



Edward Walter Walden was born in Dunedin on the 26th April 1870. He was the 4th of 6 children born to Henry and Elizabeth Walden.

His parents, Henry and Elizabeth were from Christchurch, England. Henry was born there in 1830, the son of William and Elizabeth Walden. His father was a builder by trade. In the 1850's he sailed for Melbourne, Australia where he spent a few years. He then returned to Christchurch, where he married Annie Elizabeth White (known as Betsy) on the 1st May 1862. They then sailed for Melbourne, where they stayed for a short time before sailing on to Dunedin, arriving there about 1864 or 1865. They decided to settle in Dunedin, so Henry set himself up as a dealer in fine arts, paintings and china and as a merchant selling glass, paint and paperhanging from a shop in Princes Street. They moved into a home in Elm Row, then shifted to High Street in 1878, then to Andersons Bay, where Edward grew up. Henry was a very keen gardener, and had a large glasshouse from which he sold grapes. He also sold peaches, apricots and other produce from his extensive garden. He also bred game fowls for pets, sport and the table.

Henry and Betsy's first child Annie Elizabeth was born in 1865, followed by Henry William in 1867. Unfortunately, Henry William died at 6 months of age. Janet Johnston was born in 1869 followed by Edward Walter in 1870. Mary was born in 1872 and lastly Kate in 1873. She died when she was 18 months old in 1875. In 1875 Edward's mother Annie Elizabeth died of Puerperal Fever. Henry remarried in 1880, to Elizabeth Wood who was born in Rendall, Orkney, Scotland, a farmer's daughter. She arrived in NZ in 1868.

Edward was educated at Andersons Bay School, Otago Boys High School, then studied to become an architect at Otago University. After completing his degree he began his architectural career being articled to James Hislop, then becoming a partner in the firm of Hislop and Walden. When Hislop died he then took over the firm in 1902. During his partnership he spent two years in Wellington and it was during this time that he designed the National Mutual Life Assurance Building in Hunter Street, Wellington. He also designed Murray Roberts Wool store, which took some effort to demolish. He had been studying the new techniques in earthquake strengthening, and had been implementing these into his designs. He went to England and the Continent to further his experience in Architecture, and while there went to Christchurch where his parents and Grandparents were married at the Priory. He made extensive studies of the Priory while in Christchurch.

He married Annie Nisbet Fitzgerald on the 8th June 1898, at her family home "Inveresk" on Shiel Hill, Dunedin. Annie was the daughter of William Sanderson Fitzgerald, who was Inspector of Schools for Otago from 1894 until his retirement. William and his wife Annie Copland Annandale were from Scotland, and were married there in 1861 before sailing on the "Royal Stuart" for Lyttelton, arriving there in October 1861. Annie Nisbet was born in Oamaru in 1872. She wanted to become a doctor like two of her brothers, but at this time in history, females were not allowed to become doctors if they were married, so she gave that idea away.

Edward and Annie had their family home at 22 Hart Street, Roslyn, Dunedin, where they raised their family. Kathleen was born first in 1899, then Eileen (Molly) in 1900, Eric followed in 1901 and Annie in 1905, Patrick 1906, Grace in 1907 and lastly Ted in 1911. Edward was a keen gardener (like his father) and would import all sorts of unusual plants whenever he could, and liked nothing better than being out in his garden. The house was a large square one with a verandah along one side, and lovely views out over the city, harbour and the peninsula. It had extensive gardens and a large glasshouse in which Edward would raise his new plants. At the bottom of the garden was a section of native bush in which the children used to play. Both Edward and Annie were excellent gardeners. Every morning before work Edward would walk around his garden and pick a flower, which he would wear in his buttonhole, in a silver stem container. They had help in the house to do the cleaning, washing and sewing, and there was a Nanny for the younger children. One of the Nannies contracted influenza during the epidemic and died within 2 days. During the epidemic, the family could see a procession of coffins being taken out to Andersons Bay cemetery for burial, from their house. There was always a lot of music being played, as all the children were taught the violin, flute, piano, some playing better than others. Edward used to like to cook, in particular mutton birds, which used to smell out the house when he was cooking them. He was never popular at that time! Edward was a heavy pipe smoker and used to cut his own tobacco from a plug and shred it for his pipe. He was a good mixer with many people and loved talking to others from all walks of life, from the street cleaners to ministers. He was involved in the Congregational Church and went to the church which was in Moray Place at that time. It was a large granite building. He also worked a lot for the church. He was not into politics though. He was keenly interested in the volunteering movement in his early life, and was a member of Lodge Otago No.7. He was an artist in water colours of more than average ability. He was on the Arts Council committee for Dunedin and tried promote early New Zealand artists. He would take the children to the Art Exhibitions and also to museums and to the wharves to see the ships that were in port.

During his architectural career he designed the Mayfair Theatre in King Edward Street, which is now on the list of Historical buildings for Dunedin, also the Presbyterian Church in Andersons Bay, a brick building standing on the corner of Silvertown Street and Highcliff Rd. Donaghy's Rope Walk in Macandrew Road, Hallensteins' building in the Octagon, NZ Accident Insurance building, Levin & Co building, the 1st abattoirs in NZ, and the Otago Peninsula Fallen Soldiers Memorial. He supervised the construction of Dunedin's Carnegie Library, designed the Barley Store in Maclaggan Street for Speight's Brewery, as well as the Commercial Travellers Club in Dowling Street. He designed the hotel at Pembroke Wanaka, planned the alterations to the Excelsior Hotel on the corner of Dowling and Princes Streets, designed a warehouse in Moray Place for Allen, Son and McClure, 2 houses in Castle Street, Laing's Estate shops and offices in George Street, McGavin & Co Ltd building at the corner of King and Duke Streets, alterations to the European Hotel, George Street, St Margaret College alterations, Alex Harris & Co building, Princes Street, a bungalow at 8 Corstorphine Rd, Caversham, as well as many others. Many of these buildings no longer exist, as they have been demolished to make way for new constructions, but some do remain. He liked to design his buildings using Oamaru stone or brick, and many of them were quite ornate with gables and decorative stone carvings on the outside and many also had ornate interiors of the buildings. Many also had wooden panelling, wrought iron staircases and the Commercial travellers building was the first building in Dunedin to have a lift.

Of his children, his elder son Eric, also became an architect and designed buildings in the Nelson area and then later in Auckland. His daughter Grace also wanted to become an architect, but money was tight due to the depression, so she went to University and became a teacher instead. She married and went to live in Masterton. Ted was a brewer for Speight's for several years, before joining the NZ Army where he attained to position of Major. Molly married but died shortly afterwards after giving birth. All the others died young.

Edward Walter in died on the 18th September 1944 of throat cancer. He had been a heavy smoker most of his life. He is buried in Dunedin's Andersons Bay Cemetery in the family plot. His wife died in 1949.

Prepared for the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand (www.cemeteries.org.nz) by Patricia Ellis of Wellington, a grand-daughter of Edward Walden.