

## **Gerald Linton Vendy**

Private (Pte) 727 Gerald Linton Vendy enlisted in the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion in Melbourne on 19 March 1915. The battalion embarked overseas on 10 May and disembarked in Egypt on 18 June. Pte Vendy was placed in isolation between 30 July – 15 August and returned to Australia on 26 September 1915. Unfortunately, his service record is silent regarding the reasons for his isolation and subsequent return, and there is no record of any discharge.

In any event, back in Melbourne, Pte Vendy recovered from his illness and at some stage was transferred to the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Division and given the new service number 3995.

He embarked overseas for the second time on 23 November and disembarked in Egypt in mid-December, where he was taken on strength of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Serapeum on 22 February 1916.

The battalion embarked for France on 25 March and disembarked in Marseilles on 30 March, where they entrained for the long trip north. The battalion moved into the front line at Fromelles between 28 May – 10 June for the loss of 25 men (three killed). After a brief period in nearby Belgium, the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion moved south to the Somme from 12 July and had reached Albert by 21 July.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Division was ordered to attack and capture the French village of Pozieres on 23 July. The division achieved its objectives and then had to withstand several fierce counter attacks and the most severe artillery bombardments that any Australian soldiers had encountered to that time. Overall 1<sup>st</sup> Division casualties between 23 – 27 July totalled 5,285 men, mostly due to artillery. The 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion accounted for 446 of those during their time in the line.

After a short spell, the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion returned to Pozieres on 14 August and slowly advanced towards the heavily fortified Mouquet Farm, however the Germans held firm. After a week, the battalion left Pozieres on 21 August having suffered a further 36 killed and 162 wounded, one of whom was Pte Vendy who sustained a shrapnel wound to his right arm and shell shock on 18 August 1916.

He was initially evacuated to the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian General Hospital at Etaples from 19 – 26 August, and then to the 20<sup>th</sup> General Hospital at Camiers from 27 August – 12 September. After his discharge, he convalesced at Etaples, where he was also treated for scabies until 22 October. He eventually rejoined the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, billeted at Ribemont, on 13 November.

Pte Vendy was treated for a blistered heel at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Ambulance from 17 December – 3 January 1917, after which he was admitted to the 1<sup>st</sup> General Hospital at Etretat from 4 – 18 January, then transferred to England and hospitalised at the Kitchener War Hospital in Brighton from 19 January – 16 April.

He was granted leave in England from 25 April – 10 May, then convalesced at various camps in Wiltshire for the next two months, before he returned to France on 27 July, and subsequently rejoined the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, billeted at Vieux-Berquin, on 18 August 1917.

On 14 September, the battalion moved north to Belgium, and then to Zillebeke on 19 September, where extra ammunition and rations were issued in preparation for an assault the next day. At 2.30 am on the morning of 20 September 1917 the battalion moved to their starting point near Glencorse Wood where, at 5.40 am, they attacked. Considered a success, victory at the Battle of Menin Road nevertheless came at a heavy cost, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion alone suffered 96 killed and 183 wounded, one of whom was Pte Vendy, who sustained a shrapnel wound (which fractured his left ankle) on 22 September.



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*Wounded men waiting on the Menin Road. German prisoners are assisting the stretcher bearers (20 Sept 1917)*

He was initially evacuated to the Red Cross Hospital at Rouen from 24 – 28 September, then transferred to England where he was admitted to the Colchester Military Hospital in Suffolk from 28 September – 3 December, after which he was granted leave from 3 – 17 December.

While in England, Pte Vendy was also hospitalised at the Sutton Veny Military Hospital with tonsillitis for a week from 1 March 1918, before he embarked for France on 28 March. He rejoined the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, in the support line near Ypres, on 3 April. In mid-April 1918, the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion was held in reserve during the 1<sup>st</sup> Division's successful defence of Hazebrouck and Strazeele during the German Spring Offensive, and they remained in the area for several months afterwards.

Pte Vendy was sent to the 2<sup>nd</sup> (British) Army Musketry School from 29 July – 21 August, and then to the Australian Corps School of Instruction at Aveluy from 23 August. By the time he rejoined the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion on 24 September, they had already left the line for the last time. He departed France on 24 January 1919 and embarked for return to Australia on 28 March.

Private 3995 Gerald Linton Vendy disembarked in Melbourne on 14 May, where he was discharged from the AIF on 6 July 1919.

Name: Vendy, Gerald Linton	
Service Numbers	727 & 3995
Date enlisted	19 March 1915
Place enlisted	Melbourne, Victoria
Rank on enlistment	Private
Initial Unit	24 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion
Date and ship embarked for overseas	10 May 1915 HMAT A14 <i>Euripides</i>
Date and ship embarked for overseas (2)	23 November 1915 HMAT A40 <i>Ceramic</i>
Previous military service	2 years Citizens Military Forces
Stated age/DOB (if known)	19 years 7 months
Place of birth	Landsborough, Victoria
Marital status	Single
Occupation	Clerk
Religion	Church of England
Next of kin and address	Vendy, Mr Albert, father, Noble Park, Victoria
Permanent address	Noble Park, Victoria
Appearance	Medium complexion, dark brown hair, light blue eyes, height – 5 feet 9 inches, weight – 11 stone, 6 lbs, chest measurement – 34/37 inches
Final Rank	Private
Final Unit	5 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion
Theatres of war served in	Egypt, France, Belgium
Fate	Returned to Australia
Date and place wounded	18 August 1916 Mouquet Farm, France
Nature of wounds	Shrapnel wound to right arm & shell shock
Date and place wounded (2)	22 September 1917 Menin Road, Belgium
Nature of wounds (2)	Shrapnel wound to left ankle (fractured)
Date and ship embarked for Australia	26 September 1915 HMAT A18 <i>Wiltshire</i>
Date and ship embarked for Australia (2)	28 March 1919 HT <i>City of Poona</i>
Date discharged	6 July 1919
Nature of discharge	Termination of Period of Enlistment
Honours/medals	1914/15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal
Notes	Listed on the Landsborough War Memorial and Landsborough & District Honor Roll