

Norman was born Norman Hubert Gardiner-Garden in Lewisham in 1896, the son of Hubert McBean and Georgina Gardiner-Garden. When he enlisted in A Company, AN&MEF on 11th August 1914, he stated that he was 20, whereas he was only 18, and that he was a clerk. He gave his father at "Myie", Neich Parade, Burwood as his next of kin. He also gave his surname as Garden on this enlistment and when he enlisted in the AIF.

In Rabaul he was attached to the Treasury Department and returned to Sydney and was discharged, term expired, on 4th March 1915 having completed 206 days service.

On 17th May 1917 he enlisted as a gunner in the AIF as part of the 32nd Reinforcements, Field Artillery. He sailed from Sydney on 16th November aboard the CANBERRA arriving in Suez on 21st December. On 9th Jan 1918 he left Port Said aboard the KAHYAR, arriving in Southampton on 30th Jan. He left for France on 20th March and was taken on strength by his unit on 10th April. Between 1st September and 13th September 1918, he attended the Horse Management School and promoted Bombardier on 10th Feb 1919. He transferred to the AIF HQ and was given the rank of ER Corporal.

Norman left the UK on 3rd April 1920 on the ORSOVA, arriving in Sydney on 15th May where he was discharged from the AIF on 24th June 1920.

In 1921 Norman married Williamina Soutar Coull.