



Sergeant William Warrilow (Number TS/1053) of the 2nd Company (*Meerut*) Divisional Train Army Service Corps, is interred in Laventie Military Cemetery, La Gorgue – Grave reference IV.G.2.

The Meerut Division was a unit of the Indian Army Corps which, upon the outbreak of the Great War, was mobilized to fight with the British Expeditionary Corps on the Continent of Europe. It disembarked in the French Mediterranean port-city of Marseilles on October 12-14 of 1914 whereupon it made its way northwards to assemble in an area close to the city of Orléans. It then travelled northward again, its first elements arriving in the area of Laventie on October 23.



(continued)

Provisioning the Meerut Division was to be the responsibility of the Army Service Corps* of the British Army which in the late summer of 1914 was still partially stationed, perhaps unsurprisingly, in the United Kingdom. A number of the Corps personnel, including Sergeant Warrilow, was serving at the Army establishment at Aldershot, this recorded to have been his residence at the time.

**It became the Royal Army Service Corps in 1918 in recognition of its contribution during the Great War.*

Sergeant Warrilow is documented as being in France on September 19. It is apparently not clear whether the (Meerut) Divisional Train was organized in the United Kingdom before travelling abroad, or whether it was organized on the French side of the Channel. Whichever the case, the job of Sergeant Warrilow would have been the same: he was a Transport Specialist (per his number *TS/1053*) and a wheeler (or *wheelwright*) (per his designation as Sergeant WHLR).

By far the greater part of the transport employed during the Great War by all the belligerent armies was horse-drawn; thus while the skills of a mechanic were invaluable, so were those of a wheelwright.



(Right: Ammunition being brought to the forward area during the 1st Battle of the Somme (1916). – from Le Miroir)

The Indian forces were soon to be in action to the south of Ypres, at places such as Festubert, La Bassée and Neuve-Chapelle. There they not only incurred heavy losses, but the winter weather imposed serious hardships upon these soldiers from the sub-Continent.



(Right: An officer, once of the Indian Army, pays his respects at the Neuve-Chapelle Indian Memorial. – photograph from 2011)

The husband of Susie Warrilow*, of Bell Island, Conception Bay, he was reported as having died on March 1, 1915, the cause uncertain. His widow is recorded as having passed away in Long Pond, Conception Bay, in 1955, at or about the age of eighty-eight years.

**In the 1911 English Census a Susannah Warrilow, born about 1871 in St. John's Newfoundland (1901 Census shows Portugal Cove), is recorded as having married in or about 1897 a William Warrilow, carpenter, the couple then living in Spencer's Wood, Reading.*

By that time they were the parents of three living daughters: Maud, age 13, born in St. George's, Bermuda; Gladys, age 7, born in England; and Mary, age nine months, also born in England. (There is also a record of a Arthur Joseph Peel Warrilow, born in 1900, and baptized in St. Mary's Parish, Reading – could he have been one of a twin? – Ernest, aged

one year, was still living at the time of the 1901 Census, but in 1911 the couple reported two deceased children.)

Susannah, with daughters Gladys and Maud, sailed to the United States in 1918. She was then next recorded in the 1935 Newfoundland Census as residing in Long Pond where she was still remembered – in or about 2015 – by some older members of the local population.

Sergeant William Warrilow was entitled to the 1914 Star, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).



The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to criceadam@yahoo.ca. Last updated – February 18, 2023.