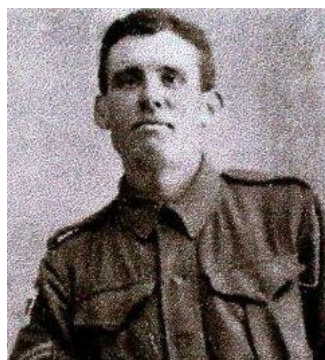


Sinclair Leitch



Sergeant Sinclair Leitch
5th Australian Pioneers, AIF
Service Number: 2440

Born: 1896 Wick, Scotland
Death: 2 November 1916, France

Sinclair Leitch was born in 1896 at Wick, Scotland, the son of Donald and Johan Leitch. The Leitch family migrated to Australia around 1913 and lived in the Richmond area before moving to Penrith. At the time of his enlistment, Leitch was a farm labourer in the Orange district and stated that he had two years' service with the Territorial Army in Great Britain. Leitch's elder brother, Lieutenant Donald Leitch served with the 4th Battalion.

Leitch enlisted on 26 May 1915 and was allocated to the 7th reinforcements, 2nd Battalion. He left Australia aboard HMAT Orsova on 15 July 1915 bound for Egypt. After a period of training in Egypt, Leitch was sent to Gallipoli. On 17 October 1915, Leitch was admitted to the 3rd Light Horse Field Ambulance with pyrexia. He was discharged on 21 October and rejoined his unit on 31 October 1915. According to family folklore, Leitch was one of the last five men to leave Gallipoli when it was evacuated in December 1915.

Leitch was transferred to the 54th Battalion, then stationed at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt. In February 1916, he was hospitalised with influenza. In March, Leitch transferred to the 5th Pioneers. He was promoted to Corporal on 13 May 1916. In June, Leitch sailed for France, arriving at Marseilles on 25 June 1916.

On 11 July 1916, Leitch was promoted to Lance Sergeant at Rue-de-Bruges before being promoted to Sergeant in the field on 19 August 1916. On 30 October 1916, he suffered gunshot wounds to the neck, lung and back near Albert, France. He was admitted to the 36th Casualty Clearing Station and on 2 November 1916, Leitch died from his wounds. On 6 December 1916, the 5th Division Routine Orders contained the following entry re Leitch 'Gallantry and meritorious service when in command of a platoon digging in the firing line he showed great courage in keeping his men at their work and completing his allotted task under a heavy fire'.

Memorial Details:

- Heilly Station Cemetery Mericourt-L'Abbe, France
- Honour Roll, Memory Park, Penrith

Sources:

- [National Archives of Australia: B2455, LEITCH SINCLAIR](#)
- [Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing](#)
- [Red Cross Wounded and Missing](#)
- Penrith City Library Biography files

TROVE:

- [Nepean Times](#): 25 November 1916, p4, Col. 4