



1st & 4th Pioneer Btms Colour Patches



## Private Arthur METHAN (alias Arthur HALLETT) 4948 — 1st & 4th Pioneer Battalions

**Born:** 8 Nov 1876, Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

**Next of Kin:** Wife - Martha Hallett/Methan, Sydney.

**Occupation:** Labourer

**District Connection:** Cumnock

**Enlistment Date:** 26 Jun 1917, Bathurst.

**Enlistment Age:** Stated 34 years. Actual age 43 years.

**Embarkation:** 19 Dec 1917 - Sydney, HMAT A38 *Ulysses*

**Served:** Western Front

**Fate:** RTA 17 Nov 1919

**Honour Boards:** Cumnock Memorial Gates

### Biography:

The name Methan A appears on the Cumnock WW1 Honour Plaque. There is no data confirming that any person by that name was living or working in Cumnock around 1913-1918. However, a person of that name may still have been working in the Cumnock locality. The only A Methan that may fit was living in Orange in 1909 - 1912 and enlisted in Bathurst on 23 Jun 1917 and this is a brief biography of this man.

Arthur Methan was born on 8 Nov 1874, Bradford, Yorkshire, England. His parents were Matilda and Arthur Methan. There are two records of an A Methan, both aged 25 years, arriving by ships at Sydney in 1900, one from Bradford and one from Yorkshire. Arthur Methan married Martha Hallett in 1903 in Sydney. They had a son, Charles Methan, born at Sydney in 1904.

*The Leader*, Orange - 13 Feb 1909, p2, reported that an Arthur Methan from Sydney was accused of assault on Alice Cassidy at the Royal Hotel, Lucknow, on 10 Feb 1909. The case was eventually dismissed at trial.

*The Leader*, Orange - 2 Sep 1912, p4, reported that an Arthur Methan was charged with stealing a pair of trousers in Orange. The judge sentenced him with a fine of £2, in default one month's gaol. He advised Methan "to go to work, save his money, and send some to his poor wife."

Arthur Methan enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) on 26 Jun 1917 at Bathurst as Arthur Hallett (his wife's maiden name). His occupation was a labourer, stated age was 34 years and 3 months (actual age 42 years), and his next of kin was his wife Martha Hallett/Methan. On 1 Oct 1917 he revoked the surname Hallett at a court of enquiry held in Liverpool, NSW, and reverted to the name Methan. His medical examination stated that he was five feet six inches tall, had blue eyes, fair hair and a fair complexion and was of the Wesleyan Methodist religious denomination.

Pte Methan embarked as part of the 1st Pioneer Btn on 19 Dec 1917 at Sydney on HMAT A38 *Ulysses* and disembarked at Southampton on 13 Feb 1918. On 20 May 1918 Pte Methan was transferred to the 4th Pioneer Btn, part of the 4th Division, and proceeded to France on 29 Jul 1918. Pioneer Battalions were essentially infantry with light military combat engineer skills and located at the very forward edge of the battle area. They were used to develop and enhance protection and mobility for supported troops and to deny it to the enemy. They constructed defensive positions, command posts and dugouts, and prepared barbed wire defences.

The 4th Pioneer Btn took part in the Hundred Days Offensive (8 Aug - 11 Nov 1918), which finally brought an end to the war in November 1918. Pte Methan was admitted to the 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital Bulford, Wiltshire, with secondary Syphilis disease in England from 4 Aug - 17 Sep 1919.

On 5 Sep 1919 he returned to Australia per *HT Port Denison* and disembarked on 17 Nov 1919. He was discharged from the AIF on 17 Dec 1919 and received the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Arthur Metham died in Penrith, Sydney in 1931, aged 57 years. Martha Methan died in 1935 at Redfern, Sydney.