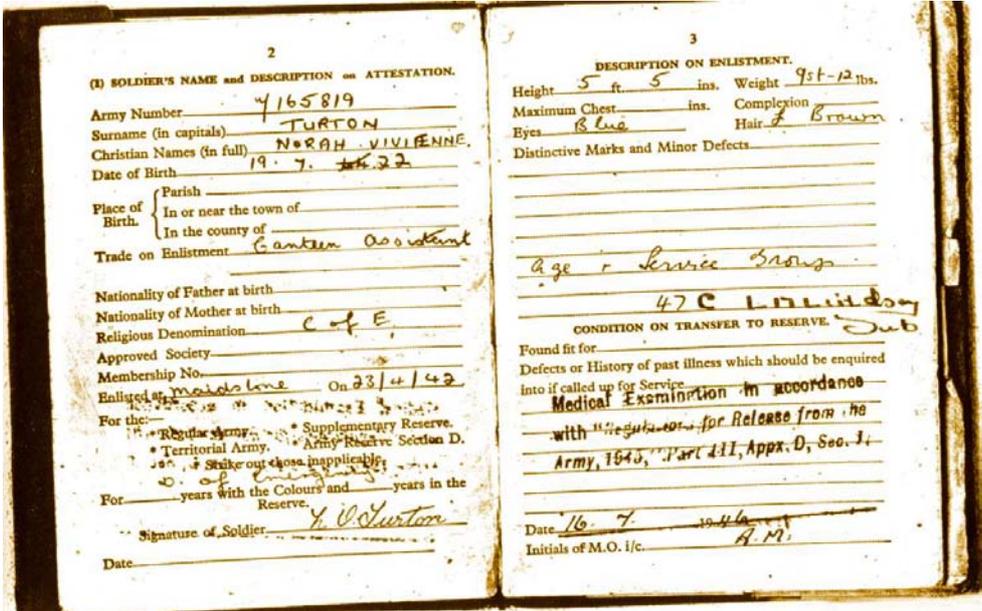


Surname: Imber	First Name(s): Vivienne Norah	Army Number: W/165819	
Maiden name (if applicable): Turton	Name used during service: Turton	Rank: L/Cpl	
Main base: Ashford, Kent	Training base: Crediton, Devon	Enrolled at: Maidstone, Kent (Volunteered)	
Platoon/Section:	Company/Battery: B Company	Group/Regiment: Kent Grp A.T.S.	Command: 14 Command R.E.M.E./R.A.O.C.
Year(s) of service: 23/4/1942 to 16/9/1946	Reason for discharge: End of Hostilities Class A Honourable Discharge	Trade: Clerk / Bookkeeper Quartermaster Stores	
Uniform Issued: Dresscap Sidecap Shirts Ties Collars Skirts Hosiery Bras Bloomers (!) Greatcoat Gasmask Steel helmet Shoes Trousers Pyjamas	Photo: 		
Description of daily tasks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reveille 5.30 am (big clanging bell) P.T. alternate morning exercises (including leap frog!) and 5 mile job round the camp out to highway and back. • Breakfast at 7.00 am. • Barrack bed, tidy hut and walk to work by 8.00 am. As clerk/bookkeeper in Quartermasters Store, maintained inventory, balanced and kept books and ledgers. Issued supplies, replaced worn out items for new. Kitted out new recruits and also Desert Rats for the N.A. Campaign; including P14 rifles and ammo. Once a month went to replenish ammunition. This entailed a 10 ton truck, driver, one man to lift eh ammo and me with the map and paperwork. Map showed 		

- woods and trees with arrows on – follow arrows and find ammo dump! (Eureka!)
- In addition to daily work had all night Orderly Room duty frequently. Had to manually carry own mattress to Orderly Room, whole length of camp, and back again in the morning at 7.00 am.
- Duty roster also found us on Camp Guard Duty, patrolling A.T.S. Camp in twos from dusk, with gas masks and steel helmets, until dawn. At this time we had to creep into huts where cooks slept and wake them up without disturbing the other occupants.
- Two sessions a week in the afternoons was taken to back of farm and taught to fire a P14 rifle, using tin cans as targets.
- One Monday every month all A.T.S. on camp assembled in mess hall at 7 pm, to 9 pm for Make Do and Mend session. (Sew on buttons, hem skirts etc). Tolerable until it was decided the Army Chaplin should use this time to sermonize and criticize us, remind us of how sinful we were – there was no rebuttal allowed, some sat and seethed! Of course he was an Officer, ranking Captain, but not a friendly C of E Vicar. That experience had a very chilling effect on me and I have not been endeared to that particular brand of religion since!

Pay book:



Memorable moments:

- I had barely finished school when war broke out. Not old enough to serve in any service, I was employed by NAAFI as Canteen Assistant at Deal Marine Barracks, also the home of the Royal Naval School of Music. The School of Music was moved to Great Malvern and I, together with two other girls, was transferred with them. Some time later the School was moved to Scarborough and I was moved also.
- I resigned and volunteered to serve in the Navy, but fate landed me in the A.T.S. on St Georges Day 1942. Enlisted at Maidstone, I was sent to Crediton, Devon for 6 weeks basic training. Lots of drill, marching, route marches and spit and polish. During this time stood guard sentry duty at main gate – 4 hours on, 4 hours off – 12 hour duration.
- Following basic training became part of a Platoon in B Holding Company and moved to Northampton. Little to do but more drill and marching, we found our platoon on stage in a theatre in Northampton following a variety show where we parade on with flags and the audience sang patriotic songs along with us and the band!

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved again to Aldershot and was teamed with another girl to be an M.P. patrolling the streets each evening and looking “solemn”! (Lots of miscreants with top buttons undone or hats off would get a reminder from us – or else! (or else what?)) • After some weeks our Holding Company was moved to Welwyn Garden City and in addition to all the mindless marching suddenly found ourselves cast as extras in a movie at Elstree, tentatively named “They Also Serve – Who Only Stand and Wait.” We were the crowd scene, dinner table scenes etc; and the stars were Leslie Howard, Lili Palmer and Sally Ann Howe. Never did see the film and enquiries to the Defence Dept elicited the fact that it may have been a documentary, or publicity film paid for b the Army and possibly now in the Archives. • One day we were told to pack and be ready to move out at 4 am – marching through streets to the railway station where we were put on a train for London. Once there we were assigned to different locations and I was posted to 14th Command R.E.M.E./R.A.O.C. Workshops at Repton Farm, several miles out in the country, near Ashford, Kent. • I was assigned to B Company, Kent Group A..S. and the Quartermasters Store where I stayed for the remainder of the war. During this time, took driving course and learnt to drive round the football field. Churned it up pretty well when raining, to the chagrin of the 14th Command men who liked to play soccer on Saturdays! • On arrival t Ashford I along with many other girls, was assigned to Nissan Huts with wooden beds, no mattresses and a pot-bellied stove with a voracious appetite for coal which was rationed. We were given sack cloth like palliases, directed to the barn where we filled the palliases with straw. Having come from a dedicated feather bed family I was shocked at this Spartan life style. It was many months before we were issued with property spring beds and mattresses. I remember we went to bed early in case “they” came and took them away! • On the rare Sunday when there was no church parade we would lounge around, with curlers in, pyjamas on etc and the hut generally looking untidy. One Sunday an officer unceremoniously opened the door to sow an “important” guest our hut. Disappointed at not finding it up to par she snapped “This place looks like Fagin’s Den!” So – we called it Fagin’s Den, had a sign made up and nailed it on the outside of the door. I guess it was a bit out of place as the hut next door was “Dew Drop Inn” and another “Home Sweet Home”. • Directly in the path of the V1’s or Doodle Bugs we saw many pass over, and had a few near misses when the odd one dropped out of the sky and exploded on impact. • Almost impossible for me to remember names of all the fine young women I met, but I do recall Kay Neish of Dundee, Eileen “Johnny” Bull from Streatham. Vera Faulkner from Folkestone, sisters Edna and Vera Osborn from the London area. They all served at Ashford and despite all the ups and downs and sometimes miserable conditions we all had good times with great good humour, much laughter and joking and many invitations to other service units, R.A.F., Army and Navy dances. • Several years ago I was awarded a medal b the City of Dover for having served in “Hell Fire Corner”. • I started off at 8 shillings per week!
Photos:	None available