

Gunner Thomas Henry WOODHOUSE
NX84009 - 1st Field Regiment & Royal Aust. Artillery,
11 Division

Biography:

Thomas (Tom) Henry Woodhouse was born on 19 Mar 1915 at Orange, the son of Clement Lachlan and Margaret Jane Woodhouse.

Clement had married Margaret Jane Richardson at Peak Hill on 30 Mar 1910. Margaret's parents were Thomas and Bridget Richardson, of "Greenbah," Obley. Clement was the eldest son of Mr Henry Woodhouse, of "Mount Oak," Obley.

Clement and Margaret had two other children: Doris born 1911, Parkes; and John (Jack) born 1919, Orange. The family lived at "Rosebank," Obley until about 1916, when they rented land from the Land Board, Molong. In 1918, a CL Woodhouse was advertising in the Molong Express & Western District Advertiser (WDA), as a Stock, Station and General Commission Agent at Yeoval. A newspaper report of 1923, stated that Mr CL Woodhouse, Manildra, was selling crossbred ewes at Homebush.

By 1924, the Woodhouse family had moved to "Redbank," Toogong. Tom Woodhouse was reported as playing tennis in a news report at "Redbank," Toogong, in 1932, and cricket for Cudal in 1935.

The Woodhouse family moved to "Glenalvon," Larras Lee, in 1936. Jean Woodhouse married Victor Barnes, of Cudal, in the Church of England, Cumnock on 5 Aug 1936. Tom Woodhouse was the Best Man. Tom played cricket for Cumnock in 1938 and was a good batsman. In 1939, Tom leased a 1097-acre block of land at "Warrawong," Cumnock until 1942, according to an entry in "The Crossroads" by Joan Marriott, p142. In May 1940, Tom had an Appendicectomy at Molong District Hospital.

Tom's brother, John Woodhouse, enlisted in the Australian Army at Molong, on 23 Apr 1941. He served as Pte John Woodhouse, N197543 - 54 Infantry Btn. He was discharged as medically unfit with chronic nephritis, on 10 Mar 1942.

Thomas Woodhouse, aged 26 years, enlisted in the Australian Army at Paddington, on 15 Jan 1942. He was single, and his father, Clement Woodhouse, of "Glenalvon," Larras Lee, was named as his next of kin. His medical examination stated that he was 6 feet 2 inches tall, had grey eyes, fair hair and a fair complexion. His occupation was listed as a farmer, and he was of the Church of England religious denomination.

He was taken on strength to the 1 Field Training Regiment at Greta, in the Hunter Region of NSW.

He was appointed as a Driver/Mechanic on 30 Jun 1942 but on 14 Sep 1942, he was transferred to the Royal Australian Artillery (RAA) and relinquished his appointment as a Group 11 Driver/Mechanic. He embarked at Brisbane on 2 Nov 1942 and disembarked at Port Moresby on 7 Nov 1942 as a gunner, part of the RAA 11 Division.

The RAA was based at Port Moresby and were divided into 1st, 2nd and 3rd Australian Corps, plus 1 to 11 Australian Divisions, and the 9 Heavy Battery. They operated in various locations around the Oro Province in the coastal province in the Southern Region of Papua New Guinea including: Popondetta, the provincial capital of Oro Province near to Buna; Dobodura - a small village about 9 miles east of Popondetta, which had many airstrips known as the Dobodura Airfield Complex; Sanananda; Buna; Cape Killerton; and Oro Bay Base (photo right Dec 1943).

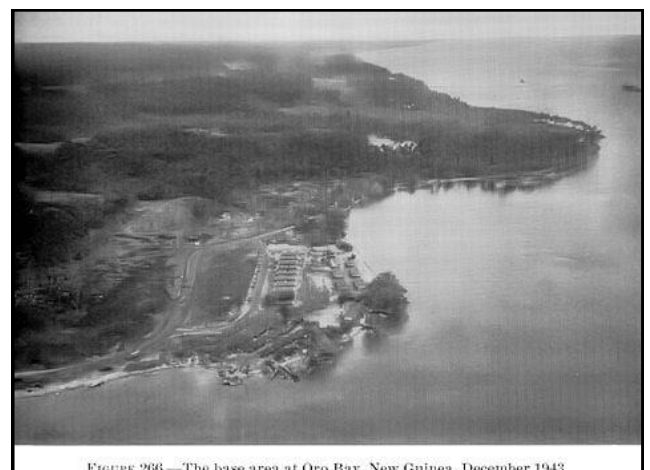


FIGURE 206.—The base area at Oro Bay, New Guinea, December 1943.

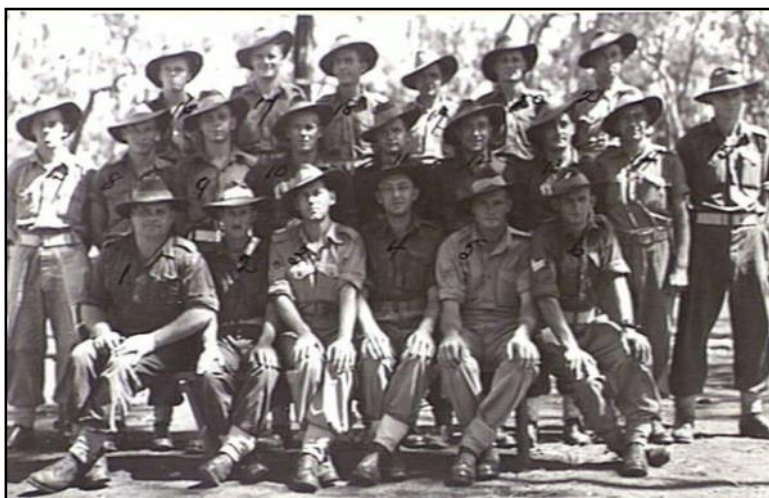
Gnr Thomas Woodhouse embarked on *SS Katoomba* at Buna on 20 Feb 1944 and arrived at Bowen on leave on 27 Feb 1944. He was charged with the offence of being AWL from 1 Apr - 17 Apr 1944 and fined £5 by the Commanding officer of the NSW Line of Communication (L of C) area, Boronia Park. He also forfeited 16 days pay.

On 22 May 1944 Gnr Thomas Woodhouse embarked at Townsville and disembarked at Lae on 27 May 1944 to rejoin the RAA 11 Division, still located around the Oro Province, PNG.

Gnr Thomas Woodhouse embarked at Lae on 20 July and disembarked at Townsville on 27 Jul 1944. He was evacuated to the 2/2 Aust. General Hospital (AGH), Rocky Creek, Atherton Tablelands, on 16 Sep 1944 and found to be suffering from Amoebiasis, an infection of the intestines which can cause mild to severe symptoms. He rejoined his unit on 20 Nov., only to report sick again on the 22 Nov 1944 to be readmitted 2/2 AGH with a right Inguinal Hernia. He rejoined his unit on 17 Jan 1945.

Gnr Thomas Woodhouse was hospitalised at 113 AGH Concord with pyrexia on 6 Jun 1945 and returned to Cumnock on leave in August and September 1945. He was discharged from the Army on 27 May 1946.

The Wellington Times - 7 Jan 1946, p6, reported that the servicemen and women of Cumnock who served in the Armed Forces during WW2 were given a welcome home on New Year's Eve 1945, at the Picture Theatre in Cumnock, followed by a ball, which over 400 people are said to have attended. One of the servicemen who attended was Thomas Woodhouse.



**Group of RAA 11 Division soldier, Mapee, Nth QLD,
9 Apr 1945. AWM 088896
Gnr TH Woodhouse is in the middle row, last on the right.**

Thomas Woodhouse married Bertha Joyce Hart at Holy Trinity Church, Orange in May 1947. Bertha was the youngest daughter of Ernest and Sarah Hart of The Gap. Ernest had died in 1934 and his wife Sarah continued to run the property. Bertha trained at the Royal North Shore Hospital as a nurse in the early 1940s. Thomas and Bertha lived at "Glenalvon," Larras Lee after their marriage. They had four children: Robin, Thomas Scott, and twins Julie and Jocelyn.

Thomas became a member of the Cumnock-Yeoval Branch of the Returned Servicemen's League in 1947. He also played cricket for Cumnock in 1947 and 1948 and was a member of the Cumnock Bushfire Brigade in 1952.

The Cumnock Progress Review - 9 July 1975 reported: "**Serious Accident at Cumnock - Death of Well Known Resident. An accident on the outskirts of Cumnock last Thursday night (3 July 1975) claimed the life of Mr Tom Woodhouse of 'Glenalvon' and put Mr & Mrs Bill O'Brien of 'Towan' in hospital. Mrs O'Brien, who suffered several fractures of the jaw and ribs, walked towards Cumnock to Mr Mr & Mrs Mick Dwyer, while rescuers went to help her husband and Mr Woodhouse. Bolt cutters and tools were needed to free the two men.**

Mr Woodhouse suffered a whiplash fracture of the neck and was dead on arrival at Molong Hospital. Mr O'Brien was conveyed to Orange and admitted to the Intensive Care Unit at Orange Base Hospital and was found to have multiple fractures of the nose, ribs, pelvis and femur.

Sympathy is extended to Mrs Bertha Woodhouse and her family on the death of her husband and their father, Mr Thomas Henry Woodhouse, last week. The family of four are Robin (Mrs Leslie Mitchell) Warrimoo; Thomas Scott, Cumnock; and twins Julie, Orange and Jocelyn, Sydney. A brother, Mr Jack Woodhouse, Orange, also survives."

In March 1999, Bertha Woodhouse, while living at Mooloolaba, Queensland, applied for her deceased husband's WW2 medals from the Army Medals Section, Melbourne, which Thomas hadn't previously claimed. She received his 1939/45 Star, the Pacific Star, the 1939/45 War Medal, and the 1939/45 Australia Service Medal. He is honoured on the WW2 plaque on the Cumnock Memorial Gates.

