audrey died in May 1920 at the age of 26 years. In March 1922, Walter married Mildred Gladys Gilles in a wedding at the Church of St Benedict, East Brisbane conducted by Rev Father O’Connor.
In May 1924, a Brisbane newspaper unexpectedly reported, “An atmosphere of gloom descended upon Brisbane society yesterday when it became known that Mrs Walter Mactaggart, the young wife of Mr WS Mactaggart of Booroodabin Avenue, Bowen Hills, had died suddenly in her sleep. The late Mrs Mactaggart, as Miss Gladys Gilles, was one of the popular members of the younger set of Brisbane.”\(^1\) Saint Andrew’s Presbyterian Church was again the scene of a quiet wedding on the evening of 22 June 1927 when Mr Walter Mactaggart (eldest son of the late Mr Dan Mactaggart and Mrs Mactaggart, Hamilton) was married to Miss Alice Mary Macdonald (younger daughter of Mr and Mrs John Macdonald, Edmondstone Street, South Brisbane). The Rev Mervyn Henderson officiated. The Macdonalds were also Saint Andrew’s Presbyterian Church members.

Walter Mactaggart rejoined the old firm after his discharge from the AIF. He was appointed a Director when the family business became a public company in the early twenties. He became widely known in Queensland, especially in the livestock selling industry.

\(^1\) *The Brisbane Courier*, Tuesday 27 May 1924, page 14
He died suddenly of cerebral haemorrhage on 8 September 1953, leaving his widow and three daughters. His younger brother, Mr Dan Eric Mactaggart was Managing Director of Mactaggarts Primary Producers’ Co-operative Association Ltd.

**Lieutenant Dan Eric Mactaggart**

Dan Eric Mactaggart was born in Brisbane on 17 July 1896. He attended the Brisbane Grammar School from 1910 till 1912 where he had received military training in the Senior Cadet Corps. He furthered his education at Scotch College, Melbourne where he took a keen interest in rowing and served in the Melbourne University Rifles. Prior to his enlistment at the age of 20 in Brisbane to serve overseas in the Australian Infantry Force on 4 August 1916, he was a stockman jackaroo on Bundooma on the Burnett River. Gunner Dan Eric Mactaggart, Regimental Number 31905, joined the 9th Field Artillery Brigade Reinforcements, embarking from Sydney on RMS *Osterley* on 10 February 1917 and disembarking at Plymouth on 11 April. He proceeded overseas to the Western Front where he was engaged in heavy battle at Ypres, Menin Road, Passchendaele and Zonnebeke. He was forced to receive hospital treatment however in England over a period of three months because of the effects of shell gas. He was transferred in July 1918 to the Australian Flying Corps and gained commission as Lieutenant. He was based at depots in England over ensuing months. His appointment was terminated soon after his return to Australia per *Prinz Ludwig* in October 1919.

Eric Mactaggart rejoined his firm and after it was made into a cooperative association he became Managing Director, a post he retained until his death.
On 3 February 1925 at St James Church, King Street, Sydney, Eric Mactaggart married Maisie Eileen Rylance of Vaucluse. Vicar General Archdeacon D’Arcy Irvine officiated. They made their home in the Brisbane suburb of Hendra.

Mr Mactaggart who was President of the Fat Stock and Produce Brokers’ Association for 14 years took a keen interest in the production side of the industry. He was also Chairman of Rylance Collieries and Brick Works. One of his principal hobbies was developing his grazing property, Cowah at Kilcoy to which he had hoped to retire.

He died on 2 July 1956, aged 59. He was survived by his wife, a daughter and one son. Mrs Mactaggart died in 1982.

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Compiled by N E Adsett, Brisbane, January 2015, 2019.
Lest we forget.