

John was born in Hitchens, Herts, UK in 1883. He enlisted in D Company, AN&MEF on 11th August 1914 stating that he was employed as a clerk (dairy) and was single, giving his father George French at Bury Farm, Newsells, Royston, Herts as his next of kin. He also stated that he spent 8 years full time in the Devonshire Regiment and 4 years part time.

On 31st December 1914 he was transferred from D Company to Admin Staff and returned from Rabaul and was discharged, term expired on 18th Jan 1915 having completed 151 days service.

John joined the AIF as an acting corporal in B Company, 18th Battalion on 22nd March 1915, regimental number 535. He was promoted Sergeant on 29th April and left Sydney with his battalion on 25th May 1915 aboard the CERAMIC. After training in Egypt, he landed at ANZAC Cove on 22nd August receiving gunshot wounds to both legs on the same day. He was evacuated on the ASCASUS on 27th August and had his left leg amputated aboard the ship. He was originally admitted to the Royal Naval Hospital on Malta before being invalided back to the UK on the DOVER CASTLE on 15th September.

There he was admitted to the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley an, on 6th November, was transferred to the Military Hospital, Brighton. He left Southampton on 31st August 1916 aboard the New Zealand Hospital Ship MARAMA, arriving back in Sydney on 17th October. He was discharged as medically unfit on 24th May 1917.

He received a pension as did his wife Mary Ellen Sarah and son John Albert. In 1921 he is recorded as living at Potters Bar Middlesex.