



Colonel E. C. DESHON CMG

[1836 – 1924]



Colonel Deshon was a Founding Member of the Club in 1892

Colonel Deshon was elected to Life Membership of the Club - possibly between 1910 and 1924

Edward Charles Deshon was born 3 January 1836 in Belgaum, Karnataka, part of the Bombay Presidency in India. The eldest son of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Charles John Deshon [1804-1844] (of the 17th Regiment of Foot *The Leicestershire Regiment*) and Charlotte Jane (née Adams) [1814-1868]. His father, “an officer of the highest talents and character”, died of cholera in while posted in Aden.

Edward’s siblings were:

Alice	[1839-1841]
Charles John	[1841-1929] who served as an officer in the Royal Artillery.
Jane	[1843-1844]
Frederick Chalmers	[1845-1877] an architect who died in Venezuela.

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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He was educated at Bath Grammar School, and in 1853 graduated from Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst into the 68th (Durham) Regiment of Foot (Light Infantry).

The Regiment's principal engagements in the Crimean War [1853-56] were the Battle of Inkerman, and the siege and fall of Sevastapol. In 1856 the Regiment embarked for Corfu, returned to Britain in 1857, and then embarked for Rangoon 1858. Deshon attended Staff College in 1861.

He left the British Army as a Lieutenant and arrived in Brisbane in 1862 on the SS *Clifton*.

No definitive record has been located of his military service after arriving in Queensland. However, his recorded rank of Colonel suggests that he would have served in the citizen forces until perhaps the mid-1870s. However, one press report on his retirement from the public service did describe him as "A fine officer being both an able administrator and a tactful disciplinarian".

On his arrival in Brisbane he quickly obtained a position as the manager of the Caboolture Cotton Company. By the next year (1863) he was the accountant at the Moreton Savings Bank. In 1872 he was appointed to the Treasury Department and in 1879 to the Audit Department. In 1882 he moved to the Lands Department – initially as Chief Clerk and then as Under-Secretary.

In 1885 he was appointed as a Member of the Lands Board, and then in 1889 as Auditor-General.

He retired in 1901 in ill health after 6 months leave - completing a very impressive career in the Queensland Public Service.

Edward Deshon was awarded a Companion in the Order of St. Michael and St. George in the King Edward VIII's June 1902 Coronation Honours – following his retirement as Auditor-General.

His health must have improved, as in 1902 he was appointed as one of the inaugural directors of the Agricultural Bank. And there are numerous reports in that decade of floods and fires on the Deshon Estate, Logan Road near Norman Creek – land owned and subdivided by Deshon.

Edward married Emily Marian (née Sawyer) [1845-1918] in 1863 in Brisbane. They had met on the boat voyage from England. They had five sons and four daughters (and 27 grandchildren):

Alice Marion [1864-1938] Born and died in Brisbane. Married Rev. Hugh Thomas Molesworth [1860-1930] in Brisbane in 1899 and had three sons.

Charles Edward [1866-1957] Born and died in Brisbane. An engineering surveyor in the Irrigation Commission. Married Margaret Josephine "Maggie" (née Nolan) [1876-1950] in 1898 in Brisbane and had nine children.^{1 2 3 4}

Frank Alfred [1868-1961] Born Brisbane, died in Roma, a grazier of *Mitchell Downs Station*. Married Theresa Elizabeth "Tessie" (née Herth) [1871-1955] and had five children.⁵

Charlotte "Lottie" Emily [1870-1967] Born and died in Brisbane. Married James Henry Cook Carson [1867-1929] in 1926 in Brisbane and had no children.

¹ A son, Gunner Frank Hubert Deshon 2/15th Field Regiment RAA died in February 1945 in Borneo as a prisoner of the Japanese.

² A son, Private Charles Patrick Deshon served in 2/9th Infantry Battalion in 1939-44 in the Mediterranean and PNG campaigns.

³ A son, Private Edward John Deshon served in 7 Battalion VDC in 1942-45.

⁴ A daughter, Lieutenant Jean Beryl Deshon served in the AWAS in 1942-46.

⁵ A son, Private Leslie Frank Deshon AAMC, served in Middle East and France in 1915-19; and in the Militia in World War 2.

Frederick Henry [1872-1952] Grazier of Mitchell, Queensland. Married Mary Kathleen Ponsonby (née Simpson) [1877-1908] in Brisbane in 1904; and Emma (née Tomlinson) [1886-1959] in 1924 and had one daughter.

Florence Edith [1874-1950] Born and died in Brisbane. Married Dr Arthur Palmer Henzell [1874-1960] in Brisbane in 1898 and had four sons ⁶.

Arthur Popham [1876-1957] Born and died in Brisbane. A Manager in the Agricultural Bank. Married Violet Brenda (née King) [1886-1977] in 1914 in Brisbane and had 3 sons. ⁷

Maud Ethel Mary [1879 -1951] Born in Brisbane, died in Roma. Married Thomas Alexander Kennedy [b.1894] in 1925 in Brisbane and had no children.

Herbert Lethbridge [1883-1957] Born and died in Brisbane. A Manager at Nixon Smith & Co (a major Brisbane shipping company of the 1920's and 30's). Married Gladys Elwyn Talbot (née Clark) [1890-1953] in Brisbane in 1915 and had 2 children.⁸

The family lived at "Kemendine" Cavendish Road, Coorparoo for almost 40 years – which building became the original Loretto College Coorparoo in 1928.



Colonel Deshon is believed to have been a founding member of the Club in 1892. He is not recorded as having served on the Committee or in any other capacity. He was elected to Life membership between 1910 and presumably his death in 1924.

Colonel Edward Charles Deshon died in Brisbane on 4 September 1924.

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
- Trove
- AWM, NAA and DVA archives

⁶ A son, Gunner Basil Deshon Henzell 2/3rd Field Regiment RAA served in 1941-45 in the Mediterranean and PNG campaigns.

⁷ A son, Flight Sergeant Frederick Popham Deshon RAAF was killed in a flying accident in the UK in January 1944.

⁸ A son, Private Arthur Edward Deshon served in 88 Transport Platoon AASC in 1940-46.