



Following his enlistment on 11 January 1916, 21-year-old South Australian, Gunner Lindsay Barrett was allocated to the 13<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Horse Regiment. Arriving in the staging camps of Egypt, Lindsay found himself in stirring times. The AIF was growing enormously after its withdrawal from Gallipoli, and new units were being formed for action on the battlefields of France and Belgium. The thought of the Artillery appealed to the young soldier, and after further training in England, he was posted to the newly raised 101<sup>st</sup> Howitzer Battery, which was part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Field Artillery Brigade.

In October 1917, the 101<sup>st</sup> Howitzer Battery was in action along the infamous feature dubbed ANZAC Ridge, near Ypres, Belgium. Barrett, now a temporary Bombardier, took over as second in command of Number 5 Gun. On the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> October, the battery was firing in support of attacking Allied infantry. The enemy counter-battery fire was extremely heavy but the Australian gunners stuck determinedly to the task.

Suddenly, an enemy round exploded between Numbers 5 and 6 guns, killing or wounding both of detachments, except for Barrett, who was generally unscathed. Realising that the loss of the two guns’ firepower would cause a serious gap in the barrage line, Barrett took on the task to lay, load and fire his gun singlehanded. For the next 10-15 minutes and under extremely heavy fire from enemy artillery, he did the work of an entire detachment, and his efforts kept the effects of the rolling barrage generally intact at the target end. As new information was relayed to the remaining guns, so as to cover the gap of fire, Barrett was ordered to tend to his wounded mates.

For his actions that day, Lindsay Barrett was recommended for the Victoria Cross, although the citation was later downgraded to the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

Lindsay Barrett later served in the Militia in World War Two.

**Sources:**

National Achieves of Australia: B884, WW2 Service Records, S1729 PTE L.E. Barrett

Interview with the Barrett Family

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War Service Record of the First Australian Field Artillery Brigade 1914-1919

AWM 28, Recommendation Files for Honours and Awards, AIF, 1914-1918 War, 1842 SGT L.E. Barrett

Department of Veterans Affairs, Nominal Roll of Vietnam Veterans – 4717870 D.L. Barrett

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