

<b>Surname:</b> O'Neill	<b>First Name(s):</b> Evelyn	<b>Army Number:</b> W/86979	
<b>Maiden name (if applicable):</b> Thompson	<b>Name used during service:</b> Thompson / O'Neill	<b>Rank:</b> Private	
<b>Main base:</b> Grimsby Oulton Broads, Belgium	<b>Training base:</b> Durham	<b>Enrolled at:</b> Volunteered - Middlesbrough	
<b>Platoon/Section:</b> B Section	<b>Company/Battery:</b> 484 H(M) A.A. Battery	<b>Group/Regiment:</b> Royal Artillery	<b>Command:</b> A.A. Command
<b>Year(s) of service:</b> 15/9/1941 to 19/10/1945	<b>Reason for discharge:</b> Marriage 12/08/1944	<b>Trade:</b> Predictor Operator Clerk	
<b>Uniform Issued:</b> S.D. (brass buttons) Shoes Shirts Tie  Helmet Grenade badge	<b>Photo:</b> 		
<b>Description of daily tasks:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Predictor Team had six operators with a sergeant in charge as No. 1. There were four teams and we were on a rota system, 24 hours command post duty. I was No. 5, I was a telescope operator for elevation. I had to keep my eye on the enemy target.</li> <li>• We were quite near the four 3.7 heavy guns, so we had to get used to the loud noises of firing.</li> <li>• Later I became a clerk in Battery Office.</li> </ul>		

Pay book:

*Certified True copy P. Thomas Esq.*

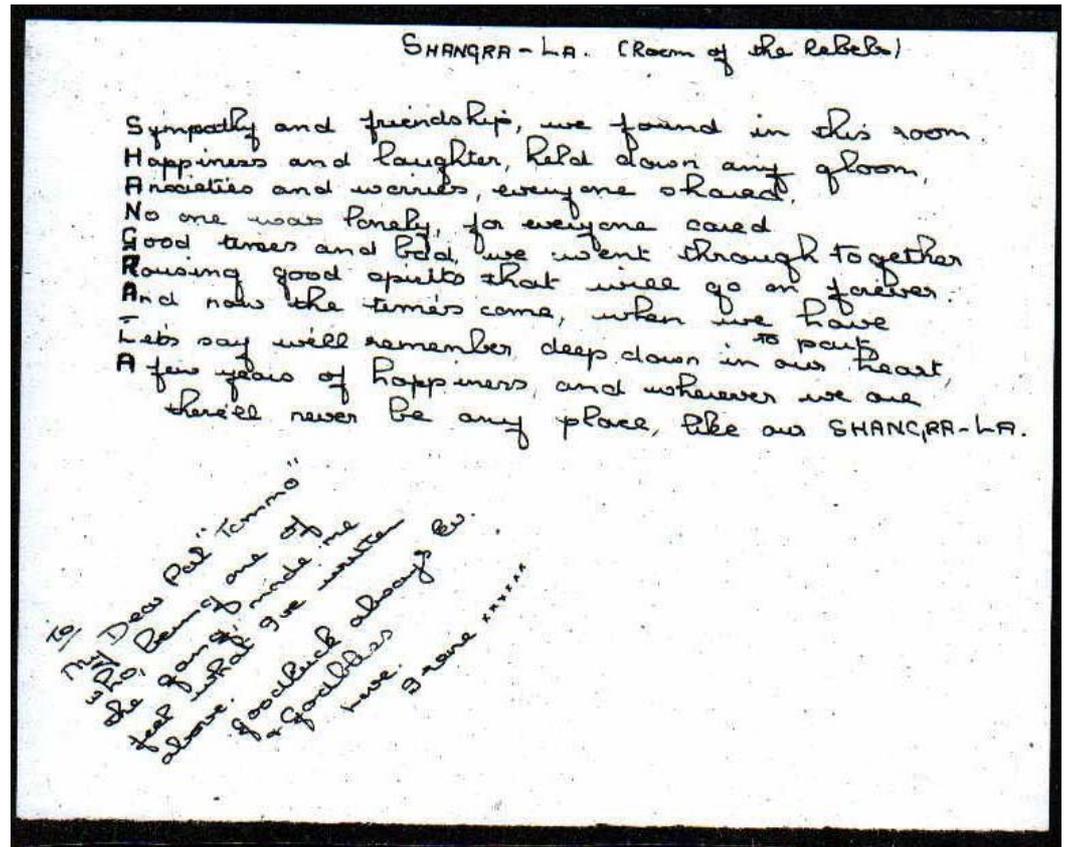
(1) SOLDIER'S NAME and DESCRIPTION on ATTESTATION.

Army Number W/86979  
Surname (in capitals) OWEN  
Christian Names (in full) EVAN  
Date of Birth 9.1.1921  
Place of Birth { Parish \_\_\_\_\_  
In or near the town of \_\_\_\_\_  
In the county of \_\_\_\_\_  
Trade on Enlistment Inspector Clerk  
Nationality of Father at birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Nationality of Mother at birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Religious Denomination C/E  
Approved Society Wesleyan & Friends  
Membership No. 1257879  
Enlisted at Grimsby on 15.9.41  
For the:—  
\* Regular Army. \* Supplementary Reserve.  
\* Territorial Army. \* Army Reserve Section D.  
\* Strike out those inapplicable.  
For Duration years with the Colours and \_\_\_\_\_ years in the Reserve.  
Signature of Soldier \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Memorable moments:

- When we moved to different gun sites, we stayed together like a family. My friend Ann and I always had our beds next to each other. There were four ATS huts, the “GL Girls” the “Mucky Duck” the “Black Swan” and our hut “Shangra-La” which was painted on the door. Our Commanding Officer said we should have called it “Nell’s Kitchen”!
- In Grimsby on a Thanksgiving Day our band was invited to play at an American Air Base near us. There was marching and singing of the Star Spangled Banner. We did a display of marching and slow marching. When doing a ‘counter march’ the drum major was passing me in the centre, and she said “Tommo – your skirt!” The white tab on my drum had dragged my skirt up and I was showing my khaki ‘issue’.
- At Grimsby – brought down Heinkle Bomber and V2s
- Was one of the first three mixed Batteries to go abroad and had a lot of action.
- My most vivid memories are of when we went abroad to Kampenhout, near Brussels, in December 1944. It was one of the worst winters there had been, some of the girls cried with the cold, but we would finish up laughing. The ink froze in the bottles. The R.A.F. boys at a nearby air base brought us wood and logs for our combustion stoves.
- There was not a lot of water in the camp in Brussels and once a week we went on the 3 ton lorries to Louvein for a bath. We had 24 hours leave once a fortnight when most of the service people went to the Montgomery Club. This had reasonable meals and we met other Services.
- We went by tram mostly in Brussels and enjoyed looking in shop windows, we did not have much money! There was plenty of night action as there were lots of V2s – I used to call them “flaming motor-bikes” in the sky.
- On New Year’s morning 1945, Hitler was having a “last go” as we called it. The German planes were machine gunning the air base near us, they did some damage, but I vividly remember the young pilots in my telescope, they were diving a lot and we were very fortunate that we did not have any casualties.
- One night duty we were given rum from stone jars. I would give mine to one of the lads. There were buckets of hot cocoa and “NAAFI Cake” (fruited) in the dining room after the “all clear” went.

- I played side drum in drum and bugle band
- Some happenings I often smile about – In the beginning we wore men's battledress and one morning on parade the sergeant major shouted at me "Thompson, your medals are showing"! I had not fastened all the buttons on the 'fly' opening of my trousers. I could not stop laughing!
- In Brussels, a pal Edna and I were amazed at the large plums on a handcart but then we did not know what a kilo was! We got them in a newspaper cone and ate the lot. The next day we had our troubles and had to report to the Medical Officer. We were sent in a jeep to hospital and kept in a day, but all was well.



- The above poem was written by my friend Irene, who could write poetry in an instant. She wrote this when we were disbanding in Belgium, I stayed with the band touring West Germany and Denmark after the war had finished.
- I had a wonderful time at the re-union in North Wales with 8 comrades and BBC presenters Judy Spiers and Andy Craig in 1987 through BBC Pebble Mill at Towyn.

Photos:

