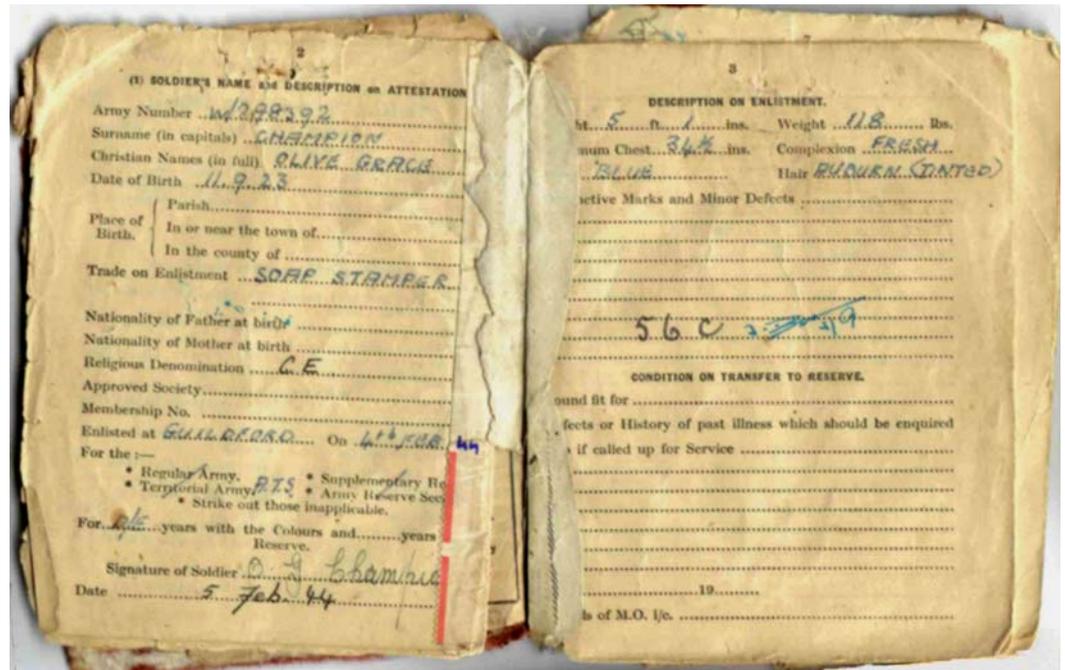


Surname: Eccles	First Name(s): Olive Grace	Army Number: W/298392	
Maiden name (if applicable): Champion	Name used during service: Champion	Rank: Sergeant	
Main base: Camberley	Training base: Nottingham	Enrolled at: Guildford in Surrey	
Platoon/Section:	Company/Battery:	Group/Regiment:	Command: Southern
Year(s) of service: 1944 to 1946	Reason for discharge: Marriage	Trade: Orderley, General Duties	
Uniform Issued: (List of items issued) Shirt Skirt Jacket Stockings Shoes Tie Hat Overcoat gloves	Photo: 		
Description of daily tasks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was in charge of kitchen waitressing and clean up members of the ATS • I would help at Church Parade • I helped to take personnel on the parade square. • I'd take girls to play netball or rounders • I'd have to see the tables were set correctly, and the messhall kept clean. • I accompanied the messing officer on his rounds. • I've been on a parade square at 6 The Square, Royal Military College, Camberley we were inspected by Queen Elizabeth before she was in the A.T.S. At this parade a horse comes down the steps to lead. 		

Pay book:



Memorable moments:

- After I had passed all requirements that were necessary, I was initiated into the ATS. After completion of training how to march, to salute, and respect officers etc. we were posted to many different places.
- I was told to report to staff college at Camberley, I was the only recruit going there. When I arrived at Camberley, an officer was there to meet me and take me to staff college at Minley Manor. At the time everybody was busy with a fire drill so I was introduced to the staff as they were fighting was fake fire and that was my first introduction to the other ATS girls working at Minley Manor staff college. It had male senior staff officers mainly captains and above in rank. My first job was helping the cooks in the kitchen. After a while I went waiting on the officers at the tables and serving food to them. We had 52 officers sitting at long tables in the dinning room. We also cleaned the silver and kept the dinning room and anti rooms clean.
- After a year and a half life was very quiet. Then we had a few bombs a short distance away from us and saw many airplanes returning from bombing raids. As the airports were not too far from us. Time passed we heard rumours that the war would soon be over, so the staff who had been in the ATS the longest time were getting ready to be discharged and at this time I was to work at company office to check out all the girls who wished to leave the service. Some had volunteered in the early part of the war. When that was completed I was sent on a sergeant warrant officer's and N.C.O course in Newerk, Nottingham for three weeks. I did enjoy this course and did very well and I was promoted to sergeant W298392 ATS.
- I was sent back to the Royal Military college at Camberley, where I was in charge of the officers mess for a year. During my time in Camberley, I was a helper for the film "The Gentle Sex" was showing at the cinema. I took the ATS members to Camberley to see this show. We collected money at this show for the ATS Benevolent Fund.
- Women officers were arriving at the Royal Military college and after a year I was posted to another camp not too far from Camberley. I was put in charge of the sergeant's mess at the new camp where German prisoners of war were being

held in England. I had to prepare a place for the sergeants looking after the German prisoners, so I had to get help with the messing officer to prepare a building for the sergeants to have a dining room, recreation room and lounge to accommodate the British sergeants looking after the German prisoners. I was given some German prisoners to work for me. They cemented around the buildings, they painted both inside and outside the building and from the messing officer I got all new dishes and cutlery for the tables. I was allowed to pick my staff so I chose most of the ATS girls who had worked with me before. I had two promoted to corporal and had a staff of 2 cooks on and 2 cooks off duty at a time and the same for waitresses. Also two looked after the anti room on and off duty. Some German prisoners went with me to get flowers from a near by gardener for decoration on the tables. The sergeants were really delighted with their new surroundings.

- I was asked to go overseas but my mother had three sons overseas and I had to refuse to go.
- I had been going with a Canadian soldier, who was serving in Europe and I was on my third year of being in the ATS. I had corresponded with him for some time. Then I heard he had returned to England from fighting in Europe. He had been quite ill in the countries he had fought in so he came to tell me he was returning to Canada. He told me he would come back when he was well again. He was going to go on the hospital ship Lady Nelson with returning Canadian service men, so he came to say his goodbyes to me. Almost a year past and he did return to England and he asked me to get married to him, so I got my discharge from the ATS. Then we got married and most of the ATS and male sergeants came to our wedding service at the church. I was so glad to see them.
- After a month of organizing my discharge papers from the ATS we was sailing to Canada and we purchased 320 acres of farm land and did very well. It took a lot of persuasion teaching me the life of farming but we progressed and did very well in Canada. The ATS taught me well. I still wear my 1939 to 1945 medal on my legion uniform. I wear it with pride. My service years taught me a lot and I was proud to have been a member of the A.T.S.

Photos:



St.Laurance's Which Church, in Edgware Middlesex

MESSAGE FROM SENIOR CONTROLLER M. J. C. TYRWHITT, O.B.E.,
DIRECTOR AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE,
TO ALL RANKS A.T.S. ON RELEASE.

As you say good-bye to service life I wish to thank you in the name of the Auxiliary Territorial Service for the loyal and devoted service you have given to your King and Country.

I also want you to realise that the esteem in which the A.T.S. is held by the Army has been earned by the combined efforts of all members of the Service and that you have a personal share in the honour and glory won by the A.T.S.

Although the war is now over, much remains to be done if real peace is to be established among the nations of the world. You will be called upon to make further efforts in the service of your country, and I know that you will make them with the same generosity which has always marked the work of the A.T.S.

Good-bye and the best of luck.

Mary Tyrwhitt

If you yourself are in need of any assistance or guidance, please write to:-

The Secretary,

A.T.S. Benevolent Fund,

81, Eaton Square, London, S.W.1,

who will put you in touch with your nearest A.T.S. Benevolent Fund representative.

