

PRIVATE JOHN DOUGLAS ADKIN 1031018

13th Battalion Canadian Infantry, (Quebec Regt.)
Died of wounds, Friday 25 October 1918, aged 25
Born 10 July 1893, Netherseal, Leicestershire.
Enlisted 26 June 1917 Canadian Infantry (Quebec Regt.)
Son of John and Martha Jane Adkin of Chesslyn, Sketchley Road. Burbage
St Catherine's Churchyard Burbage Leicestershire - New ground 230.

The Adkin family moved to Burbage from Huncote sometime after 1896. The Father John Edward Adkin found employment as a nursery labourer at the Burbage Nurseries. John's first Christian name was Douglas on the census but on all his army details, he is known as John. His elder sister Edith was a teacher probably at the Burbage Wesleyan School and his younger brother was a warehouse boy.

The family lived on Balls Lane before moving to Sketchley Road by 1917.

In 1907, the pioneering geneticist Charles Chamberlain Hurst established the Burbage Experimental Station on land at Grove Road. This area is now the Burbage Infant School. Many locals worked here tending the land and livestock that Hurst was experimenting with. It was here that John junior found employment with his father and his friend's son George Scott, whose father also worked at the Experimental Station.



Location of Burbage Experimental Station, Grove Road

The Hurst Family had connections in the USA and Benjamin Charles C. Hurst's father and owner of the Burbage Nurseries had lived in the Salem area as a boy before becoming orphaned and returning to Burbage in the 1860s. It may have been this connection that helped John move and take up gardening in Lynn Massachusetts before he enlisted in 1917.

George Scott his work mate had decided to emigrate as he had uncles in Massachusetts. Passenger lists show John Adkin sailed from Liverpool to Quebec in 1912. It is believed four Burbage boys emigrated then enlisted together. This may have been at the start of the war as Major C. C. Hurst, an Army Reservist was mobilised in 1914 and shut the station. The few men not called up kept the rest of the nurseries running on a shoestring staff producing food.

Probably as George Scott, the attraction of owning 165 acres of land after the war encouraged him to enlist on the 26 June 1917. Being in the same Regiment as his old workmate it is quite possible he visited Burbage at some point before his death at the end of October 1918. Probably in the same conflict as George Scott, John however survived for another three weeks and must have returned wounded to the UK, dying on 25 October 1918. He was laid to rest in St Catherine's Churchyard, Burbage.

