

Private Jabez Burn M.M.©
Regimental number: 13614
6th (Service) Battalion, Lincolnshire Regiment

born: 4 October 1895–died: 2 May 1918

Jabez is a Biblical name from the Old Testament, which means in Hebrew "he makes sorrowful." The Biblical Jabez was labelled with "sorrow" at birth, but his prayer against contracting sorrow overcame the label during his life.¹ However, the life of Private Jabez Burn was filled with sorrow, ending with his own death in 1918.

Jabez was the son of Jabez Jacques Burn and his wife Emillicent Smith. Jabez Sr. was born in Boston, Lincolnshire, on 21 April 1865² and his wife in London in about 1867.³ They married in Boston in 1889.⁴

In 1891, Jabez Sr. and his wife were living at 4 Gladstone Street North in Peterborough, Northamptonshire, just over 30 miles south of Boston, with their first son, Joseph Sidney, who had been born the previous year.⁵ Jabez Sr. was a railway fireman.⁶

Over the next six years, they had four more children—all born in Peterborough: Clara Hester (born on 7 January 1892)⁷, Fred (born in 1893),⁸ Jabez (born on 4 October 1895)⁹ and Ernest Redmond (born in 1897).¹⁰ It was then that sorrow struck the Burn family. Four of the six family members died within about four months.

Ernest died of acute bronchitis when he was just 3 months old, on 27 November 1897.¹¹ His brother Fred, aged 4, died on 10 January 1898 of tubercular meningitis.¹² Their mother Emillicent died five days later of typhoid fever, which had developed the week before.¹³ Then their son Joseph also died of typhoid fever at the age of 8 on 11 March 1898. He had had typhoid since late January, but developed meningitis in the 12 hours before his death.¹⁴

There was a major outbreak of typhoid in Maidstone, Kent, in 1897 and smaller outbreaks in other places in England, including London and Yorkshire. However, the outbreaks were not necessarily related. There is no evidence that there was an outbreak in Peterborough, although obviously there were deaths. Typhoid is a common bacterial disease that is spread when people eat food and water contaminated with faeces containing the salmonella typhoid bacterium.¹⁵ However, typhoid could also be mistaken for other diseases, such as malaria, pneumonia, dengue fever, influenza, or other febrile illnesses.¹⁶ Could this have been the case for the first two deaths in the family—Ernest and Fred?

By 1901, the family included only Jabez Sr. and two children—Jabez and his sister Clara. Jabez Sr. and Clara were boarding with the family of Ernest and Clara Middleton at 26 Harris Street in Peterborough. Jabez Sr. was a railway engine driver.¹⁷ They were living next door to Jabez Sr.'s brother,¹⁸ Stoker Ellis. He too was a railway man and living at 28 Harris Street.¹⁹ Jabez, aged 5, was living with another uncle, Thomas Edwin Burn,²⁰ and his family on Lincoln Road in Peterborough. He was probably just a few blocks from his father and sister.

Six years later, Jabez Sr. remarried. He married Kate Alice Blades (nee Cartwright),²¹ the widow of Henry Blades, in Boston.²² By 1911, Jabez Sr. and his family had moved back to his father's hometown of Boston. He and his new wife were living at 11 Albert Street in Boston with Clara and

Jabez. Clara was an uncertified assistant teacher, working for the Boston Education Committee, and Jabez was an apprentice to a hairdresser,²³ working for Mr. Charles Stow of 7 Bridge Street. For unknown reasons, he moved to Middleborough in 1913.²⁴

Probably about a year later, Jabez enlisted in the British Expeditionary Force. He enlisted in November 1914²⁵ and joined the 6th (Service) Battalion of the Lincolnshire Regiment.²⁶ The 6th was raised in August 1914 and was the first of the regiment's service battalions. The battalion was quartered in Belton Park, just outside Grantham. "The early days of the battalion were not easy, as the men had only their civilian clothes, they had no rifles, and target practice had to be carried out with air guns on a miniature range. These disadvantages were, however, taken in good spirit, for all ranks were full of enthusiasm."²⁷ Jabez joined his comrades a few months later.

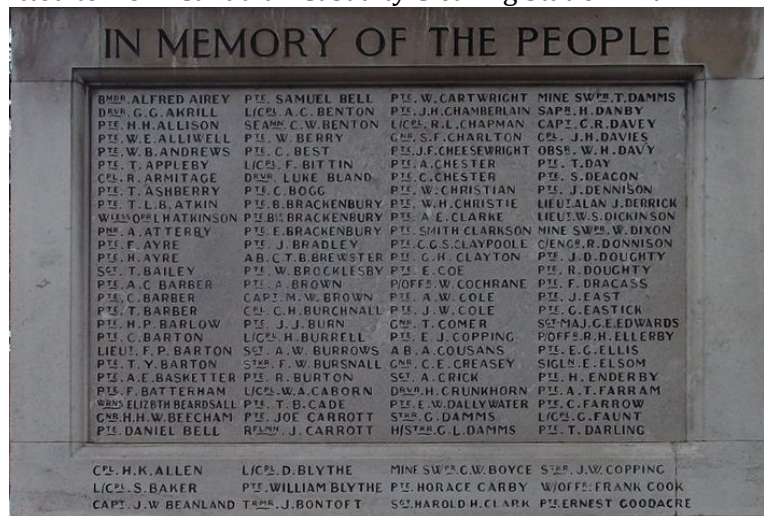
The 6th Battalion was part of 33rd Infantry Brigade, which remained encamped on Belton Park until early April 1915. Jabez left England, probably with his battalion, on 18 July 1915²⁸ and the battalion arrived on 6/7 August in Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli peninsula. Late in December 1915, Suvla Bay was evacuated. After stops in Imbros, Turkey, and Mudros, Greece, the battalion went to Egypt at the end of January 1916. In July the 6th Battalion embarked in Alexandria for Marseilles. From there, it travelled to the Abbeville area, in northern France, arriving on 13 July. After that the battalion was involved in many of the key battles in northern France.

The 6th Battalion spent most of the spring and summer of 1918 in the line near Loos. Although activity was light at first, the battalion was preparing for a big raid in its sector, which took place on the morning of 2 April. The battalion raided a 300- to 400-yard stretch of the enemy's trench line. The operation was deemed to be highly successful, in part because of the officers' careful planning, but also because of "the way in which the plans of the higher commanders were carried out : fearless and cool leading among the junior officers and dash and enterprise among the men were exemplified in the highest degree, and it was these characteristics which ensured the success which was obtained."²⁹

It was probably the last major engagement in which Jabez took part. It is not known how Jabez was injured but, on 1 May 1918, he was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wounds that penetrated his buttocks. He died there the following day and was buried that day in Pernes Military Cemetery (Plot 2, Row A, Grave 34) with the Canadian chaplain G. C. d'Easum presiding.

Pernes British Military Cemetery was only set up in April 1918 when No. 1 and No. 4 CCCSs came to Pernes, driven back by the German advance. Jabez was one of 220 soldiers admitted on 1 May and one of 115 soldiers to die at the station that month.

The chaplain sent a letter to his father, who was still at 11 Albert



Boston War Memorial

Source: *Lost Ancestors*

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Street, to notify him of his son's death. He also received the monies owing to Jabez from the army upon his death.

Jabez was awarded the Military Medal, which was given to Other Ranks (non-officers) for gallantry and devotion to duty when under fire in battle on land.³⁰ In Jabez' case, he carried bombs into the trenches.³¹ He was also awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918), the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the 1914–15 Star (for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).³²

He is remembered on the Boston War Memorial, but oddly with his father's initials.³³

Jabez Sr., who was retired, and his wife were still living at 11 Albert Street, Boston, in 1939. He died on 9 February 1948 in Boston.³⁴ He had lost a lot in his life. His second wife, Kate, died on 13 August 1954.³⁵ Jabez' sister Clara married James Best during the war³⁶ and, in 1939, was living with her husband at 64 Sleaford Road in Boston.³⁷ He was a house finisher and draper and was an air raid warden in the Second World War. Clara died in 1969.³⁸

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¹ "Jabez," *Wikipedia* (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jabez>: accessed 23 June 2019)

² "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 June 2019), entry for Kate A Burn, Schedule number: 205, Sub-schedule Number: 1, Enumeration district: TGAU, Registration district: 415-2

³ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 27 January 2019), entry for Saby [sic] Burn, Registration district: Peterborough, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 24, Piece: 1229, Folio: 54

⁴ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 26 November 2019), entry for Jabez Jacques Burn, Registration district: Boston, Inferred county: Lincolnshire, Volume: 7a, Page: 817

⁵ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 10 November 2019), entry for Burn, Joseph Sidney, Registration district: Peterborough, Volume 03B, Page 228

⁶ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 27 January 2019), entry for Saby [sic] Burn

⁷ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 June 2019), entry for Clara H. Best, Schedule number: 205, Sub-schedule Number: 1, Enumeration district: TGAU, Registration district: 415-2

⁸ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 10 November 2019), entry for Burn, Fred, Registration district: Peterborough, Volume 03B, Page 249

⁹ *LINCS to the past* (<https://www.lincstothevast.com/BURN---M-M---Jabez/1541536.record?pt=S>: accessed 24 June 2019), entry for Burn: M M, Jabez

¹⁰ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 10 November 2019), entry for Burn, Ernest Redmond, Registration district: Peterborough, Volume 03B, Page 256

¹¹ "Copy of an entry of a death," *General Register Office*, entry for Ernest Redmond Burn: accessed 7 July 2019

¹² "Copy of an entry of a death," *General Register Office*, entry for Fred Burn: accessed 9 July 2019

¹³ "Copy of an entry of a death," *General Register Office*, entry for Emillicent Burn: accessed 7 July 2019

¹⁴ "Copy of an entry of a death," *General Register Office*, entry for Joseph Sydney Burn: accessed 9 July 2019

¹⁵ "The Maidstone Typhoid Epidemic 1897–1898," (<http://maidstonetyphoidepidemic.weebly.com/-history-of-the-epidemic.html>: accessed 11 July 2019)

¹⁶ "Typhoid disease," *Vaccine Resource Library* (<https://vaccineresources.org/typhoid.php>: accessed 12 July 2019)

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- ¹⁷ “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 July 2019), entry for Jabez Burn, Registration district: Peterborough, Sub-registration district: Peterborough, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 47, Piece: 1465, Folio: 75, Page: 27, Household schedule number: 161
- ¹⁸ “1871 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 27 January 2019), entry for Jabez Jacques Burn, Registration district: Boston, Sub-registration district: Boston, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 17, Household schedule number: 287, Piece: 3343, Folio: 70, Page: 49
- ¹⁹ “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 July 2019), entry for Jabez Burn, Registration district: Peterborough, Sub-registration district: Peterborough, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 47, Piece: 1465, Folio: 75, Page: 27, Household schedule number: 161. The transcription of the census suggests that the name of the head of household is John Edwin Burn, but it is difficult to read and most likely is Thos. Edwin Burn—brother of Jabez Sr.
- ²⁰ “1871 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 27 January 2019), entry for Jabez Jacques Burn
- ²¹ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 26 November 2019), entry for Jabez Jacques Burn, Registration district: Boston, Inferred county: Lincolnshire, Volume: 7a, Page: 934
- ²² “England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 June 2019), entry for Kate Alice Cartwright, Registration district: Boston, Inferred county: Lincolnshire, Volume: 7a, Page: 876; “England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 June 2019), entry for Henry Blades, Registration district: Boston, Inferred county: Lincolnshire, Volume: 7a, Page: 281
- ²³ “1911 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 January 2019), entry for Jabey [sic] Burn, Registration district: Bolton, Registration district number: 415, Sub-registration district: Boston, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 6, Piece: 19594
- ²⁴ *LINCS to the past* (<https://www.lincstothevast.com/BURN---M-M---Jabez/1541536.record?pt=S>: accessed 24 June 2019), entry for Burn : M M , Jabez
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 June 2019), entry for Jabey [sic] Burn
- ²⁷ “The History of the Lincolnshire Regiment 1914–1918,” compiled from war diaries, despatches, officers' notes and other sources, edited by Major-General C. R. Simpson, C.B. (<https://ia800203.us.archive.org/20/items/TheHistoryOfTheLincolnshireRegiment1914-1918/TheHistoryOfTheLincolnshireRegiment-C.r.Simpson.pdf>: accessed 23 June 2019), p. 50. Unless otherwise noted, all information about the movements of his battalion come from this source.
- ²⁸ “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 June 2019), entry for Jabey [sic] Burn
- ²⁹ “The History of the Lincolnshire Regiment 1914–1918,” p. 354
- ³⁰ “A Guide to British Awards for Gallantry or Meritorious Service in WW1,” *The Great War* (<http://www.greatwar.co.uk/medals/ww1-gallantry-awards.htm#MM>: accessed 5 February 2019)
- ³¹ *LINCS to the past* (<https://www.lincstothevast.com/BURN---M-M---Jabez/1541536.record?pt=S>: accessed 24 June 2019), entry for Burn : M M , Jabez
- ³² “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 May 2019), entry for Jabey [sic] Burn
- ³³ “Memorial Garden - Boston, Lincolnshire, England,” *Lost Ancestors war memorial* (<http://www.lostancestors.eu/memwar/B/Boston.htm>; accessed 24 June 2019)
- ³⁴ “England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 July 2019), entry for Jabez Jacques Burn
- ³⁵ “England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 June 2019), entry for Kate Alice Burn

³⁶ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 26 November 2019), entry for Clara H. Burn, Registration district: Boston, Inferred county: Lincolnshire, Volume: 7a, Page: 798

³⁷ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 June 2019), entry for Clara H. Best

³⁸ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2001," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 July 2019), entry for Clara Hester Best, Registration district: Spilsby, Inferred county: Lincolnshire, Volume: 3b, Page: 976