

Surname: Boucher	First Name(s): Gwendoline Louisa Amy	Army Number: W/199133	
Maiden name (if applicable): Narramore	Name used during service: Narramore / Boucher	Rank: Private	
Main base: Arbourfield Ty Croes Portskewett Caldicott Cardiff	Training base: Honiton Guildford	Enrolled at:	
Platoon/Section:	Company/Battery: 587 (M) H.A.A. Battery	Group/Regiment: Royal Artillery	Command:
Year(s) of service: 16/6/1942 to 11/2/1945	Reason for discharge: Family Reasons	Trade: Cook	
Uniform Issued: Full uniform with cooks extra white overalls, aprons, kerchiefs & Clogs	Photo:  <p style="text-align: center;">Gwen Narramore 12th Jan 1944</p>		
Description of daily tasks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Day in The Life of an Army Cook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Early shift 6 – 2 ○ You'd prepare breakfast and serve. You then had time to pop back to your hut to make your bed army fashion and polish the floor around your bed ready for hut inspection. Then you could return to the kitchen and prepare lunch. ○ There was a butcher on site who brought the meat for you to cook, 		

	<p>orderlies or anyone on fatigues prepared the vegetables ready for cooking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Once lunch was cooked and served you finished. ○ Afternoon shift 2 – 10 ○ You cooked whatever was for tea and perhaps some buns as well. Supper was cocoa and sandwiches but not everyone came for that. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Usually shifts consisted of 4 cooks and a corporal or sergeant
Pay book:	Not available
Memorable moments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I lived in a little hamlet in Devon called Dacombe; it had five farms and eight cottages, no shop, church or pub so you can imagine what a difference it made to my life when my call up papers came. ● I chose to be a cook in the A.T.S. My first three weeks were spent at Honiton base camp where injections and uniform were issued. From there I was posted to Guildford on a six week cookery course which included cooking a roast dinner outside in a tin set in a bank with a fire under it. ● After passing the exam I was posted to Arbourfield where I joined the 587 (M) H.A.A. Battery and from there was posted to a gun site at Portskewett while half the personnel were at Caldicott. ● We lived in Nissen huts, cooks were together. We had white overalls, white kerchiefs on our heads and clogs on our feet so they knew when the cooks were about. The kitchen was a Nissen hut with two big black ranges stood back to back, a fire in the middle of each with ovens each side. We worked two shifts, 6-2 cooking breakfast and dinner whilst 2-10 did the tea and supper. There were three boilers under a lean-to outside where vegetables were cooked and water boiled for making tea and cocoa, the fires were kept going by a boiler man. ● I still have my exercise book, a bit the worse for wear now, with recipes cooking for 100 men and how much tea was needed to make a gallon bucketful. We got to know the rest of the men and women in the camp when they queued for meals with their knife, fork, spook and mug. Plenty of back chat, some good, some moans. ● While stationed at Caldicot I had a Saturday off and arranged to meet my sister in Gloucester where she had been sent to work in a factory. I caught the bus to Gloucester and asked what time the last bus back went and was told 9 o'clock. I met my sister and had a good day with her and then got on the bus back and was told it did not go back to Chepstow it only went as far as Lydney. So when I got off at Lydney I went to the railway station but no trains until after 1 o'clock. My pass was until midnight so I set out to walk through the pitch-dark night. There was no chance of a lift in those days with no cars about. Somewhere outside Chepstow I suddenly saw a chink of light as a cottage door quickly opened and closed and an army lad came down the garden path to the road just as I was passing. He was stationed at Beachely and had been visiting his mother. Like me had to be back by midnight and offered to walk with me as far as his turn off. His mother had given him a lump of cake that he shared with me while chatting as we walked along the road. He turned off for Beachely camp and I never saw him again. I was going over Chepstow Bridge when the clock struck 12 o'clock and I was due at Caldicot then. I kept walking and got to the camp at Portskewett and asked the guard to phone Caldicot and say I was staying the night there. I made my way to the

cooks hut all in the dark and opened the door. I knew Gwen Angel was in the first bed inside the door, I said, "Any empty beds Gwen?" and she said, "Get in with me". How we slept two in a single bed I don't know but I did. Next morning I got a lift over to Caldicot site in a jeep going that way. Legs Ache!!!. I was on afternoon shift and was glad to keep moving or I would have stiffened up. It must have been about 14 miles I walked that night. I did not get told off for being late.

- I often think how my life changed. I married and had four sons – a long way off 100 men. I still like cooking but with a more modern cooker.

Photos:



Honiton 24th July 1942. Gwen Narramore 1st right, front row.
Don't know the name of the kitten.



Company Battery, 587(M) H.A.A. Royal Artillery Portskewett 1944
Gwen Narramore 1st right second row from front.