

Gunner George Harry Gerald Wilson

Regimental Number: 11

2nd Division, Motor Transport Company, Canadian Army Service Corps

born: 22 April 1889 - died: 1 December 1918

Gunner George Harry Gerald Wilson, born on 22 April 1889 in Thornton Heath, Surrey,¹ was the son of George and Emily Wilson.² He obviously came to Canada at some point before World War I. When he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force on 26 February 1915 in Toronto, Canada, he was 25 years old and a teamster.³ He was 5' 8" tall and had a dark complexion, blue eyes and black hair. He was a member of the Church of England.



G H G Wilson in Gosselies Communal cemetery
(Source: Author)

George served with the 2nd Division Motor Transport, Canadian Army Service Corps. He became ill and was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 26 November 1918.⁴ He died there six days later of influenza. He was buried the following day in Gosselies Communal Cemetery (Grave 255), with the chaplain W. O'Neill Fisher presiding. The chaplain notified his next-of-kin, his sister, Miss R. Wilson, living at 40 Silverleigh Road in Thornton Heath of his death.

Influenza accounted for most deaths at the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station after the Armistice. In spite of the horrific number of soldiers killed in World War I, the influenza pandemic,



Graves of nine WW1 soldiers in Gosselies Communal cemetery (Source: Author)

which affected the whole world and scourged Europe in 1918-1919, killed more people than the war itself.⁵

The day that George was admitted to the 1st CCCS was busy. The war diaries noted that it was "Continuing receiving patients – large numbers of R.P.O.W.s [returning prisoners of war] arriving in shocking condition, starved, emaciated, very scantily clad, very lousy and dirty with wounds and sores showing gross lack of care or treatment. Very busy."⁶ The busyness continued and the day that he died the 1st CCCS was suddenly called upon to take all the patients from the 36th and 17th CCCSs, as these units were moving.

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¹ "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 March 2015), entry for Geo Harry Wilson

² "Commonwealth War Graves Commission," (www.cwgc.org; accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Wilson, George Harry Gerald, Service No: 11

³ "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," entry for Geo Harry Wilson

⁴ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Library and Archives Canada, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 734

⁵ "The Influenza Pandemic of 1918," (<https://virus.stanford.edu/uda/>: accessed 3 February 2015)

⁶ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G)