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Allan McLaurin

Allan McLaurin was born at Ballarat in September 1888, the son of Neil and Julia Avis McLaurin (nee Fenn). Allan joined the Colonial Bank of Australia and by 1914 was the Bank's accountant at Kilmore.

He enlisted in Melbourne on July 7, 1915, after being medically assessed by Dr John Semple in Kilmore. Allan trained at Albert Park and on September 30, he was allotted to the 12th Battery, 4th Field Artillery Brigade as gunner 6802.

Allan embarked in Melbourne on November 19 bound for the Suez. He then joined his unit in France in March 1916 and was promoted to Bombardier on June 1, 1916.

The 4th took part in the Battle of Pozieres in July and August 1916. The Kilmore Advertiser on October 7, 1916 reported that Allan McLaurin "says the wants of the boys in France are few. The longer a man is a soldier, in fact, the less he wants; the main idea is to give - as much and as deadly as he can. There is, however, always the odd grateful acceptance of a packet of fags and a bit of soap."

Allan probably took part in the advance of allied troops to the Hindenburg Line in early 1917. He was promoted to Corporal on April 4, 1917. The 4th took part in the Battle of Messines in June 1917. Allan was accidentally injured in the left foot on July 4. This must have been serious for he was transferred to England for a long recovery period, resulting in returning to Melbourne.

The Kilmore Advertiser reported on October 19, 1918, that Allan's ship "shortly after leaving England, the steamer was torpedoed by a German submarine. The vessel remained afloat for about four hours, and the whole of those on board were rescued by the destroyer accompanying them, but unfortunately all the Australian returning soldiers lost their kits and belongings." This was the sinking of SSBarunga on July 15, 1918 in the Bay of Biscay.

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Allan then embarked on the Carpentaria on August 8, 1918 for Melbourne. He was discharged on October 10, 1918. Allan was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal, and his name is recorded on the Kilmore Shire Honour Roll and the Kilmore Presbyterian Church Honour Roll.

After the war Allan continued his banking career and in 1932 he married Muriel Vance Archer. He served in World War Two as a staff sergeant in Melbourne. He was living in East Brighton when he was admitted to RGH Heidelberg where he died in March 1959.

Sinking of Transport "BURUNGA"

Destroyers Taking
SURVIVORS. ABOARD

