

**Corporal Joseph Neville BARTER**  
**NX41942 - 2/3 Australian Independent Company**  
**- 2/3 Australian Commando Squadron**  
**- 2/14 Australian Infantry Battalion**



**BRIEF BIOGRAPHY:**

Joseph Neville Barter was born at Orange on 6 Feb 1923, a son of Edith and Thomas Henry Barter.

Thomas Henry Barter was born in Eurimbla in 1890, a son of Joseph and Elizabeth Barter. Thomas married Edith Emily Johnson in 1913 at Cumnock. They had six children: Cecil, Gladys, Reginald, Joseph Neville, Mervyn and Margery.

Thomas Barter farmed the Weston family holding, 'Googodery', Eurimbla, for most of his working life. Edith Barter died, aged 77 years, on 15 Aug 1971 in Cumnock. Thomas Barter died, aged 78 years in Sydney on 1 Aug 1968. Both are buried in the Anglican portion of the Cumnock Cemetery.

Joseph was known by his second name, Neville. His primary education was undertaken at the Eurimbla School. He played cricket and tennis for Eurimbla and Cumnock teams.

Neville, aged 18 years, (although he stated he was 19 yrs) enlisted in the Army Citizen Military Forces (CMF) on 6 Feb 1941. He held the rank of Gunner, N104737 - 5 Heavy Artillery Brigade. He was discharged from the CMF on 4 August and enlisted in the Australian Army on 5 Aug 1941, at Paddington. His medical examination stated he was 5 feet 11 inches tall, had blue eyes, fair hair, was single, a tractor driver, and of the Church of England religious denomination.

Pte Barter was farewelled at Cumnock, as per the insert, by the ***Molong Express & Western District Advertiser - 24 Aug 1941, p7.*** He was also given a farewell by the residents of Eurimbla as reported by the ***Molong Express & WDA - 23 Aug 1941, p10.***

After training at Caulfield and Foster in Victoria, Pte Barter was transferred to Woodside, a town in the Adelaide Hill region of South Australia on 18 Nov 1941. He embarked at Sydney on 17 Dec 1941 on *SS Ormiston* and disembarked at New Caledonia in the southwest Pacific Ocean, on 23 Dec 1941, as part of No. 3 Australian Independent Company (AIC).

Pte Barter embarked at New Caledonia on *SS West Cactus* on 3 Aug 1942 and disembarked at Brisbane on 8 Aug 1942. He attended a P & RT (unknown acronym) School at Milton, QLD, from 8 - 17 Sep 1942.

On 19 Jan 1943, Pte Barter embarked at Townsville on *SS Taroon* and disembarked at Port Moresby on 21 Jan 1943. From Port Moresby the company was flown to Wau, participating in the Australian pursuit of the Japanese towards Mubo.



On 15 Apr 1943 he was treated at the Advanced Dressing Station (ADS) at Bulolo, in the Wau-Bololo area, Morobe Province, for Synovitis of right knee, and then transferred to the 9 Australian General Hospital at Port Moresby. After convalescent leave he returned to 2/3 AIS on 12 Aug 1943.

Pte Barter left New Guinea per *SS Sydney Hall Young* on 4 Oct 1942 and disembarked at Cairns on 7 Oct 1943. After leave, the 2/3 AIS reformed on the Atherton Tablelands, where it trained and conducted exercises with the 7th Division until May to July 1945.

Neville's brother, Sgt Reginald Barter - RAAF 60200, Special Police Unit, was killed in a plane crash in New Guinea on 28 Jan 1945.

**FAREWELL TO PTE. N. BARTER.**

On Saturday last Pte. N. Barter was given a public presentation in the Picture Theatre. The hall was crowded with friends and wellwishers of the young soldier. The Chairman, Mr. S. R. Reynolds, in congratulating the guest of the evening on his joining up the A.I.F., stated that Pte. Barter came of a great family. The Barter family whom he first contacted over 40 years ago, was one of the oldest Cumnock families, and had earned the respect of our district. Mr. Reynolds then stressed the urgent necessity of other young men following in Neville's footsteps, and thereby helping to shorten the war. He then called on the Rev. Peatey to add his testimony.

The Rev. Peatey, in the course of his remarks, stated that Neville was probably the youngest member to join the A.I.F. from Cumnock, being 18 years of age. He concluded his remarks by wishing him Godspeed and a safe return.

Mr. S. Wright then made a presentation to Pte. Barter from the local branch of the Home Guards and complimented their guest on his action in joining up for overseas. He also stated that prior to enlisting Neville used to ride in six miles each night to attend a voluntary parade, and was most regular in attendance.

Sergeant Caswell, in charge of 2CR, also spoke, and then the usual presentations were made to Pte. Barter, who thanked all those present for their gifts. Mr. C. Barter responded on behalf of his parents.

The *Molong Express & WDA* - 12 Oct 1943, p4, reported:

*“Pte N Barter, son of Mr and Mrs Thomas Barter, who has been home on leave from New Guinea, was taken ill during the week and conveyed to the Molong Hospital. We understand his case has been diagnosed as malaria. Pte Barter, who had been a considerable time in New Guinea, had escaped from malaria while over there and his 24 days’ home leave would have expired this week...”*

The *Molong Express & WDA* - 19 Nov 1943, p8, reported that Pte Neville Barter had recovered from his illness was home from hospital. This home leave was without permission as he was charged with being Absent Without Leave from 17 Nov - 19 Nov, admonished by his Commanding Officer and forfeited 2 days pay. Pte Barter then returned to his unit in the Atherton Tablelands.

This was a period of reorganisation for the independent companies as the 2/3rd, along with the 2/5th and 2/6th Independent Companies were brought together to form the 2/7th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment. In October the title independent company was changed to cavalry (commando) squadron. This name was later simplified to just commando squadron.

On 9 Jan 1945, he was promoted to Lance Corporal. He attended a Mortar School Course from 5 - 25 Apr 1945, and on 2 May 1945 was further promoted to Corporal.

As part of the Cavalry Commando Squadron (CCS), Cpl Barter embarked at Townsville on the *USS General Anderson* on 2 Jun 1945, and disembarked at Morotai on 8 Jun 1945.

*“The 7th Division landed at Balikpapan on 1 July. Once the landing beach was secured, the 2/7th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment would support the 7th Division by moving off along Vasey Highway and capture the airfield at Seppinggang, Borneo. The 2/5th Cavalry Squadron was to lead the way supported by the 2/3rd. On the first day of the battle, the 2/3rd landed on Green Beach and moved off along Vasey Highway. But by 2 July it came under heavy mortar fire from the Japanese on Lady Schofield Knoll and they could not capture the position until the next day. On 4 July one of the squadron's troops were transferred to the 2/9th Infantry Battalion to patrol the area around Penadjam, while the rest of the squadron continued on to Seppinggang. On 27 July offensive operations ceased and the squadron moved to Penadjam. The next month, in the middle of August, Japan surrendered and the war was over.”*  
[www.awm.gov.au/collection/U56148](http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/U56148)

After treatment for hookworm at the 2/12 General Hospital at Balikpapan, Borneo from 12 - 26 October, Cpl Barter was transferred from the 2/3 Commando Squadron to the 2/14 Infantry Battalion. He embarked at Makassar, Eastern Indonesia, on 21 Jan and disembarked at Brisbane on 4 Feb 1946. He was discharged from the Australian Army on 26 Mar 1946. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star, the Pacific Star the Defence War Medal, and the Australia Service Medal 1939-45.

Neville Barter returned home to Cumnock on leave after his return to Australia and prior to his discharge. The *Molong Express & WDA* - 19 Apr 1946, p12, reported: *“Mr Neville Barter left last week for Perth, travelling via Broken Hill and Adelaide.”* On the 12 Jul 1946, p6, the same newspaper reported that he had returned home to ‘Googodery’ after spending three months in Western Australia.

Neville took up playing cricket, tennis and football for Cumnock during 1946 and the early 1950s. On the 26 Jun 1954, at St John’s Church of England, Molong, Neville, aged 31 years, married Joan Margaret Treacy, second daughter of Mr and Mrs James Treacy, of Molong. The couple motored to Coolangatta for their honeymoon. They returned to ‘Googodery,’ Cumnock where Neville had a cottage, which he named ‘Saramea,’ after a location in the highlands of New Caledonia. They had two sons, Lee and Shane. Joan and Neville parted in the 1970s and divorced. Joan later married Peter Antrobus and they lived in Orange until her death, aged 87 years, on 22 Jul 2022.

Joseph Neville Barter died, aged 67 years, on 21 Nov 1990. His Obituary was printed in the *Cumnock Progress Review* - 29 Nov 1990, and stated that Neville was an active member of the community, had been President of the Cumnock Progress Association and a steward in the fruit and vegetable section of the Cumnock Show. He regularly attended Anzac Day marches in Sydney and reunions of the Australian Commandos Association. Members of the RSL and some of his Commando comrades formed a guard of honour at the church, and recited “The Ode” at the graveside. He is buried in the Anglican portion of the Cumnock Cemetery.

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