

ST PAUL'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1914-1918 HONOUR BOARD



(Photo D. Parker October 2012)

The information contained in these pages has been compiled using the World War 1 Records search facility of the National Archives. Not all of the names could be matched satisfactorily as there was insufficient information to be sure. Other information has been included from newspaper sources and the Australian Dictionary of Biography.

Deaconess Dianne Parker November 2012

The History of the Honour Board

No mention is made in the Session Minutes of the erection of the Honour Board. In the Minutes of June 1916 however, there is an invitation to worship at St Paul's which the Moderator reported having made to His Excellency the Governor General who was visiting Brisbane in August 1916.

At the March meeting of the Committee of Management the following is found:

"The question of the erection of an Honour board in connection with the members of the Church who were at the Front, and also erection of Memorial Tablets to the memory of late Ministers viz, Rev Dr Nisbet, Dr McSwaine and Rev A Gillison was discussed, and it was decided that circulars be prepared and sent to present and past members of the congregation soliciting contributions towards same."

At the following meeting the comment was made:

"A discussion took place as to the wording on the memorial tablets and it was finally decided that same be left in the hands of the committee. It was decided that the tablets be placed on the wall, instead of being let in."

In the Courier Mail of Saturday 16th August the following appeared:

"His Excellency the Governor-General will unveil the church honour board tomorrow morning at the service in St Paul's Presbyterian Church, Leichhardt Street. There will also be unveiled by relatives, brasses to the late Dr McSwaine, Dr Nisbet, Rev A Gillison, Lieutenant Colin Ross-Munro, Lieutenant Thomas Holmes Nisbet, and Private Thomas Windle. The Rev Moorhead Legate will be the preacher at both services."

From a photo which appeared in the Courier Mail later, it seems that the current board is not the original one. The framework remains the same but for the fact it is headed "1914 - 191" and the names have obviously been re-done and new panels slipped in, when we compare that photo with the current board.

Deaconess Dianne Parker

November 2012

From the "Courier Mail" September 2nd 1916



THE HONOUR BOARD OF ST. PAUL'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
BRISBANE.

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James Allen – name too common to trace without further information

William Glen Anderson – unable to trace

Private William Argo enlisted on July 27th 1915 in the 15th Battalion. He was a grocer who joined the 15th Light Horse aged 18 years and 7 months in July 1915 and sailed in the following October only to suffer an attack of a pre-existing illness soon after arriving overseas. He was discharged in February 1916 and returned home to hospital. His mother lived in Boundary Street.

Captain Frederick John Biggs who enlisted aged 19, had been in his second year as an Engineering Student at University of Queensland living with his family at the Exchange Hotel in the City. He joined the 9th Division, rising through the ranks from a Private to become a Captain. He was wounded in shell fire in 1916 and mentioned in the despatches of Sir Douglas Haig for distinguished and gallant service and devotion to duty which was recorded in the Australian Gazette No 165 dated 24th October 1918. He returned home in February 1919.

Private Archibald Lorimer Brown was a farmer aged 36 whose mother lived in Bowen Terrace. He enlisted in the 15th battalion in September 1915 and was wounded in action in France and hospitalised before returning to the field. He was listed as missing before being confirmed as a prisoner of war in Germany. He was released after the war and returned home in March 1919.

Sister Dorothy Brown was a nursing sister aged 28 who was a member of the Australian Army Nursing Corps and describes herself as a 'natural born servant of the King'. She served with No 3 Australian General Hospital and suffered Beri Beri not long after arriving overseas. She served in hospitals in France and England before returning home in 1917 and resigning to marry.

Staff Nurse Ruby D M Brown was a member of the Australian Army Nursing Service from August 1916 and was 39 when sent overseas in March 1917. Her mother lived in Bowen Street. She served in the Middle East and Salonika as a Sister before returning home in September 1919.

Private Joseph Harvey Buckle was a Public Servant in the Taxation office aged 20 when he joined the first Battalion in July 1917. He had been a School cadet and also served in the CMF before enlisting. He was wounded and finally returned home in October 1919.

Lieutenant Hugh Campbell was a machinery salesman from Innisfail whose mother lived in Brisbane. He enlisted in February 1916 aged 30. He joined the 11th Field Company Engineers and left for France as a Private. During his service he was chosen for Officer training and returned home in June 1919.

Private Arthur Clark – too many choices to know which one is the correct one without further information.

Gunner Henry Stuart Lyon Clark was a Bank Manager aged 32 giving his home address at Highgate Hill with his mother. He joined the 4th Field Artillery Brigade in November 1917 and fought in France before returning home in September 1919.

Private John M Davidson was a 19 year old Railway employee who enlisted in the Railway Section. His mother lived at East Brisbane. He went overseas in May 1917 and returned home in July 1919.

Sapper William Dickson was Scottish born and joined the 12th Field Company Engineers enlisting in May 1917. He was a Joiner in Brisbane and had a sister living in New Farm. His next of kin was in Scotland. He served in France and was wounded and then hospitalised with other problems before returning to Australia in December 1918.

Private Robert Peter Elder was a grocer aged 21 who lived with his mother at Eagle Junction when he enlisted in October 1916. He served with the 11th Ambulance and was wounded in France. He returned to Australia in May 1919.

Private Robert Ferguson enlisted in November 1915 as a 42 year old labourer from Bundaberg. His wife and child then moved to Brisbane. He served in the Sea Transport section and was discharged in December 1917 because he was 'over age'. However he went back into that section again in May 1918 this time aged 52 and finished again in February 1919.

Private William A Fisher served in the 9th Brigade and enlisted in September 1914. He was from Liverpool and his mother lived at Southend on Sea in the United Kingdom. He was wounded at Gallipoli in May 1915 and hospitalised following that with fever and other problems. He returned to Australia in December 1915.

John Fleming – unable to identify

Private William Fleming, a storeman from Isaac Street, Spring Hill, enlisted aged 18 years and 6 months with the 1st Reg 41st Battalion. He went to France where he was wounded and gassed but eventually returned to the field. He came home in 1919 after marrying in England.

Private Richard George Fraser was a Draper aged 44 years who lived with his wife and four children at Spring Hill when he enlisted in November 1916 and was attached to the 7/41st battalion. Twelve months later he returned home due to ill health.

Albert Galbraith – more information is needed to identify him definitely, but he is probably Private Albert Daniel Galbraith born in Govan, Scotland who joined the 26th battalion in February 1915. He was a labourer and his next of kin was his father in Lanarkshire, Scotland. He was wounded at Anzac Cove but returned to the field. He came back to Australia in 1919.

Henry George Gessner enlisted in April 1916 and was a Jackeroo at Winton. His mother and sister lived in New Farm. He became a Driver with the 9th Division serving in France and England. His record is unusual for the comment "not wounded or sick" on his blank Health Report. He returned to Australia in 1919.

Captain Chaplain Andrew Gillison (whose portrait is to the right of the entry door into the Church) served with the 14th Battalion who landed at Gallipoli on 21st August. An Australian Government war history records: *"On the following morning there occurred in this remote and now forgotten sector of the Anzac line one of those acts of bravery and compassion which lie buried in the footnotes of Charles Bean's official history of the Australians at Gallipoli. As Chaplain Gillison read the*

burial service over some of the recent dead, he heard a groan from a nearby ridge in no-man's-land. Although he had been warned against showing himself in this area, he went forward and discovered a wounded English soldier of the Hampshire Regiment who had lain out all night and was now being attacked by ants. Together with two other men of the 13th Battalion—Corporal Ronald Pittendrigh and Private Hinton—Gillison crawled out to rescue the stricken man. After they had dragged him for about a yard, a Turkish sniper severely wounded Gillison and Pittendrigh. Both men subsequently died—Gillison on the same day, 22 August, and Pittendrigh on 29 August. Chaplain Gillison lies buried in Embarkation Pier Cemetery.”

He was mentioned in Despatches on 28th January 1916 by Sir Ian Hamilton.

A full biography is found in the “Australian Dictionary of Biography “part of which follows:

“Gillison had served as a private in the Queen's Edinburgh Rifle Volunteer Corps in 1885-87, and had maintained close contact with soldiers in Glasgow where his church adjoined the military barracks. He became a part-time chaplain to the Australian Military Forces on 9 November 1906, and from 1909 was chaplain to the Victorian Scottish Regiment. He was appointed chaplain-captain (4th class) in the Australian Imperial Force on 23 October 1914 and applied for the 14th Battalion out of respect for its commander, Lieutenant-Colonel R. E. Courtney.

As one of the few A.I.F. chaplains with any previous military experience Gillison introduced some British customs to his battalion. On 13 December 1914 the governor-general Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson presented the unit with its colours, which Gillison consecrated, and next Sunday the battalion paraded at his church to witness the consignment of the colours 'until our return'. Gillison spoke to the men 'about the responsibility of having colours, and what these meant'. His parishioners farewelled him warmly and generously, presenting him with two cameras, field-glasses, an automatic pistol, a wristlet watch, an attaché case and a purse of twenty guineas. They also donated £250 and sports equipment for the use of the battalion.”

Private George Ferguson Grant was a 23 year old born in Scotland who was in his fourth year of Medicine at Queensland University when he enlisted in the Army Medical Corps in 1917. His parents and sister lived at Eagle Junction. He served in England but sadly died of influenza in November 1918. He was buried in his birthplace in Scotland with full military honours.

Corporal George Groundwater was born in Tiaro and was living with his wife in Howard. He enlisted in Townsville in March 1914 giving his occupation as a Telegraphist aged 24. He served in the 2nd Light Horse in Signals and was mentioned in Sir A J Murray's despatch March 1917. He also gives a Petrie Terrace address so possibly he too had a mother who attended St Paul's. He returned home in February 1919.

Sir David Hardie was the President of the British Medical Assn in Queensland and Queensland's first medical Knight but he served in France 1915-1916 at the age of 50. The entry for him in the “Australian Dictionary of Biography “ reads in part:

Hardie joined the Royal Army Medical Corps and served with it in France in 1915-16. On his return to Brisbane he became the first chairman of the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association. After retiring from active practice in 1922, he was commissioned by the Queensland government to investigate the treatment of tuberculosis in England and Switzerland in 1922-23. A staunch Presbyterian, he was active from 1928 in the formation of Rev. John Flynn's Aerial Medical Service of the Australian Inland Mission and fostered the development of Traeger's pedal wireless.

Major John Hardie MC, AAMC (son of Sir David) was 26 when he left on "RMS Mooltan" from Sydney 6th May 1916. He was wounded in the back and feet by shrapnel in April 1917. He was mentioned in despatches and was awarded the Military Cross for continuing to treat wounded whilst under fire and in spite of being wounded in two places himself.

C.S.M. Robert Henderson was a 23 year old Railway Porter with a wife and one child who lived in Red hill. He enlisted in October 1916 and served in France in the 3rd Division train returning home early in 1919.

John McCraw Hodge 6/26th Battalion was born in Bundaberg and enlisted from Rockhampton in October 1915. His mother however lived in Leichhardt Street which may be why he is listed on the Board at St Paul's. He was a compositor before joining up. In July 1916 he was wounded in action in France but returned to the field, finally coming home in June 1919

Gunner John William Crawford Hunter was an accountant aged 44 when he joined the Reinforcement Field Battery in January 1917. He went first to Alexandria in 1917 with the 11th Field Artillery Brigade and then via England to the battle in France where he was killed on August 19th 1918. He is buried in the Heath Cemetery, Harbonnieres. His mother and sister lived in Brisbane but his wife returned to England after his death.

Private William McNeillie Hunter was 40 years old, an engine driver who was married with three children and lived at Sylvan Road Toowong when he joined 12/11th Machine Gun Company in March 1917. He trained as a Machine Gunner in Victoria before going to Alexandria and then on to France. He returned to Australia late 1919.

2nd Lieut. Sydney Jones a compositor, enlisted in Brisbane into the Army Medical Corps but when he died he was a Pilot in the 3rd Squadron, Australian Flying Corps. His plane crashed near the village of Flesselles and he is buried at Vignacourt Cemetery in France

Corporal Alec B Laing, a mechanic, enlisted in 13/25th Battalion in December 1915 and sailed for Egypt in May but was hospitalised in July 1916 with a chronic condition which resulted in his return to Australia in August 1916 as he was medically unfit.

Captain Chaplain Charles Legate became a CMF chaplain in 1911 before becoming Navy Chaplain to the Port of Brisbane in 1914. He enlisted on the 27th November 1916 at the age of 48 and left Melbourne for Cairo in June 1917. By October he was hospitalised for several spells with illness and left for England in March 1918. He returned to Australia at the beginning of November 1918.

Sergeant William McDonald aged 37 was born in Scotland and was a Range Foreman living in Bowen Hills with his wife and family when he enlisted in March 1916 and served in the Australian Army Ordnance Corps. He served in France and England before return to Australia early in 1919.

Blane R R Macleod - Miss Macleod was Thomas's sister. She died in London whilst helping with the rehabilitation of blinded servicemen after the war. She acted as housekeeper/hostess for Thomas who was single, before the war. There is a plaque in her memory on the wall near the Organ.

Major Thomas Macleod (was Session Clerk until he asked for leave of absence for twelve months as he had offered his services to the Royal flying Corps in England) excerpt from the "Australian Dictionary of Biography"

"In November 1914 Macleod formed the Queensland Volunteer Flying Civilians to train at Hemmant for aerial warfare in a reconstructed Caudron aircraft. He and eight Volunteers sailed for England where the Royal Flying Corps accepted them. Commissioned second lieutenant, Macleod was appointed temporary captain on 22 December 1916. He served with No.13 Squadron, with a period in command, and was awarded the Croix de Guerreavec Palme for his work as an aerial observer in the 1st battle of Arras and at Vimy Ridge. In 1918 he was appointed O.B.E. Transferred to the Australian Flying Corps, he was demobilized in 1919 as major. On his return to Brisbane he was a founder of the (Royal Queensland) Aero Club. In December 1922 he was appointed a commissioner of the World's Board of Aeronautical Commissions..."

Lieutenant Kenneth McSwaine was a salesman aged 29 who lived at home in New Farm with his mother and other family members when he joined in September 1914. He was the son of Rev J F McSwaine DD. He served in the 3rd Division Ammunition sub Park and was awarded the Military Cross in France when as Rail Head ordnance officer he single-handedly unloaded ammunition from a train which was under enemy fire. He also was recognized for his efficient distribution of ammunition to areas of need.

Lieutenant Thomas Holmes Nisbet a law student and his brother **Lieutenant Alexander William Nisbet** farmer in New Zealand sons of Rev Thomas Nisbet DD, are both remembered. Thomas served with the Otago Infantry Battalion and left on the 16th October 1914 for Gallipoli. He was mentioned in Gen I Hamilton's (Commander Mediterranean Region) despatch of 20th May 1915. He died August 7th 1915 and is buried at No2 cemetery, Gallipoli, Turkey. His brother Alexander served with the New Zealand Expeditionary forces overseas. He was married with two children and on his return at the end of 1918 he continued to serve as a Volunteer in the NZ Territorial army helping to train Cadets and local Militia.

Harold Finister Paton was born in Balbeattie, Kircudbrightshire in Scotland and his mother still lived there. In the session Minutes of June 1916 he was received on transfer from Colombo, Ceylon. He was a Clerical worker who seems to have served two terms - firstly with the 9th Battalion when he was wounded and returned to Australia. He re-enlisted after recuperating and returned to service, this time with the 24/15th battalion. He returned to Australia the second time in March 1919

The Ross-Munro family

Keith Ross, Colin Cameron Ross and (William) Ranald Ross: **Lieutenant Keith Ross Munro**, joined the 9th Battalion of the 5th Australian Light Horse - a grazier aged 20 from Boombah St.George. He was slightly wounded at Anzac Cove. He resigned from the Light Horse to join the Royal Naval Air Arm and was killed over France in 1917. His brother **Lieutenant Colin Campbell Ross Munro** joined the Royal Artillery and was a second Lieutenant in "A" Bty. 122nd Bde. He was killed in France April 23 1916 and is buried in the Merville Communal Cemetery. Their parents lived at 'Rob Roy' in Indooroopilly. **Captain (William) Ranald Ross Munro** served as a Pilot in the Royal Flying Corps and returned home safely.

Private Sydney Russell was a 32 year old clerk from Brisbane whose mother lived in East Brisbane. He enlisted in the 11th Depot Battalion in 1916 and served in Headquarters in England until 1918 when he went to France. He returned to Australia in August 1919.

Private Victor A Spiers a schoolteacher in Toowoomba, enlisted at 18 years 8 months in January 1916 in 3/47th Battalion. He went to fight in France and was reported Missing in action in April 1917 (which was later changed to Killed in action) and is buried at Bullecourt Cemetery. His mother Annie lived at Rose Street, Kelvin Grove. He had been admitted as a member of St Paul's in March 1916 by profession of faith.

Lieutenant David Stitt was one of the group who went to England in 1916 with Thomas Macleod to offer their services to the Royal Flying Corps. In a letter published in the "Courier Mail" in August 1926 Macleod says:

"All the men who came with me from Brisbane are now in the Royal Flying Corps. Five have received commissions, and four are mechanics, so the 'Courier' Aeroplane and the Queensland Volunteer Flying Corps have justified their existence."

His obituary published in the "Courier Mail" 7th August, 1923 records:

"Shortly after the outbreak of the War David Stitt went home with Mr Thomas (now Major) Macleod. Here he received, with several others who accompanied him, his commission in the royal Flying Corps but when he was an observer in an aeroplane in England he was involved in an accident. The plane crashed and he was badly hurt. He was unable to proceed to France but was appointed Equipment officer at Croydon and other places. Lieutenant Stitt died after a short illness aged 33 years leaving a widow and small children."

Private Thomas Windle aged 36 was a shipping clerk, whose family lived in Rogers Street. He enlisted in May 1914 (No 125) and was in the 9th Battalion. Twelve months later he was killed in action at Gaba Tepe on the Gallipoli Peninsula. He was buried in Shell Green Cemetery No 1 at Gallipoli. He left a dependant mother and invalid sister at home.

Private Cyril Melrose Windrum was a clerk aged 23 when he enlisted in November 1915 and was part of the 12th Field Artillery Battalion. He served as a Gunner before experiencing heart problems and being forced to return home in March 1919. His mother lived in New Farm.

Captain Robert Wrench was just 18 years old, a clerk from Wickham Street when he joined D company of the 42nd Battalion at the end of August 1915. He had six years in School cadets and had been an officer but enlisted as Private. He left Australia in 1916 and spent time in England at Training School before going to France. During his term he rose through the ranks from Private, to Sergeant, then Lieutenant before being made a Captain during his last twelve months.



