

McGOWEN, Frank Noel



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Born in Sydney, NSW, in 1895 his father was the Honourable James Sinclair Taylor McGowen MLA and the first Labor Premier of NSW. His mother Emily was a suffragette who marched in London in 1911 for the women's vote along with Vida Goldstein, Margaret Fisher (wife of the then Australian Prime Minister Andrew Fisher) and Lady Sarah Cockburn (wife of the then South Australian Premier). Frank enrolled at HAC aged 16 on 9 March 1912, completing the 1st and 2nd year certificates. On 20 August 1914, aged 19, Frank joined the Australian Army Medical Corps, as a member of the 1st Light Horse Field Ambulance along with more than 20 students and staff of HAC. Like many students he had been a member of the Ambulance Class at HAC in 1912, gaining experience that would be vital in his AIF role. He landed with the 1st LHFA on Gallipoli and was working at the dressing station established by them at Chailak Dere on 6 August 1915 at the start of the Battle for Lone Pine. While working as a stretcher bearer on 8 August, he suffered shrapnel wounds to his back resulting in spinal damage and paraplegia, and died at the 19th Australian General Hospital Alexandria, 24 August 1915, exactly a year to the day since enlisting, aged 20 years 5 months. He was buried at Chatby Military Cemetery, Alexandria, Egypt.