

Joseph was born in Dundalk County, Ireland in 1891. On 11th August 1914, he enlisted in the AN&MEF, stating that he was a stockman and single, giving his mother, Mrs Annie Johnson, Quay St, Dundalk, Ireland, as his next of kin. He stated that he served with the 5th Dragoon Guards, purchasing his discharge.

Joseph returned from Rabaul on 15th October 1914 and was discharged, medically unfit but also at own request. He may well have sort this early discharge because of the impending birth of his son Francis Patrick Skinner, in November. Francis Patrick's mother was Ida Skinner, but on his birth certificate, no father was given. Ida, in 1915, had a warrant issued for Joseph's arrest due to unpaid support for the child.

By this time Joseph had already enlisted in the AIF on 28th October 1914, regimental number 3227, under the assumed name John Joseph Hanratty. He sailed from Melbourne with the 1st Reinforcements of the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade aboard the BORDA on 22nd December 1914.



Joseph joined his unit in Egypt on 8th April 1915. On 12th April his unit embarked on the KARROO for Lemnos, leaving Lemnos on 25th August and arriving at ANZAC Cove. There the unit stayed until evacuated on 19th December 1915.

Joseph departed Alexandria with his unit on 22nd March 1916, arriving in Marseilles on 28th March. On 17th November 1916, whilst on the Somme, Joseph was killed in action. In the unit diaries of the 2nd Field Artillery, it is noted for the 17th; -

"Batteries in Action. Lt Dangwell and 1 o.r. evacuated wounded. 3227 Gn Hanratty killed".

Joseph is buried in the AIF burial grounds, Flers, Picardie, France and is remembered on panel 12 at the Australian War memorial, Canberra.