

Alexander was born at Dundee, Scotland on 12th December 1878. He served with the 10th Hussars, service number 4150, during the Boer War where at one stage in 1901 he was a prisoner of war. He states that he was 3 years in South Africa. After coming to Australia, he joined the Royal Australian Navy on 7th Jan 1914 and was an "off cook" aboard the HMAS PIONEER. The Pioneer was original a light cruise in the Royal Navy and was gifted to the RAN in 1913, where, at the time of Alexander's service, was a training ship for the Naval Reserve.

Alexander's Naval Record shows he left the Navy on 7th My 1914, under what circumstances is not clear. In the NSW Police Gazette of 16 May, he is listed as a deserter from the Pioneer at Adelaide.

On 11th August 1914 he joined D Company of the AN&MEF, stating that he was a chef, married and gave his wife, Margaret of 112 Jersey Road, Paddington, as his next of kin. He advised of his Boer War service but made no mention of his RAN service.

Between 23rd September 1914 and 11th Jan 1915, he was a corporal and returned from Rabaul and was discharged, term expired, on 4th March 1915, having completed 206 days service.

Alexander joined the Australian Army Service Corps on 3rd March 1915, regimental number 6060, as a driver and was promoted to corporal on 16th April and to sergeant on 18th April. He left for the Middle East on 2nd June 1915 aboard the MEDIC and reverted to a driver, at his own request, on 3rd September before landing on Gallipoli on 19th November.

After the evacuation, he sustained a fractured metatarsal and was hospitalised from 1st Jan 1916 till the 3rd April, where we he transferred to the Anzac Provost Corps, again as a sergeant.

In October 1916, he transferred back to the ASC and in Sept 1918 requested that he be sent home. He left the UK on 4th December 1918 aboard the SOMERSET and was discharged on 22nd March 1919 as Medically Unfit – premature senility.

He had another brief stint with the RAN as a chef/cook from 29th July 1919 till 31st Jan 1920, service number 11515.