NAME: Brabazon Clarence BADGERY +
SERVICE NUMBER: NX58441

RANK: Lance Corporal

UNITS: 2/19th & 2/27th Battalions, AIF.

OCCUPATION: Farmer

ENLISTMENT DATE & PLACE: 1 Jul 1941, Orange.

CONFLICT AREA/S: Singapore, Malaya, Thailand.

BIRTH DATE & PLACE: 21 Oct 1917, Leeton, NSW.

PARENTS: Frank Ernest and Annie (nee Stafford) Badgery

NEXT OF KIN: Father, Frank Badgery, 'Burgoon', Cumnock.

FATE: Died of illness, 9 Jul 1943, Thailand. Aged 25yrs.

CEMETERY: Kanchanabun War Cemetery, Thailand.
Grave reference: Coll. Grave 1. 0. 4-43

MEMORIALS: Cumnock War Memorial Gates**.**

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY:

Brabazon's parents, Frank and Anne Badgery moved from the Riverina and bought 'Burgoon' Cumnock, in 1926 (The Crossroads by Joan Marriott, 1993, p134, 157 & 158). Brabazon was 21 years and 3months old and living at 'Burgoon' with his parents when he enlisted in the Militia Forces at Molong on the 31 Jan 1939 and assigned to the 20/54 Btn. He joined the AIF at Orange on 1 Jul 1940. He was one of four soldiers farewelled at Cumnock on 20 Jan 1941.

On 26 Jul 1940 Pte Badgery was attached to the 2/19th Btn and embarked at Sydney on 14 Feb 1941, disembarking at Singapore on 18 Feb 1941. He was appointed a Lance Corporal on 26 Feb 1941. He was detached from his battalion for transport duty to Singapore from 26 Apr - 17 May 1941. He was transferred to 27th Brigade Head Quarters on 27 Aug 1941. On 10 Oct 1941, he was admitted to the No.10 Australian General Hospital and had a repair of a left inguinal hernia. He was discharged on 25 November and returned to the 27th Brigade on 13 Dec 1941.

The following is a letter to his mother, Malaya 16 Jan 1942:

Dear Mother,
Well here I am again and still going strong. I am terribly sorry for not writing more regularly but don't seem to have had time. My last letter was dated 3 Jan so it is just on a fortnight, but I expect the mails have been held up, so hope you haven't been worrying about me. The last couple of weeks have been one big rush and now the boys are into it. I can't tell you much about it of course but expect you get it all over the wireless. I haven't been in any actual fighting, but have had a few air raids. In fact, I have been interrupted 3 times while trying to write this. When they come over we have to leave the car and get into a ditch and if they are very low we aren't very fussy about a bit of mud and slush in the ditch.

Talking of mud, we haven't had a fine day for the last couple of weeks, and it rained steadily for 3 days without a break, so everything is pretty muddy. The car looks like a big heap of mud, both inside and out. Hardly go a day without getting bogged – it is all in the day's work now. The main roads are tarred but a lot of any driving is done on side tracks and we have to get off the road for the night.

In the last couple of weeks I have slept in a variety of places – tents that leak and have about a foot of mud on the floor, bits of sheds, and in the car. But now 6 of us have taken up residence in a nice little bungalow (with) all mod cons – water, sewrage, refrig, electric stove and beds. So when I am at home, live in comfort. Spent last night in the car and at the moment am in the middle of a rubber plantation and our artillery blazing away over our heads, so what with the crash of guns and the planes touring about every few minutes, it's quite a peaceful spot.

Well I think that is about all. Tons of love and don't worry. Brad.

"The Japanese had prepared for the invasion of Singapore with a heavy bombardment. They began their amphibious landings on the north-west of the island, where the Strait of Johore is narrowest. This area was held by the Australian 22nd Infantry Brigade but late on the night of 8 Feb 1942 the Japanese made their way through undefended sections. Twenty-four hours later a second Japanese landing force struck between the Causeway and the mouth of the Kranji River, an area held by the Australian 27th Infantry Brigade. By the morning of 10 February there were Japanese troops on most of north-west Singapore.

On 15 February 1942 Lieutenant General Arthur Percival, the British commander in Singapore, called for a ceasefire and made the difficult decision to surrender. He signed the surrender document that evening at the Ford Factory on Bukit Timah Road. After days of desperate fighting, all British Empire troops were to lay down their arms at 8.30 that night. More than 100,000 troops became prisoners of war together with hundreds of European civilians who were interned." (www.ww2australia.gov.au/japadvance/singapore.html)

L/Corporal Badgery was reported as 'Missing' on 16 Feb 1942 at Malaya and became a Prisoner of War, working on the Burma Railway. He died, aged 25 years, of heart failure, cholera and Malaria on 9 Jul 1943 in Thailand, according to Roy Mills, Doctor's Diary and Memoirs, 1994.

Brabazon's father, Frank Badgery, who was then living at Vine Lodge, Exeter, NSW, received his Medals in 1952: The 1939/45 Star, Pacific Star, Defence Medal, War Medal, and the Australian Service Medal. He is remembered on the WW2 Honour Plaque on the Cumnock War Memorial Gates and the National War Museum, Canberra.

L/Cpl Brabazon Badgery features in The Molong & District Servicemen and Servicewomen Portrait Gallery book, 2nd edition 2016, compiled by Helen Haynes.

***Above left**: Brabazon Badgery (left) with his brother-in-law, Tom Atkinson, in Sydney, 1940.*

***Above right:** Kanchanabun War Cemetery, Thailand. It is the main prisoner of war (POW) cemetery for victims of Japanese imprisonment while building the Burma Railway.*

***Right:** Cumnock War Memorial Gates*