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 98

STEWART NEIL GOW

1896 - 1974

SLQ

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Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

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Corner Ann and Creek Streets
Brisbane QLD 4000
2016, revised 2018

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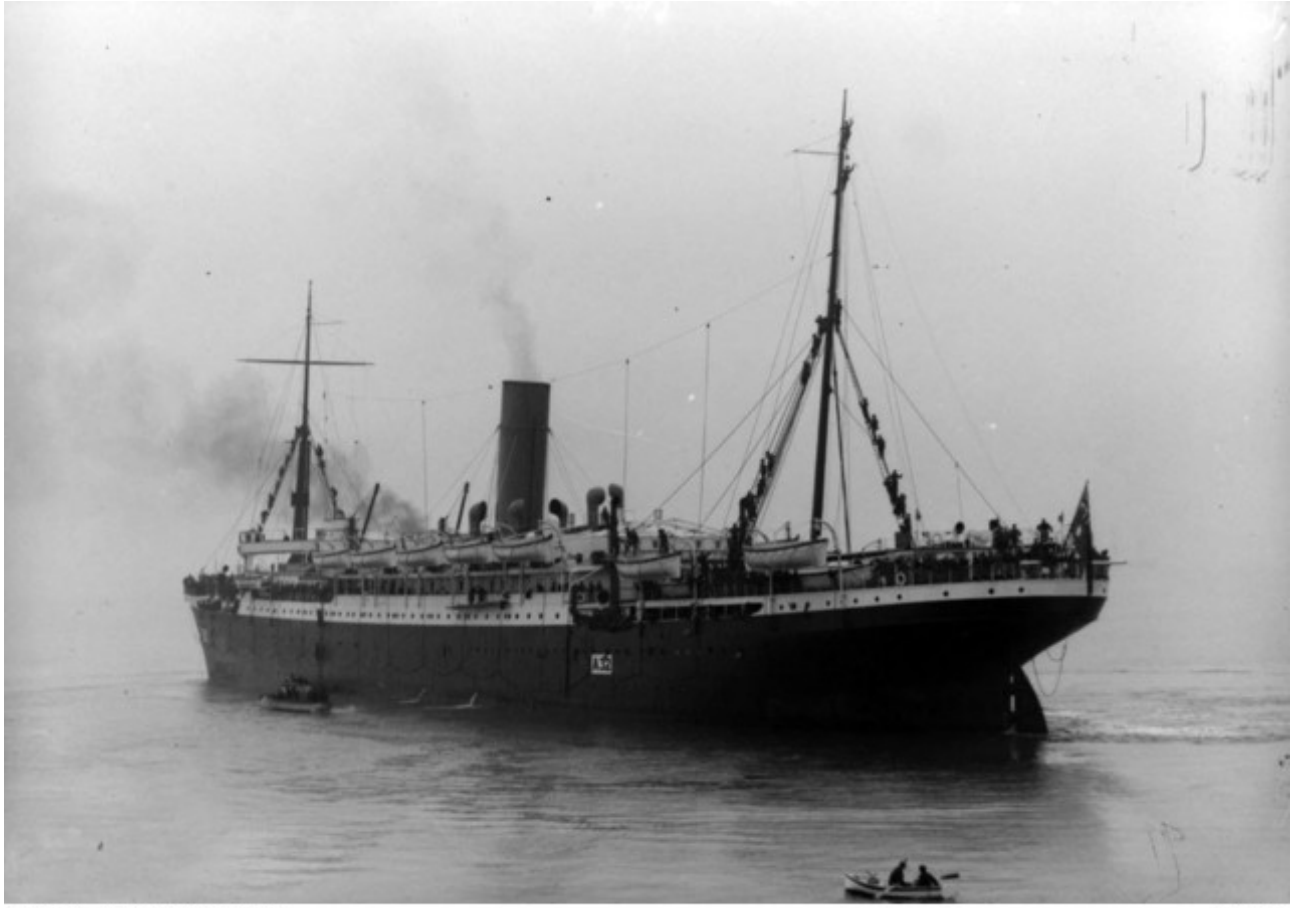
for an online copy of this booklet and more pictures .

Private Stewart Neil Gow

Stewart Neil Gow was born on 22nd January 1896 at Newcastle, New South Wales, eldest son of Robert Milne Gow, (businessman, merchant, company director) and his wife Agnes Mary née Jones. Soon after his birth, his father opened a business in Brisbane on the corner of Edward and Mary streets which was to become R M Gow and Company Limited, a highly successful firm specialising in the wholesale merchandising of foods and household requisites. Stewart's three younger brothers - James Gordon, Edward Norman and Robert Wallace Milne Gow were born in Brisbane in the first decade of the twentieth century. Their family home was Gowan Brae in Mark Street, New Farm. Stewart Neil Gow attended Brisbane Grammar School in 1910 and 1911. In his late teenage years in Brisbane he joined the 7th Infantry Citizen Forces and worked in his father's company as a salesman.

On reaching the age of 20 years 8 months, he enlisted in Brisbane on 19 September 1916 to serve in the Australian Imperial Force. He named his mother as next-of-kin and his religious denomination was Congregational.

Private Stewart Gow was given regimental number 14643 and appointed to the motor transport section of the Australian Army Service Corps in the 11th Depot Battalion at Enoggera. In 1917 at Broadmeadows he received the rank of cleaner, then driver and driver mechanic in the 17th Divisional Supply Column 300 Company and he embarked with his unit on board HMAT *Themistocles* on 4 August 1917 from Melbourne.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL PB1021

Stewart Gow embarked from Melbourne on 4 August 1917 on His Majesty's Australian Transport (HMAT) Themistocles.

Themistocles *had a twin screw engine, weighed 11 231 gross tons and was capable of 15 knots. It was built in Belfast for G Thompson & Co, London, to carry passengers and refrigerated cargo and was completed in January 1911. It was leased by the Commonwealth until 20 October 1917.*

The troops disembarked at Glasgow before travelling to Parkhouse Camp in southern England where he remained for the rest of that year preparing for duties at the Western Front.

1918 was a difficult year. At Tidworth in mid-January, an offence was recorded against Driver Gow for being absent without leave while travelling by train when not in possession of a leave pass. He was confined to barracks for seven days and forfeited one day's pay. On the last day of January he proceeded overseas to France where he served at the Australian General Base Depot at Rouen. Joining 1st Siege Battery Ammunition Column in early April, Driver Gow carried out transport duties in France and Belgium till June when he fractured his right arm. This injury required hospital treatment at Mile End Military Hospital in Bancroft Road, Stepney and later at 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford. Partly recovered, he was assigned duties in No 4 command depot, overseas training brigade in England but was again in hospital at Parkhouse in November and early December.

After the war, Stewart Gow was granted leave to engage in non-military employment at a merchant's premises in Clink Street London. He returned to Australia per *Port Denison* on 17 November 1919 and was discharged on 18 December. He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal for his services in the AIF.

At home in Brisbane Stewart Gow resumed his career as a salesman in his father's business but very soon took managerial responsibility. R M Gow and Company Ltd became a private company in 1921 by which time R M Gow's four sons had joined the firm. R M Gow remained the governing director until his death in 1948.

His eldest son Stewart and his brothers continued to undertake new ventures like their enterprising father and the firm continued to prosper.

On 4 April 1925 Stewart Gow and Nancye Muriel Sack were married at Sydney in Saint Stephen's Presbyterian Church. The bridegroom's gift to the bride was a single-seater sports car. The couple lived at Prospect Terrace, Hamilton. In the late 1960s they moved to Monaco Street, Surfers Paradise. Stewart Neil Gow died in 1974 and his widow in 1978.

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Brisbane
April 2016, revised November 2018

Lest we forget