



Private David Robertson 20609



9th Battalion Leicester Regiment
Died of wounds Thursday 13th July 1916
Age 29
Born in Dull, Perthshire, Scotland
Enlisted in Leicester, Living in Burbage
Communal Cemetery Extension, Merricourt
L'Abbe, France
Plot 2 Row D Grave 13
Son of Peter and Nellie Robertson, Scotland
Husband of Mrs Hilda Louise Robertson, one
Daughter living at 15 Hinckley Road, Burbage

Burbage War Memorial
St Catherine's Church War Memorial



David Robertson was born in Dull, Perthshire a small rural village with a population of 140. By the time David had enlisted he was married with a small daughter and living at 15 Hinckley Road in a house next to the Cross Keys Inn, across the road from St Catherine's Church and the National School. The house was rented off the Paul family, builders whose yard was next to the house. David may have come to work in Burbage on the Church Tower in 1912. It is believed a Scottish firm were engaged to undertake the work.



Church Street opposite St Catherine's Church

The Hinckley Times, 12th August 1916, which reported David's death, appears to have two soldier's obituaries confused. A David MacDonald same age and date of death who is not on the Burbage Memorial.

If it is presumed, the obituary is of David Robertson it was reported - "News has been received in Burbage that Pte. David Robertson has been killed in action in the great push. Both his legs were blown off by a bomb, death resulting shortly afterwards.

Deceased's remains were interred somewhere in France. Prior to enlisting Macdonald was engaged on the Burbage Waterworks Scheme. He enlisted 12 months ago in the 9th Leicester's. After 5 months training; he was sent over to France and after participating in several engagements, fell on July 13th, at the age of 28 years. He leaves a widow and one child".

The Burbage Waterworks Scheme was completed and opened by Edward Crump the Borough Engineer on the 30th July 1915, 12 months before David was killed, which probably was the time he enlisted after finishing working on the scheme.

The big push mentioned in the report was the Battle for the Somme, which started on 1st July 1916 when the British Army sustained the largest loses in one day in history.

Thirteen divisions launched an attack north of Maricourt despite heavy bombardment the German lines remained unbroken and in the following weeks vast resources were deployed, but it was not until the end of September that some success was gained, but at a cost of many thousands of lives including David Robertson's.

David perhaps survived a few hours and was taken by field ambulance to the clearing medical railway station, where the injured could be moved out of the battle area quite quickly and dispatched to Nettley Hospital at Southampton.

ANOTHER BURBAGE SOLDIER
KILLED.

News has been received in Burbage that Pte. David Roberston has been killed in action in the great push. Both his legs were blown off by a bomb, death resulting shortly afterwards.

Deceased's remains were interred somewhere in France. Prior to enlisting Macdonald was engaged on the Burbage water-



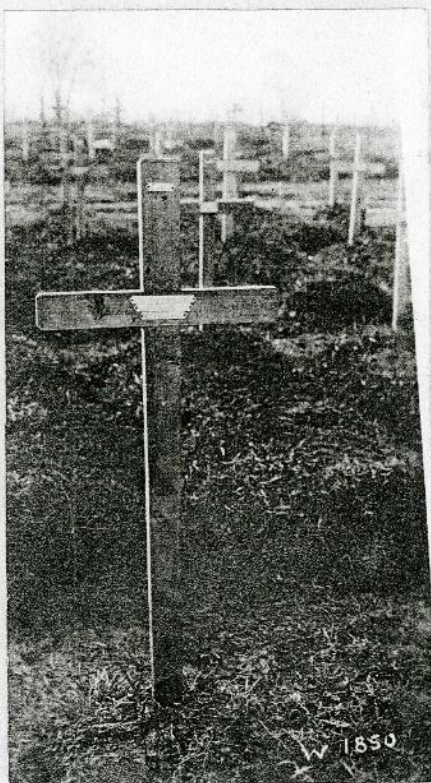
THE LATE PRIVATE DAVID ROBERTSON.

works scheme. He enlisted 12 months ago in the 9th Leicesters. After 5 months' training he was sent over to France, and after participating in several engagements, fell on July 13th, at the age of 28 years. He leaves a widow and one child.

The men who died here were buried at Mericourt-L'Abbe.

David's widow Hilda received a letter from David's commanding officer saying he was severely wounded in action on 13th July and was taken to the field ambulance where he died of his wounds later that day.

He was buried at 6pm on 14th July with military honours in the British Cemetery at Mericourt-L'Abbe. A temporary wooden cross was erected over his grave and later the War Graves Commission set a Portland stone. His wife paid the extra three pence halfpenny a letter for a private inscription- 'He died that we might live.'



Director of Graves Registration & Enquiries.

Begs to forward as requested a Photograph of
the Grave of :—

Name *Robertson*

Rank and Initials *Pte D.*

Regiment *9/Leicester Regiment*

Position of Grave *Mericourt L'Abbe*

Communal Cemetery Extension

Nearest Railway Station *Mericourt L'Abbe*

All communications respecting this Photograph should quote
the number *22/11601*) and be addressed to :—

Director of Graves Registration and Enquiries,
War Office,
Winchester House,
St. James's Square,
London, S.W., 1.

Owing to the circumstances in which the photographic work is carried
on, the Director regrets that in some cases only rough Photographs can
be obtained.

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110th Inf. Brigade.
B.E.F.

7. Aug. 1916.

Dear Mr^s Robertson.

You will already have heard the very sad news of the death of your husband.

Pte D. Robertson (20609) was ~~seriously~~ wounded in Action on July 13th, at the beginning of the great & victorious Battle, which the Commander-in-Chief speaks of as the greatest battle ever fought. He was taken to the Field Ambulance, where he died of his wounds later in the same day.

He was buried at 6. ~~pm~~ pm. on July 14th, with military honours, in the British Military Cemetery at Mericourt L'abbé, by the side of the graves of other brave men who have given their lives for their country. A little wooden Cross, bearing his name & Regiment & date of his death, has been set up over his grave.

We out here all understand that the greatest share of Sacrifice in this tremendous time of Sacrifice is being made

by the wives & mothers at home.
May I offer you not only my own sincerest
sympathy, but that of the whole battalion,
in your great sorrow.
May our Heavenly Father, who gave
His Only Son to die, that we might
live for ever in His own Eternal Home
of Rest & Peace & Happiness, bless &
console you, & give you strength to
bear your terrible loss.
I am yours sincerely
Hugh F. Sawbridge
C.F.

I am so sorry I have not been able to
write before, but we have been moving
about so much that I have only
just had the opportunity of finding
out your address.

David's widow and daughter never visited his grave but in 2000, his two grandsons finally made the pilgrimage.

