## FRANCIS NELSON BOARD, 34891 PRIVATE, SOMERSET LIGHT INFANTRY 149420 PRIVATE, MACHINE GUN CORPS 2 January 1898-1974

Francis, or Frank, was born on 2 January 1898 in BSM, the son of Abednego, an agricultural labourer, and Lucy Board. He was baptized in BSM Church on 6 February. They were living at Little Hill, neighbours of the Grabham family (qqv).

The Old Testament name of Abednego is an unusual one nowadays, but even at the time of the 1871 Census (he was born in 1870) its oddity was underlined by the fact that he was the youngest of three sons whom their parents had named Shadrach, Meshak and Abednego. The story in the Book of Daniel is that these were the three men thrown into a fiery furnace by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, for failing to bow down to an image of him, but were unconsumed by the flames. It's a trio once familiar to every school child!

Francis went to BSM School in April 1901, but left in September 1904 when he was six. He's on the school's Roll of Honour, despite having left so long before. This move was probably because the family were leaving the area. Certainly by 1911 they were living in West Bagborough, where Abednego was working as a domestic gardener; their youngest son Sidney, aged 6, had been born in West Bagborough. At this point the 13 year old Francis was still at school.

The next we know of him is as a Private in the SLI, and then in the Machine Gun Corps. Unfortunately there is no detail of which battalions he served in, so we're short of any further detail. He was demobbed into the Class Z reserve on the 22 October 1919. He married Ethel North in 1931; we have found no children of the marriage.

He appears to have gone back to West Somerset - in 1939 Francis and Ethel were living in the Crowcombe area, and he's working as a wheelwright and Estate carpenter. He died in West Somerset in 1974.

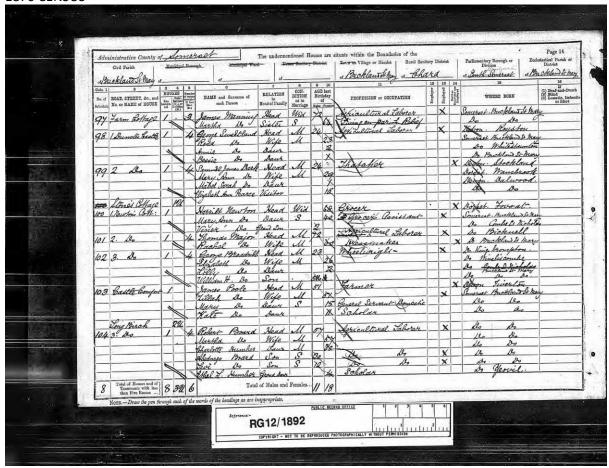
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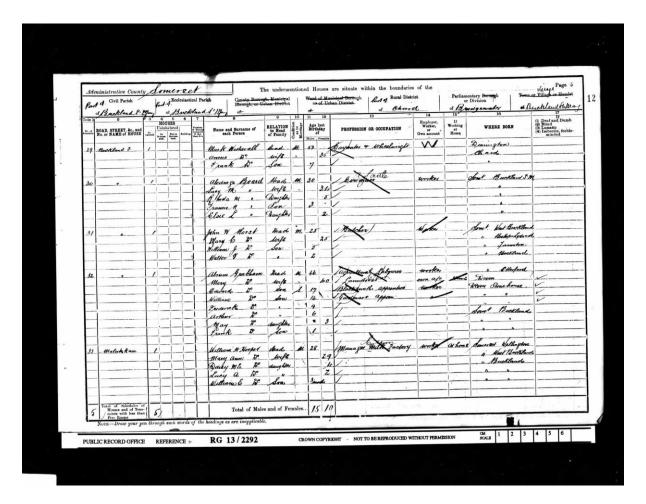
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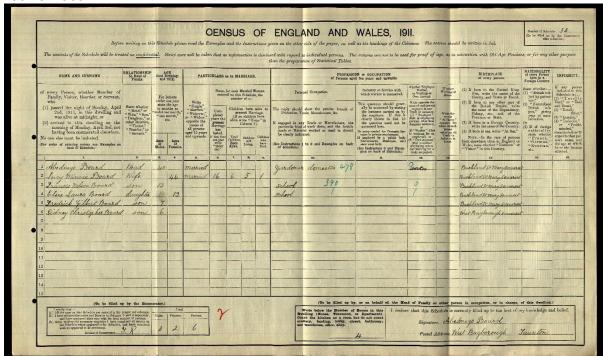
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