

Stories from the Honour Boards

Stories of those who served and are remembered on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church

Booklet Number 97

ALISTAIR ROSE MACDONALD 1896 - 1981



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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8th August, 1918. *by Septimus Power.*
Alistair Macdonald took part in this decisive battle.

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Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

Lieutenant Alistair Rose Macdonald

Alistair Rose Macdonald was born at Georgetown in Queensland on 2 June 1896, the eighth child and fourth son in the family of nine children of Alexander Rose Macdonald and Nancy née Armitage. Alexander Rose Macdonald was police magistrate, assistant land agent and district registrar at Aramac in 1888 and carried out similar work in Eidsvold, Maytown and Charters Towers before his appointment to Georgetown in 1896. Alistair's eldest brother Allan Robert Armitage Macdonald began his naval career in 1898 when Alistair was only 18 months old. In 1899 Alistair's father became under-secretary for the Department of Mines in Brisbane so the family moved to their Brisbane home at Hillview, Barradine Street, Greenslopes.

Alistair attended Brisbane Grammar School from February 1910 till December 1912. His youngest brother Ian left home in 1914 to attend the Royal Australian Naval College at Geelong. Alistair too decided to join His Majesty's Forces but he chose the army. He enlisted to serve in the Australian Imperial Force at Brisbane on 5 October 1914. He had already served a year in the Citizen Force 9th Infantry and had become a clerk. At the age of 19 years and 6 months he was appointed to the Australian Divisional Ammunition Park at Melbourne on 17 December 1914.

A few days later he was embarking from Melbourne on board HMAT¹ *Ceramic*. He was given regimental number 1679 and the unusual rank of cleaner. AR Macdonald arrived in England in February 1915 and left for France in April with 2nd Division Mechanical Transport. He served with this unit till he was sent in April 1917 to Officers' Training School at Oxford.

Alistair Macdonald received his commission on 31 July 1917 and was attached to the 12th Battalion. Having taken part in the brief advance that followed Germany's retreat to the Hindenburg Line, the 12th subsequently returned to Belgium to participate in the Third Battle of Ypres. 2nd Lieutenant Macdonald was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in November 1917.

1. His Majesty's Australian Transport

In March and April 1918 the battalion helped to stop the German spring offensive, and later participated in the great allied offensive of 1918, fighting near Amiens on 8 August 1918. This advance by British and empire troops was the greatest success in a single day on the Western Front, one that German General Erich Ludendorff described as "the black day of the German Army in this war". The 12th Battalion continued operations until late September 1918. Soon afterwards Lieutenant Alistair Macdonald left London on the troop ship *Borda* to return to Australia. He was discharged on 21 February 1919. Medals awarded to him were the 1914/15 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

With his sister Alexandra Rose Macdonald, Alistair Macdonald continued to live at Barradine Street in Greenslopes. He became an Associate Judge.

He served in the Second World War as a Staff Captain, 1st Australian Garrison Battalion in Brisbane for a brief period from 25 June 1942 until 3 March 1943. In 1977 he was still living with his sister Alexandra at their Greenslopes home in retirement. He died in 1981 aged 85 years. Alexander Rose Macdonald is remembered on honour boards in the Great Hall at Brisbane Grammar School, in the Coorparoo School of Arts and Memorial Hall as well as on one of the honour boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel.

References

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Brisbane
March 2016



Lest we forget