

France,

30.10.17.

My dear Mrs Barr,

Please allow me to offer you the sympathy of my officers, N.C.O.s & men as well as my own in your sad bereavement.

Your son has been given by God the greatest privilege of all - that of a soldier's death fighting for right. If it will ease your mind I would like to tell you that death was instantaneous. He was killed by a shell & buried by some comrades between Ypres & Passchendaele on 13.10.17.

Mrs Barr, I, as Haghe's Company Commander, can assure you he was much valued in this company. Both by his comrades & Officers. I have often been with him on patrol in No Man's Land & therefore knew his sterling worth. All I can say is that he was always a true soldier, devoted to duty.

I remain, Yours sincerely,

Ray Skinner Capt.
44th Bn.

44th. BATTALION

In the Field

5.11.17

Mrs. M. Barr

Larne

IRELAND

Dear Mrs, Barr,

It is with deep regret that I have to confirm the sad news of the death of your son No. 337 Tempy. Sergt. H. Barr who was killed in action on the 13th. October 1917.

Your son was a brave and conscientious soldier and as a Non Commissioned Officer of very great value to the Battalion.

Without doubt he was one of our most serious losses in the recent operations, and his memory ~~will~~ will ever live in the minds of his comrades. It will be some small consolation to you to know that his death was instantaneous and quite free from pain. The Commanding Officer desires me to convey to you his very sincere sympathies at your sad loss

~~xxx~~

I am,

Yours sincerely,

T. B. Sillary

CAPTAIN
ADJUTANT 44th. BATTALION.

TELEPHONE:
CENTRAL 4780.

PB/DB

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS
TO "THE SECRETARY."



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

No. 18379

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE,
BASE RECORDS OFFICE, A. I. F.,
MELBOURNE. 10th July, 1918.

Dear Madam,

I have much pleasure in forwarding hereunder copy of extract from Fourth Supplement No. 30498 to the London Gazette dated 25th January, 1918, relating to the conspicuous services rendered by your son, the late No. 337 Sergeant (temporary) H. Barr, 44th Battalion.

x x x x

AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL

"HIS MAJESTY THE KING has been graciously pleased to approve of the award of the Military Medal for bravery in the field of the undermentioned Non-commissioned Officer:-

No. 337 Lance-Sergeant H. BARR. "

x x x x

The above has been promulgated in Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, No. 95 dated 27th June, 1918.

Yours faithfully,

W. J. P. ...

Captain.

for Officer i/c Base Records.

Mrs. M. Barr,
Larne,
IRELAND.

12/11/284

25 June 1927.

Mrs. M. Barr,
1, Balneum Terrace,
Larne Harbour,
Ireland.

Dear Madam,

The Australian War Memorial Museum, containing as it does the written records, the pictures, and the relics of Australia's forces which served in the Great War, has been established by Act of Parliament of the Commonwealth as the national memorial to those who fell or died in this country's service during that struggle. A certain portion of these records, comprizing pictures, official photographs, models, and relics, has for the last five years been exhibited in Melbourne and Sydney, but the whole will later be brought together and permanently housed at the Federal Capital, Canberra, in a monumental building, plans for which are now being determined.

In the library of the "War Museum" there are preserved the written records - that is to say, the war-diaries of the A.I.F. as they were written up from day to day in the field, the signal messages written in battle, the correspondence files, maps, air-photographs, naval records, and other official documents, as well as copies of most books or publications of both sides which touch or have a direct bearing on the work of the Australian forces, newspaper files for the years 1914-1918, and a number of private diaries and letters - all of which are now being used by the official historians, and will through the coming centuries be the main source of information for students and for those writing of Australia's war-effort.

Many living officers and men who served in the army and navy have given their private war-records into the custody of the Memorial library, and the collection is still growing week by week. But in respect of the records of those who died, it is not sufficiently representative; and, as these are the men and women to whom the War Memorial is dedicated and whose great service it will for all time commemorate, it is especially fitting that every effort should be made to collect and worthily preserve their papers and letters. The Australian soldier and sailor frequently recorded in his diary or in his home-letters indications of the thoughts, hopes, and fears which were then uppermost in his mind, and descriptions of his own and others' work and actions. These papers are often the most valuable human documents, bearing evidence of supreme effort and endurance in circumstances of which, unfortunately, there is in many cases nowadays practically no other existing record. It is apparent, from the letters and diaries which have already come into the keeping of the War Memorial library, that in many homes there must exist numerous letters and other papers which would form data of importance and value.

It has therefore been decided to ask the relatives of some of those who gave their lives if they would kindly agree to present to the War Memorial library now, or bequeath to it later, any such documents in their possession. For this reason I am writing to inquire whether you can see your way to contribute to the Memorial the letters received from your son, the late Hugh Barr, during the whole of his service with the A.I.F., or any other relevant papers, diaries, maps, photographs, etc. It is of course

Mrs. M. Barr.

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recognized that these documents are very precious to you, being in the nature of cherished herilooms which, if kept in your family, cannot fail to inspire future generations with a spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice and a determination also to serve their country well. On the other hand it may perhaps be reasonably held that, if included in a library such as the one being formed by the Australian War Memorial, they will be of even greater value to Australia and the world at large, and, in the long run, more tenderly and carefully preserved.

In the case of letters it is also realized that they must contain much of a private and family nature. The documents in the War Memorial library, however, include many confidential State papers, and are well guarded, and only to be inspected by historians on conditions strictly laid down. The confidence imposed by these conditions has never been and is never likely to be broken.

If you decide that you are unable to part with these private records, at least for the present, might I suggest that you will be good enough to allow the War Memorial library to copy or to make extracts from them? In that case all care will be taken of them, and they shall be returned to you either separately or together, as you wish, as soon as the work of copying has been completed.

In addition, you may know of interesting letters written by your son to others of his relations or friends, and possibly still preserved, which might suitably find a place in the War Memorial collection. The War Memorial Board would be grateful if you would assist it by sending to me the names and addresses of any friends who would be likely to present such letters.

Yours faithfully,

Director,
Australian War Memorial.

Letter sent in respect of 337 Sergeant H. Barr, M.M., 44th Battalion, AIF, who on 13 October 1917 was killed in action in the Third Battle of Ypres. Other biographical details concerning him are: seaman (on the Western Australian Government steamer "Western Australia"); of Fremantle, W.Aust.; born Larne, Ireland; educated at Olderfleet National school, Larne; came to Australia at the age of 24-25; enlisted in the A.I.F. on 18 January 1916; age at time of death, 29-30.

Alternative address: c/o Miss Irwin,
5, Chelmsford Avenue,
Larne Harbour,
Ireland.