

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 119

HERBERT JAMIESON STEWART 1878 - 1949



This booklet remains the property of Saint Andrew's Uniting Church.
Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

Cover Illustration:

Dr HJ Stewart (left of Matron Grace Wilson, centre front) with others of the staff of the Australian General Hospital, Lemnos.

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Corner Ann and Creek Streets
Brisbane QLD 4000
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Major Herbert Jamieson Stewart

Herbert Jamieson Stewart was born on 2 March 1878 in Brisbane, Queensland, the youngest of seven children and sixth son of Alexander and Anne Stewart.

Alexander Stewart was a partner in the merchant firm of Stewart & Hemmant, an elder and trustee at Wickham Terrace Presbyterian Church, later Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church, a member of the Scottish Constitution of Freemasons and a director of the A.M.P. Society. The family lived at Wickham Terrace where Alexander Stewart's first wife died in 1865.



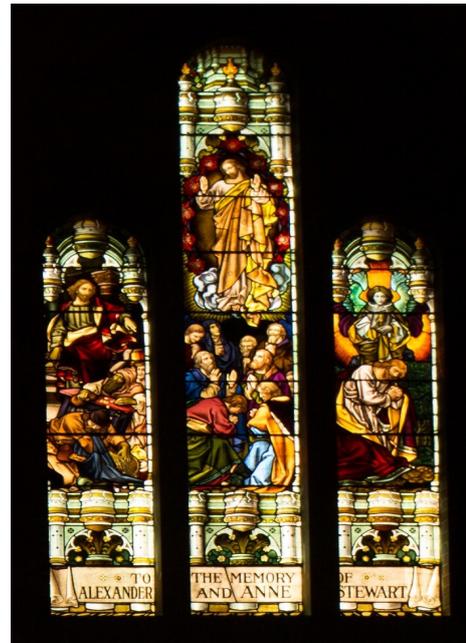
*Alexander Stewart
loved Scottish customs*

Their only daughter was the mother of the Billington brothers¹ whose names are also on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel.

Mrs Anne Stewart (née Killough) was Alexander's second wife and Herbert's mother. Herbert had five older brothers and an older sister. At about the time of Herbert's birth, Alexander Stewart acquired a 250 acres (100ha) property extending along both sides of Enoggera Creek at Ashgrove and had built there a mansion which he named Glen Lyon after his birthplace in Scotland. The Stewart family moved to Glen Lyon, now a heritage-listed villa at 34 Glenlyon Drive, Ashgrove. Built from around 1876 to 1920, it is also known now as Marist Fathers Monastery. It was added to the *Queensland Heritage Register* in 1992. Herbert's mother died in 1905.

¹ See Stories from the Honour Boards, Booklet 77, *Billington Brothers*

The stained glass window at Saint Andrew's church in the northern wall on the right hand side was dedicated in memory of Alexander and Anne Stewart in 1922. Alexander Stewart married a third time in 1907. The wedding to Edith Annie Best (1850–1945) took place on 15 January of that year. Alexander Stewart died in 1918.



Herbert Stewart's name was listed in the 1901 census in Scotland where he was studying at Edinburgh University to become a doctor. He graduated MD from that university and also obtained a degree in Surgery, B Ch. Dr HJ Stewart commenced his career as a medical practitioner at his Clayfield residence, Wyndlawn, in Sandgate Road in 1909.

On Wednesday 12 April 1911 at St Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Sydney, Dr Stewart married Miss Ruby Irene Taylor, younger daughter of Mr William Taylor MLA, Ercildoune, Bexley, New South Wales. Back in Brisbane, the couple settled at Wyndlawn where their two children were born, Marjorie Elizabeth Ann Stewart in 1912 and Ian Jamieson Stewart in 1914.



*Dr Stewart's wife Ruby
with their children
Marjorie and Ian*

At the age of 37 years, Dr Stewart enlisted to serve in the Australian Imperial Force on 3 May 1915 and a fortnight later embarked on RMS¹ *Mooltan* from Melbourne with other servicemen and women, part of the 3rd Australian General Hospital unit.



The RMS Mooltan weighing 9621 tons with an average cruising speed of 34.26 kmph was owned by the P & O SN Co, London. It was torpedoed and sunk by UC27 on 26 July 1917.

Clydebuilt Ships Database

Mrs Ruby Stewart's older sister, Miss Mary Florence Park Taylor stayed with her at Wyndlawn to help care for the young children.

Soon after reaching Suez the 3rd AGH staff transferred to the island of Lemnos, a Greek island in the Aegean Sea near Gallipoli.



Number 3, Australian General Hospital, Lemnos

Australian War Memorial. AO3075

1. Royal Mail Ship

Their arrival coincided with a visit by Padre Ernest Merrington¹ from Gallipoli where he had become accustomed to the noisy din of ceaseless firing and flying shrapnel. It was the practice for a chaplain to go from Anzac to Lemnos for a week to visit the hospital units there. It was Rev Dr Merrington's turn to go and he left on 26 July, travelling with Major General Legge, Major Blamey and Colonel Sutton. He described his feeling on arrival. "My joy in finding myself under such a peaceful set of conditions was indescribable. I went ashore, visiting the Greek Church and looking round on the town and countryside."²

Chaplain Merrington continued, "On succeeding days I visited the hospitals and took the names of our men who were patients, with a note of their state of health. A very pleasant surprise was the meeting with Major Lockhart Gibson, an elder at St Andrew's Church, and Dr Stewart, a member of the same congregation in Brisbane. They had just arrived with the new No 3 Hospital party on board the *Simla*, where I had dinner with them afterwards."³



*When Dr Stewart and the first medical team arrived on Lemnos there was no hospital.
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AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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¹ See Stories from the Honour Boards, Booklet 2, *Ernest Northcroft Merrington*

² *Memoirs*. P 74

³ *Memoirs*. P 74

Within hours the hospital began receiving wounded patients. Numbers of casualties increased dramatically due to the August offensives taking place on Gallipoli Peninsula.



The men were treated for diseases and different sorts of dysentery and so on—and they had to diagnose which type it was before they could start curing them. The pathology was basic but effective. Dr Stewart went on to write a paper for the Australian Medical Journal on his work controlling disease at the hospital.

Dr Stewart himself was treated for sickness in late October. His wife received a telegram stating, “Regret reported Major HJ Stewart admitted hospital London suffering from jaundice will promptly advise if anything further received.” In mid-November however a medical board at Horseferry Road in London reported the patient had ‘quite recovered’ from enteritis and jaundice.

Dr Stewart returned to Mudros at the beginning of December 1915. After the evacuation of allied troops from the Gallipoli Peninsula the hospital staff left Lemnos for Egypt thence to Brighton, England. Unfortunately it became clear during the early months of 1916 that Major Stewart would not be fit for further active service following an operation for varicose veins. His return to Australia was therefore recommended and approved. He sailed per hospital ship *Port Sydney* on 24 June 1916 and his appointment was terminated on 29 August.

Dr Herbert Stewart returned to his wife and infant children and his medical practice at Sandgate Road, Clayfield but the sudden death of his wife following an attack of pneumonia in September 1919 was the cause of great sadness. Mrs Ruby Stewart's sister, Miss Park Taylor who had resided with her and the children during Herbert's overseas war service had subsequently served as a VAD¹ worker in Egypt, taking charge of a Red Cross kitchen at Moascar. She had returned to Brisbane just a week before her sister's death.

Dr Stewart and his young family continued to live at Wyndlawn, Old Sandgate Road, Clayfield. The family worshipped at Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church where Marjorie joined the choir and Dr Stewart became an elder. Marjorie married Norris Octavious (Paddy) Vidgen at a ceremony conducted by Rev Norman Millar at Saint Andrew's Church in September 1938. Her younger brother Ian was a groomsman.

Dr Stewart's only son Ian served in the AIF in World War 2, was awarded a Military Medal and gained the rank of captain but died in a military hospital in Brisbane in July 1945. His military funeral was held at Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church.



After dealing with so much death and pain during the war, Dr Stewart embraced life, delivering thousands of Brisbane babies between 1919 until his retirement in 1948.

Dr Herbert Stewart died in 1949 and the Saint Andrew's congregation recorded this tribute in its annual report: "Death invaded our Session on July 16th when the call came suddenly to our beloved elder Dr Herbert Jamieson Stewart. Dr Stewart belonged to the best known family in St Andrew's for his parents Alexander and Anne Stewart were among the pioneers of our congregation and among the very generous supporters of it. The outstanding trait in the doctor's character was his abounding cheerfulness and joviality. He never faltered in his great task of happiness. ... Kindness was another of his great characteristics. By his unfailing kindness he won the affection of his patients. His unbending integrity also won for him the esteem of the medical profession. The death of his son, Captain Ian Jamieson Stewart, in 1944 (sic), was a sore blow, for the bond of affection between father and son was rare in its strength and beauty. He was also a man of deep religious faith. In the Scots fashion he did not wear his heart on his sleeve, but his religious faith was deep and real. We miss him from his accustomed place. His eldest (sic) sister, Mrs Mary Hawthorn,¹ did not long survive him for she passed away suddenly also a few weeks later on September 21st. She was a gracious lady, foremost in good works and a great lover of her Church."²

Dr HJ Stewart's name is remembered on Honour Boards at Clayfield Bowls Club and the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church, Brisbane.

1. In 1894 Mary Stewart (1868-1949) married AGC Hawthorn who was later appointed to the Queensland Parliament Legislative Council

2. Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church *Annual Report* 1949, pages 20/21

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Written and compiled by Noel E Adsett
Brisbane
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Alexander Stewart was a prominent Brisbane businessman, who built this mansion Glen Lyon on Enoggera Creek at Ashgrove to be the family home of Herbert Stewart and his siblings.



The Honour Board at Clayfield Bowls Club includes the name of Dr HJ Stewart



Lest we forget