



A Queensland Rifle Club member who made the supreme sacrifice  
1914-1919

# The Story Behind the Name



**Captain John Fitzmaurice Guy LUTHER**

26 March 1870 - 25 August 1915



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### **PRE-ENLISTMENT:**

- John was born on 26 March 1870 in Donnybrook, Dublin, Ireland to parents John Fitzmaurice Luther and Jane Mary Litton who married in St Peters Church, Dublin on 2nd March 1861
- His father was Rector of the Church of England and was about 45 years of age when John was born.
- He was educated at Rathmines School, Dublin, as well as the Ireland University of Dublin Medical School and graduated in 1893
- Before coming to Queensland, he was House Surgeon, City Hospital, Dublin.
- He arrived in Queensland, Australia in 1895 aged 25 years
- His home town became Bundaberg, Qld
- His first appointment in Queensland was that of Assistant Physician at Goodna Asylum. Later he acted as locum tenens to his brother, who was in practice in Maryborough.
- He built up a practice that had reached large dimensions. He was large hearted and generous to a degree, and was known for his continuous and frequent acts of kindness
- He married Miss Ida Tassie Mowbray, eldest daughter of the late Mr. Thomas Mowbray, Police Magistrate, and of Mrs. Mowbray, on 10 April 1900 in Brisbane
  - They had four children, Jean Alice (1901), Guy Mowbray (1903) , Ida Betty (1906), Edward Fitzmaurice (1913) who later he served in WW2 (QX6171) & (Q185087) and became a Captain and was discharged in 1945
- At the time of his death his children were still rather young, namely Jean, aged 14 years, Pat., 12 years, Betty 8 years, and Teddy 2 years.
- When John (Guy as he was known) enlisted he listed his next of kin as his wife, Mrs Ida T Luther, Bundaberg
- His sister-in-law, Sister Norma Violet MOWBRAY, Australian Army Nursing Service, died of disease, 21 January 1916

### **PREVIOUS MILITARY SERVICE:**

- He served in the militia in the Australian Army Medical Corps from 1902
- He also did a lot of work with the local cadets
- Major Dr. Guy Fitzmaurice Luther had seen over fifteen years' service in the Army Medical Corps of the Australian Defence Forces and was Area Medical Officer and Regimental Medical Officer of the 4th Wide Bay Infantry Battalion, Bundaberg. He was regarded as one of the best-informed officers in the military forces in regard to sanitation.

### **RIFLE SHOOTING:**

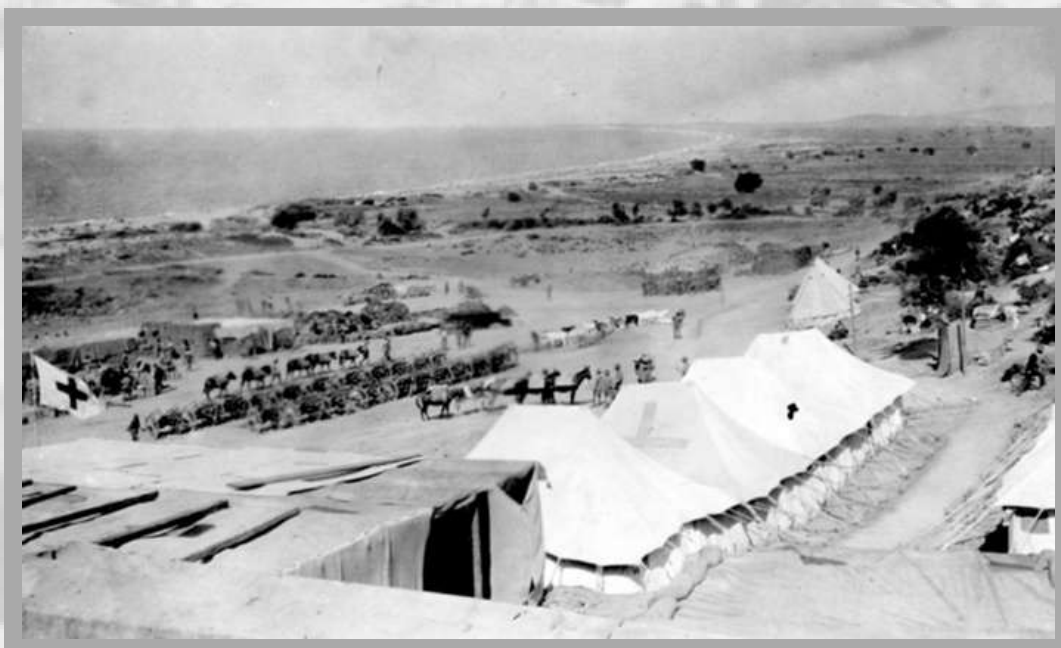
- In 1910 he was the vice president of the Bundaberg Rifle Club



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**SERVICE:**

- John (Guy) enlisted on 6 October 1914 in Brisbane as a Captain (Medical Officer) with the 15th Battalion, in Headquarters, aged 44
- Luther was appointed Regimental Medical Officer to the 15th Battalion and sailed from Melbourne with his unit on 22 December 1914, aboard HMAT A40 Ceramic.
- He spent some time training in Egypt with his Unit
- In 25 April 1915, he, with his Battalion, landed at Gallipoli the first day of the ANZAC Campaign
- He was in charge of the Field Ambulance section of the 15th Battalion
- On the 8th August, it was Dr Luther who discovered Herb Booker, an old Bundaberg boy belonged to the 15th Battalion. Herb had been critically wounded from enemy fire and was laying on the battlefield. He was still breathing when Capt. Luther found him and had him carried to the beach but Herb died on the way. Dr. Luther buried him and read the burial service over the grave.
- For three months; good fortune smiled at Captain Luther in the hottest corners at Anzac while he unselfishly tendered the wounded and dead soldiers around him
- It seems that in one of the Fifteenth's brilliant charges the men were falling so quickly that Dr. Luther decided to leave his dug-out and take his dressing station right near the firing line. He was hit with a bomb on the back of the head and never gained consciousness. Captain Macgregory, medical officer of the 16th, had him carried on to the beach, and despite all they could do, he passed away.



Clearing Station where Luther worked helping so many wounded soldiers at Gallipoli



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### SERVICE:

- The mail had arrived at the front, and in one of his packets the soldier doctor found a red handkerchief, "Someone wants to make a target of me," he said, laughingly, as he tied it round his neck. There was also a box of chocolates, and the medical captain was sitting in the advanced trenches distributing them one by one to the troops as if they were a lot of children at a party, A few minutes later he was hit.
- On 25 August, near Hill 60, Luther was shot in the head by a Turkish sniper and died soon afterwards. The 'Brisbane Courier' reported: 'He had been attending to several casualties caused by snipers firing on a certain point in the communication line. He was wearing around his neck a large red bandana. An officer and some men came to Luther's dressing station on their way up to the front line. To show them the dangerous sector in the communication line Luther accompanied them, and at the spot where so many casualties had occurred, a sniper's bullet struck him in the head'.
- Luther's stretcher bearers carried him down to the 4th Field Ambulance near the beach. Although he was attended by four of his fellow doctors he did not regain consciousness and died about an hour later.
- It was a merciful death, but one that brought great sorrow to the soldiers, when all loved the victim.
- Known to be buried in No. 2 Out Post Cemetery at Anzac, Luther's body could not be located for a more formal burial immediately after the war. Instead, headstones for him, and other men known to have been buried there are placed around the cemetery's perimeter.
- Captain John Fitzmaurice Guy LUTHER died of wounds on 25 August 1915 at Gallipoli, Turkey, aged 45 years



No 2 Outpost on Gallipoli Peninsula



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### **TRIBUTES:**

#### **A NOBLE OFFICER DIES FOR FREEDOM**

At 10 o'clock yesterday morning, the Rev. H. C. Beasley, Rector of Christ Church, received the following cablegram from Nurse Mowbray at Heliopolis: "Please break news to Mrs. Luther, Doctor killed last Wednesday. The reverend gentleman lost no time in carrying out the sad mission, and Mrs. Luther accepted the news in a calm heroic manner, consistent with what could be expected of the brave wife of a noble warrior.

In the briefest possible time, the sad tidings spread all over the city, and the whole community were stricken with a despondency that cannot be described. Strong men were sealed with emotional feelings that are very seldom aroused, whilst women everywhere wept copiously. Without apparent exception it was swiftly recognised that a true hearted man, a noble citizen, and honourable friend, had been taken away, whilst gallantly fighting for the freedom of those he loved so dearly, and tending to the injuries of the comrades with whom he was associated.

The Mayor, Alderman Steptoe, upon being apprised of the sad news by a representative of the "Mail" ordered the flag at the Council Chambers to be placed at half mast, and a similar procedure was followed throughout the city and district. The tri-colour flag was floated from the mast at the French Cable office.

"The Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Bundaberg, having learned of the death of Dr. Luther in the discharge of his duties at the Dardanelles, desires to convey to Mrs. Luther and family, their own and the community's heartfelt condolence." The Mayor opened a public fund to erect a public monument to the memory of Dr. Luther, and with a marble tablet containing the names of the fallen Bundaberg soldiers.

From the The Bundaberg Mail and Burnett Advertiser, Thu 2 Sep 1915



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## KILLED IN ACTION - 8 NOVEMBER 1915

- DEATH OF  
CAPTAIN JOHN FITZMAURICE GUY LUTHER
- <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/113124252> Thu 2 Sep 1915

**Captain G F Luther**  
AUSTRALIAN ARMY MEDICAL CORPS, 15 BATTALION, AIF



This unofficial identity disc was found in No 2 Out Post Cemetery after the war. It was made from an Egyptian coin with the design on the reverse side ground away and engraved as an identity disc reading: 'CAPT. G.F. LUTHER A.M.C. A.I.F. C.E.' around the edge, and '15th Btn 4th Bgde.' in the centre.