



## **Lieutenant Allister Baird MacCULLOCH**

### **18701 – 26th Battery, 7th Field Artillery Brigade**

**Born:** 1891, Yeoval, NSW.

**Parents:** Kennedy and Fenelon SC MacCulloch

**Occupation:** Grazier

**District Connection:** Yeoval

**Enlistment Date:** 31 Dec 1915/25 Jan 1916, Liverpool, Sydney.

**Enlistment Age:** 23yrs 7 months

**Embarkation:** 11 May 1916, Sydney, *HMAT Argyllshire A8*.

**Served:** Western front

**Fate:** RTA 15 Oct 1919, per *HT Main*.

**Honour Boards:** Sydney Grammar School WW1 Honour Roll; Yeoval WW1 Memorial Hall; & Cumnock and Tullamore War Memorial Gates.

### **Biography:**

Allister Baird "Nib" MacCulloch was the eldest son of Kennedy McIntosh (nee Baird) and Fenelon Selwyn MS MacCulloch. Fenelon (known as Selwyn) MacCulloch was the son of Thomas MacCulloch who purchased "Buckinbar Station," Yeoval, along with 14,114 sheep and 180 head of cattle, for £5,549 in 1869 from Andrew Bogle Paterson (Banjo Paterson's father).

Selwyn married Kennedy MacIntosh Baird (daughter of David Donald Baird of "The Springs", Toongi, NSW) at "The Springs" on 22 Jul 1891. They had six sons: Alister B 1891; Ian B 1893; Major (Sam) B 1896; Malcolm B 1897; Kennedy B1899; and Ronald Keith B 1900.

Selwyn became overseer of "Buckinbah Station," around 1889. He died, aged 52 years, at Yeoval on 12 Mar 1906. In October 1906, an advertisement was placed in the *Sydney Morning Herald* for a "competent tutor for 5 boys". In 1908, Buckinbah (20,399 acres or 8,255 hectares) was offered for sale and attracted an offer of £60,000 which was not accepted. "Buckinbah" was subsequently subdivided into 55 freehold farms and offered for sale in blocks of 40 acres (16 hectares) to 880 acres (350 hectares). All the blocks were sold by 1913, with the last six blocks (2,195 acres - 888 hectares) being sold to the NSW Government for closer settlement. A remaining part of "Buckinbah Station" around the homestead (reportedly 4,494 acres - 1,819 hectares) was sold to Mr. Robert Bruce, of Myrangle, Cumnock, at "a highly satisfactory price" in August 1913, after 44 years in family ownership.

Five of the MacCulloch brothers enlisted in WW1. The youngest brother, Ronald, was too young to enlist. All were born and raised at "Buckinbah Station" and attended Yeoval Public School. Allister also attended Sydney Grammar School. Three of the brothers enlisted from Apr – Jun 1915 and all served with the 6<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment: 1269 Pte Ian Hamilton MacCulloch, 1273 Pte Major MacCulloch and 1272 Pte Malcolm MacCulloch.

Allister MacCulloch enlisted on 31 Dec 1915 but was not medically examined at Casula, Sydney, until 25 Jan 1916.. Pte Kennedy MacCulloch - 66755, did not enlist until 12 Aug 1918 but only served a month and was demobilised on November 1918, due to the end of WW1.

Allister's medical examination listed him as being 5 feet 8¼ inches tall, had brown eyes, dark hair, a dark complexion and was of the Presbyterian religious denomination. He initially served as a Gunner with the 26th Battery, 7 Field Artillery Brigade (FAB). Alister was living on the property "Greta" at Tullamore at the time of his enlistment.

The 7th Field Artillery Brigade was part of the 3rd Division, and was formed on 17 March 1916 at the "Warren" a one-time convent located in Marrickville, Sydney, on a rocky outcrop above the Cooks River. Members were chosen out of the men in training camp by a selection process which included an interview. The *Yandoo* (a newsletter produced by members of the 7th FAB) claimed the 7<sup>th</sup> FAB was "second to no unit that has ever left Australia...the Artillery which as an arm of the service was probably the most popular at that time, certainly in Sydney".

The Brigade comprised the 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Field Batteries (each of four 18 pounder guns), 107<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (Howitzer) Battery and 7<sup>th</sup> Field Brigade Ammunition Column. The 18-pounders had a range of almost 6 km and fired a range of ammunition including high explosive (HE), shrapnel, smoke, gas, star (illumination) and armour piercing projectiles.

The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB departed Sydney on *HMAT Argyllshire A8* on 11 May 1916, the same ship that carried Alister's three brothers 7 months earlier. His cousin, Gunner Edward Roberts MacCulloch (18510) travelled with Alister as part of the 25<sup>th</sup> Battery of the 7<sup>th</sup> FAB.



HMAS Argyllshire A8

The *Argyllshire* moored adjacent to The Bluff at Durban Bay on 3 Jun 1916. Alister and his fellow Australians were treated like kings and were “*extended numerous invitations to private residences where they fared sumptuously, nothing being left undone by hosts and hostesses. They were carried free on the city trams, admitted gratis to the Zoo*” but the rickshaws “*easily won first place as a source of amusement.*” (7<sup>th</sup> FAB Yandoo)

The Yandoo reported that “*the ‘forget-me-nots’ which Gnr. McCulloch (26th) was seen to take from The*

*Royal, Durban* (Durban’s oldest hotel, established in 1845), *were for a bookmark*”.

On the night of 7 Jun 1916, “*a passing boat signalled the news of Lord Kitchener’s death* (Kitchener drowned when the armoured cruiser *HMS Hampshire* sank in a storm off the Orkneys on 5 Jun 1916), *which caused our usual exuberant spirit to give place to a feeling of gloom. A memorial service was arranged for the following Sunday.*”

The next morning *HMAT Argyllshire* entered Table Bay and moored in Cape Town docks. “*Cape Town cedes first place to Durban from the standpoint of natural beauty, but the former is the greater business centre... We could not help contrasting the well kept streets and roads in the vicinity of Cape Town, with the jolt and jar of Parramatta Road and other Sydney thoroughfares... Among the large Dutch population are patriotic and loyal citizens, we noted with regret a good proportion of the antipodal element, mainly among those of a lower educational standard.*”

The *Argyllshire* joined with 3 other troopships (including *HMAT Beltana* with Tom West, Earlon Comer, Henry Cooper, Leslie Cooper and Arthur Brown from Yeoval and Obley aboard) and sailed for England on 16 June 1916, escorted by a cruiser of the Royal Navy. The trip was very peaceful and “*it says a lot for the equable temperament of the Australian for his innate sense of humor and his power of adapting himself to any circumstances that during the whole of that time, foul weather or fine, cold or hot, bad food or good, two thousand troops crowded aboard, there was never a fight, never a disturbance, nay, hardly so much as a petty quarrel.*”

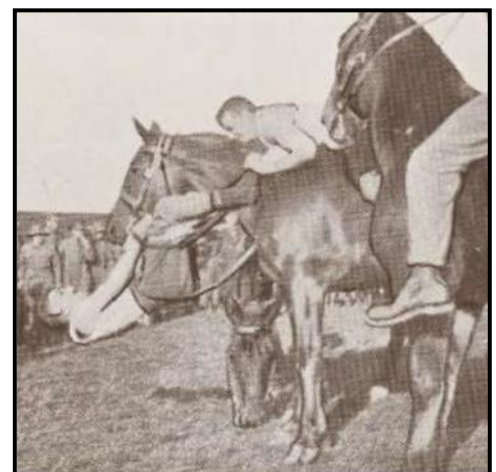
The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB arrived at Devonport, England on 9 July 1916 after 2 months on the *Argyllshire*. Allister travelled by train via Exeter and Yeovil Junction to Larkhill, Salisbury Plains where training took place. The Yandoo reported that “*The provision for our comfort is astounding when it is considered that an army of millions has been raised in the brief period since the outbreak of war. The huts are most commodious: a building which in Liverpool (Sydney) would shelter 50 men, is here allotted to 30. Separate mess rooms are provided in addition, so that the huts are used for sleeping places only. Each man is furnished with sleeping boards and mattresses; in fact we have all the comforts of home, except the lying in bed in the morning. Hot and cold showers are available except when Johnnie Norton is on duty in the boiler house and lets the fire go out... There are pianos, music and spacious accommodation for concerts; refreshments and soldiers’ incidental requirements are provided at low cost, and there are billiard tables, post offices and many other conveniences.*” There were also opportunities for sightseeing to London (Buckingham Palace, Tower of London, Drury Lane shows, Westminster Abbey, St Paul’s Cathedral, etc), Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight.

Allister’s rank changed from a gunner to a driver in September 1916. Around the same time, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division was reviewed by King George V. The Yandoo reported, “*It was a great and happy day for the boys. We had had plenty of work preparing to make a decent show, and every available man for several evenings was sent into harness rooms and gun parks to shine the easily tarnished metal. To cap our discomforts, reveille was sounded at 4:30 a.m. Of course, there was much murmuring about the extra work and we set about it somewhat grumblingly, but with no ill will. The King (with) the Royal Standard and Pennants flying, first of all inspected the troops, riding past the lines on a spanking black charger... Then followed the march past which the 7th (FAB) had the honor of leading...*

*This was the first occasion on which the King had reviewed Australian troops, and we all felt our pulses tingle and our hearts swell with pride and love for our loyal native land, and our wonderful Empire. We surveyed the long lines of well built men all offering their lives to their country, eager to do their bit, and would most assuredly be the men who would guide Australia to greatness.*”

A 7<sup>th</sup> FAB gymkhana was held on 6 Oct 1916 on a natural amphitheatre adjacent to No. 17 camp at Larkhill. Alister’s team tasted victory in the “wrestling on horseback”.

The gossip column of the Yandoo continued at Larkhill, with gems like “*Who said that Gunner Radcliffe was so beautiful that the lady bought her own ticket.*” Alister was not exempt from the banter with “*They say that Driver McCulloch, known as Jim Fish of Durban, lost good business by not having his rickshaw outside after the 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade concert,*” and “*Driver ‘Sh Sh Sh’ McCulloch is annoyed with Ruby for not letting him know the meet was off.*”



Sports—Wrestling on Horseback. A Catch-as-Catch-Can Hang On.



Three inches of Snow at Larkhill, 19th November, 1916. Stopping Snow-balls with the face was quite a feature of the event.

The Yandoo commented about Larkhill: "We, undoubtedly, were knocked into shape as a Brigade on that cheerless place... The gunners received special instruction in gun laying and for open warfare; the drivers were taught the dexterous use of brush and currycomb, and the exact tone in which to pitch the accompanying... grooming whistle... and each battery learnt to work in unison like the combination of a good football team... At Lark Hill we had our first acquaintance with mud and snow and ice, an acquaintance that was destined to grow into close intimacy in France."

Allister was confined to Brimstone Bottom Hospital for nearly 2 months from 29 Oct 1916. Brimstone Bottom Isolation Hospital was part of Tidworth Military Hospital which dealt with infectious cases only. Mumps and measles were common in the camp at that time. He was discharged just before Christmas.

The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB disembarked at Le Havre, France on 31 Dec 1916. At Strazeele, in January 1917, a further reorganisation of the Brigade occurred. The batteries were reformed and made into six gun batteries.

The Brigade went into action on 17 Jan 1917 at Armentieres. "The ordinary routine of trench warfare was immediately embarked upon, calibration of guns, registration of the enemy front line and of special targets in support, subsidiary and back areas, preparation for concentration at likely points liable to strong enemy assault, temporary moves of one or two guns for special tasks, firing of S.O.S, barrages to repel hostile raiding parties, support of our own infantry in small operations of the same nature." A number of these raids were undertaken by the inexperienced 3<sup>rd</sup> Division so that "the infantry gradually built up the supreme confidence in their own powers that is one of the essentials in the launching of operations on a large scale."

Drivers such as Allister had a demanding job. "At night when frost had made the roads iron hard and slippery as glass, there was the long journey to the batteries. To sit for three, four, five hours in the pitch dark, on the back of a pulling horse, whose feet might fly from under him at any instant, with the stiff leather of the reins bruising fingers numbed with cold, faces stung by an icy wind that hurt like the lash of a whip, boots almost frozen to the stirrup irons, toes impossible to move - such was the common task of these men, week after weary week. Then at midnight to arrive 'back home,' unharness the horses, and if not on 'picquet' (guard duty), tumble into a rough bed of straw with the prospect of a morrow of feed and water and groom, groom, feed and water."

The Brigade's first major battle was at Messines Ridge in June 1917. The Yandoo reported that, in preparation for the battle, "The roar of gunfire daily increases in intensity... the enemy retaliates with his artillery, and from time to time tremendous explosions indicate that he has located one of our ammunition dumps. (However) it is obvious that Fritz is subjected to a bombardment infinitely more terrible..."

In the early hours of June 7th, tremendous explosions intimated that the mines had gone up, and the infantry went over the top protected by a barrage which they afterwards described as a wall of steel... Great was the victory, but it had demanded of us tremendous sacrifices in the loss of comrades who willingly laid down their lives for the beloved homeland, and in the great cause for the world's emancipation...

Major General Monash commended (the Divisional Artillery) for the efficient manner in which they had played their part in the important Messines attack... The Trench Mortars, he said, had destroyed barbed wire through which the Infantry could not otherwise have passed; the 18 pounders had put up a barrage which was a veritable fence of steel. The howitzers had wrought havoc on enemy defences of the second line."

During a rest period in mid 1917, the Yandoo reported that Allister's team came second in the Loyd-Lindsay race held as part of a field sports day, beaten by their mortal enemy - the 25<sup>th</sup> Battery. The Yandoo also listed (often cryptically) the "hobbies and pastimes" of unit members - "Very curious and questionable customs (adopted) as time killers... as the war drags on and things become a trifle monotonous." These included harness cleaning, dugout diving, sitting on nettles, and maypole dancing. Intriguingly, Alister's pastime was reported as "bribing children" in September 1917.

When the 7<sup>th</sup> FAB returned to the front line after the Battle of Messines, occupying former enemy trenches, ahead was "A stretch of devastated country of shell holes, mine craters, smashed dugouts, and annihilated woods... Fritz dugouts are constructed of reinforced concrete about 4ft in thickness, and even they may sometimes be seen hurled out of position by the heavy shells from our guns. Heaps of brick, and an occasional cabbage or turnip are all that remain of a former farm. In this locality we are enabled for the first time to note the results of our own fire..."

"In the foreground is a strip of green grass, daisies, poppies and other wild flowers - the former site of No Man's Land. The scene behind is a contrast. Flourishing woods, verdant pastures, and red-roofed farm buildings enable us to comprehend what this country was like before the invasion by the Boche... Little wooden crosses denote the last resting place of those who 'died that the nation might live'."

The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB were in the front line near Messines, Belgium, on 2 Jul 1917 when Major General William Holmes, commander of the 4th Division, took the Premier of New South Wales, William Holman, to survey the Messines battlefield. Holmes was fatally hit in the chest and lung by a fragment of a German shell landing nearby. General Holmes was the most senior Australian officer killed in action on the Western Front.

On 2 Sep 1917, the 7<sup>th</sup> FAB commenced a much-needed rest at Merck-St-Lievin near St Omer, France. Just four days later they were suddenly told to go back into action. The *Yandoo* observed "*It is awful...to be so indispensable.*" The short-lived "rest" at Merck-St-Lievin involved a 70km march in each direction!

On 11 Sep 1917, a German high explosive shell landed amongst members of the 26<sup>th</sup> Battery having breakfast at Dickebusch near Ypres, on the way back to the front. Eight soldiers were killed outright; three died of wounds; and thirty-four were wounded. Of the 24 men of the 26<sup>th</sup> Battery lost during the War, over 45% died as a result of this single incident. October and early November 1917 saw the deaths of a further 6 members of the 26<sup>th</sup> Battery.

Allister was remustered as a gunner at his own request on 11 Sep 1917, most likely due to the high number of casualties sustained in his battery



**Australian Artillery unit near Ypres, September 1917.**

The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB supported the infantry in the battles of Menin Road, Broodseinde, and Passchendaele between September and October 1917. The batteries operated in some exposed positions that led to high casualties. The *Yandoo* reported that on 11 Sep 1917, "*Our guns and their crews went into action in front of Zillebeke Lake, The proximity of the 'possy' to the Menin Road made it an attraction for old Fritz, to fling his 'ironmongery about'.*" Afterwards "*We received orders...to take up a position on Westhoek Ridge, in front of Chateau Wood. Here the batteries were under observation from enemy balloons and suffered accordingly from concentration of fire... After going through a particular brand of Hades at Ypres, we pulled out on 22nd Oct. So thick was the mud that drag ropes and men were mostly employed (to move the guns), horses being impracticable... Looking back now it is hard to realise how human beings could live through the strenuous hideousness of those weeks in the Passchendaele area.*"

The rest period was again short-lived, and on "*6th Nov; without any warning we were told to be ready to go into action at daybreak the following morning. The Batteries took up positions round about dear old 'Plug St'.*" (*Ploegsteert is the proper name*) and the *Le Bizet* area...*generally worrying Fritz, and doing our best to sidestep his return compliments.*"

Allister was admitted to a field hospital with Pyrexia of unknown origin (PUO) 11 Oct 1917, and transferred to hospital on 13 Oct with diarrhoea, and did not rejoin his unit until 8 Nov 1917. Despite being very depleted by the extended campaign around Passchendaele, there was no break for the Brigade over Christmas. The *Yandoo* reported that, "*On 20th Dec, we pulled out (of Ploegsteert) but went into action again (around Armentieres). Christmas and New Year were spent in action here, but really, we couldn't growl. The season was typical of France, snow all day and a bit on the cool side. Plenty of provender had been secured, such as sucking pigs and poultry. Champagne being very cheap in this country, a goodly stock was obtained, and that, together with some 'borrowed' red and white wines from the cellars in Armentieres which people had forgotten to lock up, kept us merry and bright. In addition, each man was issued with a ½lb allowance of plum duff (Christmas pudding). Both sides of the line were pretty quiet that day, evidently our enemies were celebrating too.*"

Allister was promoted to Acting Bombardier (equivalent to an acting corporal) on 6 Dec 1917. He remained in an acting role until the promotion as Corporal was endorsed in June 1918. Alister was also detached to II Army artillery school for about a month around the New Year.

In January 1918, the 26<sup>th</sup> Battery comprehensively won the Divisional Artillery rugby championship, winning all nine matches and scoring 140 points without conceding a single point! The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB moved around frequently during the winter, from Armentieres to the Merris-Steenje area, then back to Ploegsteert, then Bailleul and finally to Vieux-Berquin (France).

Allister had leave in England, commencing late February 1918, for about 3 weeks. He returned to the Brigade just before the relative calm at Vieux-Berquin was suddenly interrupted by the rapid German advance ("Operation Michael") which commenced on 21 March 1918.

The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB was ordered to urgently deploy further south with only 2 hours notice. Travelling light, they left "*a few tons of surplus gear... to the tender mercies of the villagers.*" As the Brigade marched 136 km south over 4 days, they encountered "*remnants of regiments, all toll-worn and dishevelled, batteries gunless and practically horseless. Often, we heard this warning from the retreating troops - 'Look out Chum, Jerry's coming!'*"

The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB took up positions between Franvillers and Heilly just north of the Somme River. Allister rejoined the Brigade there after he spent time at another school for a week, this time on gas warfare.

April 1918 was an eventful month for the 7<sup>th</sup> FAB. Their commanding officer (Lieut-Colonel W Churchus) was killed by a German shell on 1 April. On 21 April, Baron von Richthofen (the Red Baron) was shot down close to the 7<sup>th</sup> FAB positions. The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB played an important role around Anzac Day in the defence of Villers-Bretonneux and in stopping the German advance, but the replacement commanding officer was gassed and replaced during the battle.

The Brigade spent a short but enjoyable break at Cocquerel, swimming in the Somme River, organising horse races, playing baseball against nearby American units, attending concerts and socialising with nurses from the nearby 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian General Hospital at Abbeville. *"The few days spent at Cocquerel were easily the most enjoyable holiday we had had so far."*



*Australian Field Artillery using an 18-pounder gun.*

The Brigade went back into action near Villers Bretonneux mostly with harassing fire on enemy trenches and back areas. *"Great sniping work was done by some of our guns placed only about 400 yards from the front trenches and with the observation post near the front line. When a Hun was sighted, it was only a matter of seconds before shrapnel and H.E. (high explosive) was bursting all around him. The men doing this sniping say it was the most interesting work imaginable."* Around the same time Allister was promoted to bombardier.

On 4 Jul 1918 (American Independence Day), the Brigade took part in the Battle of Hamel. It was the first time Australians and Americans had fought together in the War and the first time that American soldiers had been under the command of another country. The attack was planned and commanded by Lieutenant General John Monash and was considered to have been a great success, and one of the turning points of the War. Around 2,000 Germans were killed and 1,600 captured, along with the loss of much of their equipment.

Afterwards, the Brigade took up another position near Corbie, laying down harassment fire, usually at cross-roads and dumps. Each battery sent over a dozen bursts (each of 20 or 30 rounds) every night.

On 6 Aug 1918 the Brigade moved much closer to the front line in preparation for the Battle of Amiens. The Brigade fired the opening barrage commencing at 4:30 am on 8 August, but the attack was so successful that they had trouble keeping up with the infantry and did not fire much for the remainder of the day. In just over 3 hours, the enemy's front line had been overrun and the Brigade had fired more than 11,000 shells. In total, the Allied forces captured 29,144 prisoners, 338 guns, and liberated 116 towns and villages.

Despite the success on 8 August and succeeding days, the Brigade had to be wary of returning German "whizzbangs, 4.2s, 5.9s and 8-inch Hows" and "Fritz Gothas dropping their eggs" on moonlit nights. They suffered several casualties during this period.

Between 22 and 24 August the Brigade provided artillery support near the village of Bray. A rolling barrage on 24 August enabled the village to be captured with relatively few Australian casualties. The rest of August and early September consisted of constant shifting of guns and supply lines, pursuing a retreating enemy, and supporting a rapidly advancing infantry. The 7<sup>th</sup> FAB participated in the capture of Peronne, Mont St Quentin and the Hindenburg Line near Bellicourt.

During all these operations the 7<sup>th</sup> F.A.B. was acting in close support to the infantry covering advances by creeping barrages, engaging opportunity targets and all movements and putting down all enemy concentrations. August gave the Brigade its first opportunity of putting into practice its early training at Lark Hill in offensive open warfare after a long spell of trench warfare. Towards the end of the month, the batteries had become quite efficient in this new mode of warfare.

In late September, the Brigade moved forward to support an attack by the remnants of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Division infantry on the Hindenburg Line and the St Quentin Canal between Bellicourt and Vendhuile. The depleted Australian forces were reinforced by keen, but inexperienced, American troops. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian Division, trying to advance to its own start line, became embroiled in the fight for the Americans' first objective. With the uncertain position of the forward troops preventing the use of artillery, the battle degenerated into a struggle for individual strong points, fought with bombs, bayonets and Lewis guns, that lasted for three days.

The action which finally saw the Hindenburg Line breached was a telling blow to the German forces. However, it was a gain at a massive cost to the Allies. The Brigade advanced through the area a few days later noting, *"It was perhaps the worst sight that one could have looked upon, everywhere were piles of dead bodies, unfortunately the greater number being those of the Americans."* Even as the ultimate victory drew nearer, the carnage continued.

In early October 1918, Australian infantry units were pulled out of the front line for a well-earned rest. Around the same time, Allister joined the No.1 Royal Field Artillery Officer Cadet School at St John's Wood, London, as a cadet. Meanwhile, the 7<sup>th</sup> FAB fought on, supporting American and British troops. After the breach of the Hindenburg Line, the action moved to fresh country with good roads and still inhabited villages. The Brigade saw action at Wiancourt, Montbrehain, Becquigny, St Souplet and La Vallee Mulatre during October and November. The latter action on the Oise-Sambre Canal on 4 November saw 13,000 Germans captured and 250 artillery guns taken.

The Yandoo reported that, *"The news of the cessation of hostilities (Armistice Day 11 Nov 1918) did not create any undue excitement throughout the Brigade. Some said 'Goodo', others, 'Now we'll have to roll up the barbed wire and fill in the shell-holes!' Headquarters that night held a hit of a corroboree, and a few of the diggers had an argument with a jar of rum; that's about all that happened. So ended the Brigade's part in breaking down the resistance of the enemy...a part that was done, we hope, to make Peace secure upon this earth for generations."*

The 26<sup>th</sup> Battery numbered 200 officers and men at the time they arrived in France and retained that strength at Armistice Day. The unit's roll of honour indicates they lost 24 men during the War - 11 killed in action, 10 died of wounds and 3 died of illness. In addition, 3 were killed after being transferred to other units.

In mid-December, the Brigade left Montbrehain for some relaxation in Hautmont. *"During our stay in Hautmont much time was devoted to sport, such as horse racing & football, and our nights were pleasantly whiled away, either at the 'Courtiers', the cinema, euchre tournaments or the Battery dances...these little affairs went off most happily."*

Unfortunately, it was not all merriment as, *"An epidemic of Spanish influenza showed itself in January, and for some weeks it raged. Illness was rife in the units, and deaths from 'bronco pneumonia' were numerous. Funerals passed through the town dally - sometimes it was a coffin borne by a gun and drawn by a team of black horses, but more often a draped hearse followed by a queue of civilian mourners."*

Allister, now graduated from cadet school as Second Lieutenant MacCulloch, rejoined his unit at this time. The first draft of men left for England on 5 March 1919, while the remainder travelled to Lobbes in Belgium, reluctantly leaving Hautmont and their French friends behind. Allister was one of those shifted to Lobbes, with the Yandoo cryptically asking, *"Did Capt. Moriarty engage the Bosche promenadors as waitresses for the 27th Officers' Mess at Lobbes? We know Lt. 'Lucy' MacCulloch had to do the 'parlez' to clear up the mis-understanding."*

Allister was attached to the finance section working for the Chief Paymaster as a Lieutenant at the AIF headquarters in London from May to July 1919. The last of the Brigade left England on 23 Jul 1919, but Allister did not depart until 23 July aboard *HT Main*, arriving in Sydney on 15 Oct 1919. The voyage took so long due to a storm off the West African coast that caused damage to the ship's steering gear. The ship had to sail very slowly and to put into Dakar for water and repairs. Three weeks were spent at Capetown and another two weeks at Durban doing further repairs. The trip across the Indian ocean was also very slow, with fog and storms across the Great Australian Bight.

After the War, Allister returned to his property "Greta", and was an active member of the Tullamore community for many years. He was a long-term member of the Tullamore Amateur Picnic Race Club, and President in 1931. Allister was also involved in organising the erection of a new Post Office and postmaster's residence at Tullamore around 1928. Allister married Ariel Wynne Webster in 1923 at Sydney. They had a daughter named Jean.

Allister's property "Greta" produced Merino wool, and also sheep and lambs. The family suffered a big setback in March 1932 when their house burnt down, destroying all their personal effects. Allister wrote to the Officer for Returned soldiers in 1935, requesting a replacement Returned Soldier's Badge, and the British War and the Victory Medals awarded to him.

Mrs MacCulloch was a vice president in the local CWA, and secretary of the Condobolin CWA Group. She was successful in the needlework and flower sections at the Tullamore Shows.

Allister, aged 72yrs, died suddenly on 30 May 1963, at Tullamore. Ariel, aged 76yrs, died on 24 July 1970, at Tullamore Hospital. Both are buried in the Tullamore Cemetery.

Allister is commemorated on the Sydney Grammar School (pictured), the Yeoval, the Cumnock and the Tullamore WW1 Honour Rolls.

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The 7th FAB Yandoo, WW1 7 Field Artillery Brigade Newsletters – Volumes 1 to 3.

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(<https://www.7fd-regt-raa-association.com/History%20of%20Regiment.htm>)



Allister MacCulloch also features in the WW1 book "Wellington's Finest" by Trevor Munro & Graeme Hoskin, 2005.

**Compiled mainly by Peter Tremain, with some editing by Val McKenzie, August 2020.**