MacFarlane enrolled at HAC aged 16 in 1907 and left at the end of 1908, his father, a civil servant of Neutral Bay, Sydney. As a dairy farmer and member of the 37th Infantry militia, he joined the AIF in September 1914 and embarked aboard the *Euripides* on 20th October as part of the 3rd Brigade. He was promoted Lieutenant in February 1915 and took place in the Gallipoli landing on 25 April at which time he was wounded and invalided off the Peninsula. He was promoted to Captain B Company 3rd Brigade on 23 June and rejoined his unit on Gallipoli on the 25th but two months later, on 2 August while in Shrapnel Gully he was shot in the forehead. He is said to have lived for some two hours and was conscious throughout but as soon as he was received on board the hospital ship *Rewa*, he died. He was buried at sea and is commemorated on Panel 19 of the Lone Pine Memorial, Turkey, along with other HAC men, Douglas, Pavey and Webster.