



Lieutenant Colonel C.G. GEHRMANN VD

[1875 – 1958]



Colonel Gehrman was elected to Life Membership of the Club in 1947

Charles George Gehrman was born on 24 July 1874 in Ipswich. His father was August Frederick Gehrman [1830 – 1879] and mother, Christina Sophia Louisa (née Low or Law) [1835 – 1923]. He was the youngest child in the family, comprising his siblings:

- Francis Frederick [1856 – 1930]
- Maria [1857 – 1864]
- Henry (Harry) [1859 – 1886]
- August [1861 – 1873]
- An unnamed male child [1868]
- Henrietta Charlotte Louisa [1869 - ?]
- Charles [18? – 1872]
- Charles George [1874 – 1959]

We thank the History Interest Group and other volunteers who have researched and prepared these Notes. The series will be progressively expanded and developed. They are intended as casual reading for the benefit of Members, who are encouraged to advise of any inaccuracies in the material.

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On 9 October 1911 he married Alice Maud (née Shaw) [1882 – 1961]. They had three sons:

- Charles Frederick Shaw [1912 – 1913]
- August Shaw [1914 – 2004]¹
- Hal [1920 – 1983]²

The family lived variously at Oxley, Annerley and Sherwood.



Captain Gehrman [rear row, far right] at a Course of Instruction for Officers, Sydney University, October 1908

Gehrman's military career is summarised below:

- 22 May 1893 Second Lieutenant
- 21 June 1895 promoted Lieutenant
- 4 January 1900 promoted Captain
- 6 March 1901 as a Lieutenant, sailed for South Africa on "*Templemore*" with the 5th Contingent
- 5 February 1901 promoted Temporary Captain
- 1901-02 2 Company, 5th Queensland Imperial Bushmen
After his military service, he remained in Southern Africa & travelled up to the Great Lakes of central Africa with some fellow veterans prospecting exploring and hunting before returning to Brisbane.
- 28 November 1902 to Unallotted List
- 10 December 1904 to Reserve of Officers
- 5 March 1907 to Unallotted List
- 1 November 1910 to Active List

¹ Lieutenant Colonel A ("Gus") S Gehrman, CBE, DSO, ED – an active and popular Club member who Commanded 2/13 Field Company RAE in the Second World War; was a prominent engineer in Brisbane; and a Member of the Senate of the University of Queensland 1952-77 and Deputy Chancellor 1966-77.

² Major Hal Gehrman ED, RAE. 2nd AIF 1941-46. A long-standing Club member who was Senior Town Planner at the Brisbane City Council and part time lecturer in Town Planning Law at QUT until his death in 1983.

- 1 July 1911 Staff Captain (Adjutant), 9th Battalion (*Moreton Regiment*)
- 28 October 1912 Regimental Duties 9th Battalion and Area Officer, Senior Cadets
- 16 November 1914 promoted Major
- 1 September 1915 Passed "Tactical Fitness to Command" Course
- 1 April 1916 Major (AIF)
- 29 March 1916 – 1 October 1918 AIF Camps – Brisbane. He is also reported to have undertaken "domestic field security tasks"
- 1 April 1921 Acting Adjutant, 26th Battalion (*Logan and Albert Regiment*) when that Battalion was re-raised after the First World War
- 1 August 1921 Honorary Lieutenant Colonel and to Retired List

The specific reason for Gehrman's promotion to honorary rank on retirement is unknown – however it was a common practice in those times to so recognise long and distinguished service.

In South Africa, the 5th Queensland Imperial Bushmen³ saw plenty of fighting. They were constantly in touch with the enemy, and beside innumerable small skirmishes, mention may be made of operations of 24 and 25 May at Klipfontein and Mooifontein; and Mokari Drift. The 5th also were in operations at the Natal Border Campaign and at Onverwacht. The majority of the 110 Queensland officers who went to the South African War (1899 – 1902) were Club members.⁴ For many years he was the Secretary of the South African War Veterans Association.

For his service, Captain Gehrman was awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal with 5 clasps; and the Volunteer Decoration in 1913.

It has been difficult to ascertain precisely what civil employment Gehrman followed after leaving the army. In various electoral rolls he is described as "clerk". It would appear that he was qualified as an accountant and company secretary. He was a member of the Queensland Branch of the Australasian Institute of Secretaries. In 1930 he was registered as a Trustee in the Federal Bankruptcy Division. In 1931 he was recorded as being the Secretary of Burnett Air Navigation Ltd.. In 1943 he was Secretary of the Brisbane Fruit and Produce Exchange Ltd. – which operated the Turbot Street markets, and he conducted a public accounting practice from there.

The then Captain Gehrman joined the Club in 1906.

He was the Club's Honorary Auditor from 1935 to 1957 – it is presumed that his election to Life Member was as a result of this service.

Soon after World War II, he inaugurated the annual *El Alamein Dinner*, for officers of the three services who fought in that battle. This dinner was held in the Club on 23 October. In later years, the dinners were presided over by his son Lieutenant Colonel A S 'Gus' Gehrman.

In October 1957, the finance sub-committee had before it a proposal that "... Colonel C G Gehrman should write a history of the Club. It was one of those good ideas, seemingly before its time. The minutes make no further mention of the project; no manuscript has ever been found; Colonel Gehrman's son had no knowledge of the project and C. G. Gehrman died two years later."

The last annual general meeting of the 1950s was held on 25 November 1959. It noted ... "the 'sterling work' done by the late Colonel C. G. Gehrman, who had given so much of his life to the Club."

Colonel Gehrman died in Brisbane on 1 May 1959.

³ distinguished by their puggarees (hat bands) of koala skin.

⁴ For example, Captain (later Lieutenant Colonel H.R. Carter VD (President 1930) also served with in the 5th.

Sources included:

- Various web pages
- *United Service Club, Queensland: The First Century, 1892-1992* by Flight Lieutenant Murray Adams and Lieutenant Colonel Peter Charlton
- Club Meeting Minutes, Annual Reports and sundry documents
- Contribution from Major Richard Gehrman – Club Member, son of Major H. Gehrman, and grandson of Colonel Gehrman

Prepared By: [initials, date] SJM May 2020

Reviewed By: Garry Collins, 4 May 2020

Major Richard Gehrman Richard Gehrman <Richard.Gehrman@usq.edu.au>

