

Frank enlisted in the AN&MEF on 11th August 1914 under the name Frank John Kirkland. It is not at all clear why he used this pseudonym. He gave his mother, Mrs Maria Dowling (actually, Marie Celia Dowling) of Johnson St, Collingwood as his next of kin. He gave his birthplace as Melbourne and stated he was 27 years 5 months of age. He gave his occupation as boundary rider.

He served in the Force for the normal 206 days and was discharged on 4th March 1915 as "Time Expired".

On discharge Frank immediately enlisted in the 14th Battalion, AIF, again as Frank John Kirkwood #2167. On his new Attestation form, he gave his next of kin as his wife, Rose Mary Kirkland of 83 Plenty Road Sth Preston, Victoria. In fact, Frank had married in 1906, Rose Vera May Letchford, under the name Frank James Dowling.

Frank was promoted to Sergeant and, whilst on Anzac Peninsular, became quite ill with malaria and rheumatism. On 3rd September 1915 he left Suez aboard the ULYSSES for Australia where he was discharged as medically unfit on 4 January 1916.

In May 1916, he again enlisted in the AIF, this time in the 2nd Pioneers and this time under his real name of Frank James Dowling (#2235). On his new Attestation Papers, he gave another variation of his wife's name, this time as Vera May Dowling living at 131 Victoria parade, Collingwood.

He again left Australia, this time for England where he moved with the 2nd Pioneers into Belgium. On 15th August 1917 he was promoted Corporal and on 30th September he was appointed Acting Sergeant. On 9th of October the Battalion was at Ypres, Belgium, working on the roads around Ypres. In his diary, the Battalion Commander notes:

"Further advance made by our Division and troops on the flanks. C Coy continued planking Zonnebeke Road from Westhoek. A & D Coys cleared and reformed roads from Brickkiln through Zonnebeke to Broodseinde. B Coy cleared and reformed Ypres – Zonnebeke Road from Roulers to Zonnebeke and filled big crater and bridged C.T. in road from ?? summit from Broodseinde North. 5 offs 5 OR wounded and evacuated; 1 OR wounded and remaining with unit"

One of the OR's wounded was Frank who received a gunshot wound to his left arm and a shrapnel wound to his right leg. The wound to his leg resulted in him having the leg amputated and he was evacuated aboard the "Princess Elizabeth" back to England.

On 10th Jan 1918 he left England for Australia aboard the CORINTHIC and was discharged in Melbourne on 16th May 1918 as medically unfit.

On 17th March 1920, Frank signed a statutory declaration to the effect that his real name was Frank James Dowling. He never explained whilst he used a pseudonym for his enlistment in the AN&MEF and the AIF on the first occasion.

Frank died 1n 1963.