

## Arthur Herbert Faulkner



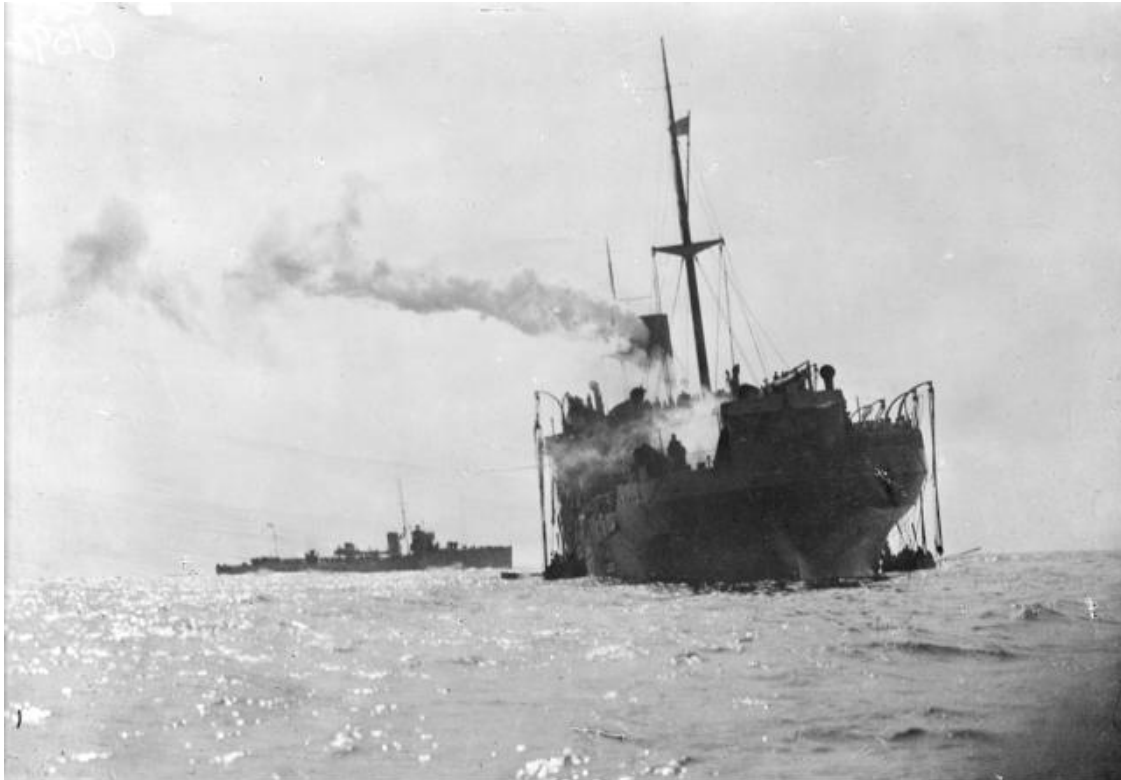
Private (Pte) 7233 Arthur Herbert Faulkner enlisted in the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion reinforcements in Melbourne on 12 October 1916 and embarked overseas on 19 February 1917.

Enroute to England his ship, HMAT *Ballarat*, was torpedoed by the German U-Boat *U-32* in the English Channel on 25 April 1917. All 1,752 people on board were taken off the ship within an hour and no lives were lost. Initial efforts to tow the ship to shallow water failed, and she sank off The Lizard the next morning.

Pte Faulkner disembarked in Devonport on 25 April, where he was treated for influenza at the Devonport Military Hospital between 25 April – 2 May.

He then joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Training Battalion at Lark Hill on 8 May, where he undertook a further four months' training for war on the Western Front.

He left England on 10 September and landed in France the next day, where he was transferred to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Battalion in the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Division, in the field near Ypres, on 20 September 1917.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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*Troops evacuating HMAT A70 Ballarat after it was torpedoed in the English Channel, 25 April 1917*

The battalion moved further into Belgium in late September and on 4 October was involved in the successful attack on Broodseinde Ridge. Although mainly used as carriers, the battalion sustained 110 casualties during the engagement.

Just five days later, on 9 October, the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade supported the right flank of a British attack further to the north at Poelcapelle. The British assault failed in the mud and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Battalion returned to their start line, having suffered a further 83 casualties.

The Australians remained in the Ypres and Messines sectors throughout the remainder of 1917 and right up until late March 1918, when they moved south to the Somme region of France to help stem the German Spring Offensive underway there at that time.

On 19 May 1918 several 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade raiding parties attacked and captured the village of Ville sur Ancre, plus about 330 German prisoners. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was mainly involved with mopping up duties after the battle and sustained just the three casualties.

Late on 3 July, the battalion was in the process of forming up for the Battle of Le Hamel, planned for the following morning, when Pte Faulkner sustained shrapnel wounds to his hand and neck.

He was initially evacuated to the 5<sup>th</sup> (British) Casualty Clearing Station at Picquigny on 4 July, then transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian General Hospital at Rouen between 5 – 11 July.

After a further two weeks at the Australian Infantry Base Depot at le Havre, he eventually rejoined the 23<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, in the field near Villers-Bretonneux, on 25 July.

The battalion was still manning the support line near Villers-Bretonneux on 5 August, during the lead up to the allies' upcoming offensive, when Pte Faulkner was wounded for the second time. Unfortunately, his service record is silent as to the nature of the wound, as he remained at duty and did not seek medical assistance at the time. We do know that during this period the German artillery regularly bombarded the Australian lines with gas shells, but as his record is silent, the circumstance of his wound remains speculation.

The Amiens offensive commenced shortly after, on 8 August, and in the weeks that followed, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Battalion pursued and fought the retreating Germans, including during the famous action at Mont St Quentin on 31 August – 1 September.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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*6<sup>th</sup> Brigade soldiers moving along a trench during the assault on Mont St Quentin, 1 September 1918*

While the battalion rested after the battle, Pte Faulkner was evacuated to the 6<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance with scabies from 7 – 10 September, then returned to his unit the same day.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade reserve for the last Australian action on the Western Front, at Montbrehain on 5 October, after which they left the line for the final time.

Pte Faulkner was granted leave in England from 10 – 27 October, then returned to France.

After the war ended, he left France for the last time on 16 May 1919 and landed in England the following day, where he spent the next seven weeks at the Sutton Veny Camp in Wiltshire, then embarked for return to Australia on 7 July.

Private 7233 Arthur Herbert Faulkner disembarked in Melbourne on 5 September, where he was discharged from the AIF on 13 October 1919.

Name: Faulkner, Arthur Herbert	
Service Number	7233
Date enlisted	12 October 1916
Place enlisted	Melbourne, Victoria
Rank on enlistment	Private
Initial Unit	8 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion
Date and ship embarked for overseas	19 February 1917 HMAT A70 <i>Ballarat</i>
Stated age/DOB (if known)	24 years 5 months
Place of birth	Kerang, Victoria
Marital status	Single
Occupation	Farmer
Religion	Methodist
Next of kin and address	Faulkner, Mr Harry, father, Tragowel, Vic.
Permanent address	Tragowel, Victoria
Appearance	Fresh complexion, black/grey hair, blue eyes, height – 5 feet 6 ½ inches, weight – 9 stone, 11 lbs, chest measurement – 30/33 inches
Final Rank	Private
Final Unit	23 <sup>rd</sup> Infantry Battalion
Theatres of war served in	France, Belgium
Fate	Returned to Australia
Date and place wounded	3 July 1918 – le Hamel, France
Nature of wounds	Shrapnel wounds to hand & neck
Date and place wounded (2)	5 August 1918 – Villers-Bretonneux, France
Nature of wounds (2)	Remained at duty – no other details
Date and ship embarked for Australia	7 July 1919 HT <i>Chemnitz</i>
Date discharged	13 October 1919
Nature of discharge	Termination of Period of Enlistment
Honours/medals	British War Medal, Victory Medal
Notes	Died 14 May 1942

