

# 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 89

## **LUKE BROTHERS**

### **ROLAND THOMAS**

**1890 - 1947**

### **HARRY**

**1892 - 1980**



*Queenslander Pictorial Supplement, 1915. SLQ*

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*Tel el Kebir*

*At Tel el Kebir Roland Luke worked at No 1 Australian General Hospital. Tel el Kebir is between Cairo and Port Said on the edge of the Egyptian Desert.*

Photograph by 1772A Sgt. Harold Littlejohns1st Machine Gun Company.

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Corner Ann and Creek Streets  
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for an online copy of this booklet and more pictures .

## **The Luke Family from Manchester**

David Luke and his wife Mary née Davidson and their two children, Arthur and Clara were passengers on board the royal mail steamer *Quetta* from Lancashire to Brisbane in 1886. Three more children were born in Brisbane – Gertrude, Roland Thomas and Harry. Mr David Luke was a carpenter and on arrival the family lived at first at Fortitude Valley, later at Rosa Street in Spring Hill and then at Killeen Street Nundah. They attended Wharf Street Congregational Church.

Arthur married Mary Alice Bugslag whose younger brother Charles<sup>1</sup> served in World War 1 and whose name is on an honour board at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church. The eldest daughter Clara married Len Atherden<sup>2</sup> whose name is also on an honour board. Gertrude became a tailoress and did not marry. The two younger brothers, Roland and Harry both served in the Australian Army Medical Corps in the Great War. Their names are on our honour boards and their stories are told in this booklet. Their father Mr David Luke died in 1918 before his sons returned from the war. Their mother Mary died in 1943 at the age of 86 years.

### **Corporal Roland Thomas Luke**

Roland Thomas Luke was born on 20 July 1890 in Brisbane, second son of David and Mary Luke. Roland was a draper when he enlisted in May 1915 to serve overseas, a single man residing at Nundah with his parents and sister Gertrude. He had served in the Australian Army Service Corps, part of the citizen defence scheme before the war.

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1. See Booklet Number 88 *Charles David Bugslag*  
2. See Booklet Number 85 *Leonard Henry Atherden*

He was 24 years 10 months old, stood 5 feet 6¾ inches (169.5 cm) tall and weighed 137 lbs (62.1 kg). Roland's father, David Luke of Killeen Street Nundah was his next-of-kin and his religious denomination was Congregational.

Like many other young Congregationalists Roland Luke chose to serve in the Australian Army Medical Corps. He was attached to the 4<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance and embarked from Brisbane on HMAT<sup>1</sup> *Karoola* on 12 June 1915. At Tel el Kebir<sup>2</sup> he worked at No 1 Australian General Hospital and embarked from Alexandria at the beginning of June 1916 to serve with the British Expeditionary Force in France via Marseilles. While carrying out the dangerous duties of the Field Ambulance throughout 1917 he suffered gunshot wounding and spent some weeks in hospital at Havre at the end of that year. He rejoined his unit in the field on 31 December 1917 and was given leave in the UK from 24 February till 12 March 1918. He was promoted to Lance-Corporal then Corporal in October 1918 while serving with 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion performing field ambulance duties. On 2 January 1919 Corporal Luke left the Australian General Base Depot in Havre to prepare for return to Australia per hospital ship *Plassy* from Southampton on 17 March 1919. During the voyage he was on nursing staff duties. He arrived in Australia on 30 April and received discharge soon afterwards. Medals awarded to him were the 1914/15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Roland's mother at Nundah would have welcomed his return, his father having died in 1918. Mrs Luke and Roland moved to McIntyre Street, Woolloowin. Later Roland's younger brother Harry, also an ex-serviceman joined them. Roland continued his employment as a draper.

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1. His Majesty's Australian Transport

2. Tel el Kebir training camp was located on the southern side of the Sweet Suez canal, 40km east of Ismailia.

On 11 October 1929 Roland married Gertrude Fanny Krefter, daughter of Julius Herman and Charlotte Ann Krefter née Burton at St Thomas' Church Toowong. Unfortunately Gertrude died on 12 June 1932 at Dalkeith Private Hospital at Eagle Junction. She was buried at Lutwyche Cemetery. In 1934 Roland lived at Kingsley in George Street in the city where he was employed as a manufacturer's agent.

Roland was 45 years old when he married again on 20 July 1935, this time to Ethel Evelyn Rach, daughter of Frederick Rudolph Rach and Annie Cecilia née Maddison of Killarney Queensland. They lived at 83 Somerset Street, Kedron for the rest of their lives, Roland occupied as an agent. Ethel died on 20 June 1967 and Roland in 1974.

### **Extra Regimental Corporal Harry Luke**

Harry was the youngest member of the Luke family, born in Brisbane on 5 May 1892. He became a commercial traveller probably based at Toowoomba as it was there that he enlisted on 2 October 1915 to serve overseas in the military forces of the Commonwealth of Australia. He was of slighter build than his older brother, 5 feet 4 inches (162.5 cm) tall and 136 lbs (61.7 kg) in weight. Like his brother he named his father as next-of-kin, his religious denomination as Congregational and was allotted to serve in the Australian Army Medical Corps. Harry's service number was 10450 and he embarked from Sydney on board SS *Hawkes Bay* with General Reinforcements for the Army Medical Corps on 20 April 1916.

Throughout the years of the war, Private Harry Luke carried out medical corps duties in England, mainly in London. He was attached for various lengths of time at Park House Camp and the Australian Auxiliary Hospitals at Southall and Moreton Gardens.

In January 1919, Private Luke was attached for duty with AIF Headquarters at Horseferry Road, London, an appointment he fulfilled till his return to Australia per SS *Wahehe* on 30 October. During this period, he received a promotion to Extra Regimental Corporal on 5 June 1919. On the return voyage he undertook responsibilities as part of the nursing staff. His AIF discharge was finalised in Brisbane on 9 March 1920.



Australian War Memorial D00796

### *Horseferry Road, London. 1919*

Harry's mother had moved to McIntyre Street Woolloowin following her husband's death in 1918. Again she would have welcomed her son's return from the war. Harry resumed his work as a manufacturer's agent and lived with his mother till he married at the age of 43. The wedding of Harry Luke and Ida May Smith took place on 21 December 1935. The couple lived at 20 Ryans Road Northgate till Harry retired and they moved to Southerden Avenue at The Grange. Harry died in 1980 and Ida in 1983.



*Group portrait of officers and other ranks on board HMAT Wahehe during the return voyage to Australia, September-October 1919.  
Back Row, Left. Cpl Harry Luke.*

*Australian War Memorial D00960K*

## **References**

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Prepared by Noel Edward Adsett, Brisbane, February 2016



*Lest we forget*