

Ione Evelyn Grace Nowland



Date/place of Birth: 1887, Penrith, NSW

Date/Place of Death: 4 November 1974, Roseville, NSW

Australian Army Nursing Service

Enlisted: 24 May 1917

Discharged: 31 May 1919

Biographical details

Ione Evelyn Grace Nowland was born in Penrith in 1887, the daughter of Edward and Louisa Nowland. Her father was a coach builder and painter and by the 1890s, the family had moved to Ryde. Ione undertook her nursing training at Sydney Hospital, passing her final examinations in September 1915. By the time of her enlistment, her parents were living in Ashfield.

Military Service with AANS

Ione Nowland enlisted on 24 May 1917. She left Melbourne on 9 June aboard the RMS Mooltan, a mail steamer, along with Penrith nurses, Adele Baker, Jessie Bassetti, Esther Coggins, Vida Greentree, Alice Scahill and Annie Major-West, and 300 nurses bound for Salonika, Greece. The ship arrived at Suez on 19 July and the nurses travelled to Cairo via train. On 13 August, Nowland arrived in Salonika, Greece and there she worked in British hospitals. In November 1918, Nowland was evacuated to Cairo with nervous debility and in December was invalided back to Australia, returning on board the *Leicestershire* on 23 January 1919. She was discharged on 31 May 1919.

Life after the First World War

Nowland married surveyor Lieutenant William Charles O'Toole at St. Phillip's Anglican Church, Sydney on 27 March 1920. They moved to the Clarence River district where her husband was attached to the Grafton Lands Office. They divorced in 1923 and Nowland reverted to using her maiden name. In 1925 she was appointed assistant to the registrar of the newly established Nurses' Registration Board. She was responsible for inspecting training schools. In 1931, appalled by the nurses' conditions she worked with Jessie Street to form a nurses' union in New South Wales. On 27 March 1931, Nowland became the first president of the New South Wales Nurses' Association. In 1936, for the first time there was uniformity of pay and conditions for nurses in public and private hospitals in the State. Soon after, Nowland resigned as president. She later worked as

a private nurse in Sydney's northern suburbs. Nowland died on 4 November 1974 in a convalescent home at Roseville.