

<b>Surname:</b> Burton	<b>First Name(s):</b> Orience Evelyn	<b>Army Number:</b> W/33543	
<b>Maiden name (if applicable):</b>	<b>Name used during service:</b> Burton	<b>Rank:</b> Corporal	
<b>Main base:</b> Margate Weston-super-Mare Warwick London	<b>Training base:</b> Aldermaston	<b>Enrolled at:</b> Volunteer – Coventry 13/03/1940	
<b>Platoon/Section:</b> GHQ 2 <sup>nd</sup> Echelon	<b>Company/Battery:</b> GHQ, B.E.F.	<b>Group/Regiment:</b> ATS	<b>Command:</b>
<b>Year(s) of service:</b> 13/3/1940 to 10/1/1946	<b>Reason for discharge:</b> Demobilised	<b>Trade:</b> RO Clerk Group 'C' Class 1	
<b>Uniform Issued:</b> Jackets Shoes Cap Panties, woollen Gloves, knitted Greatcoat Jersey, woollen Shoes, canvas Stockings Skirts Vests, woollen Pyjamas Knickers silk Brassieres Belts, corset Shirts poplin Collars, poplin Gas mask Tie Kit bag	<b>Photo:</b> 		
<b>Description of daily tasks:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orderly N.C.O.</li> <li>• Take parade every morning (in Warwick).</li> <li>• Polish cap badge and buttons and shoes.</li> <li>• Carry gas mask as part of the uniform.</li> </ul>		



intenseness of horror of what we were about to record.

- Later, I think about August time, after this duty was complete we were told to put our names down under the nearest Record Office to our homes. The Government thought it would not be long before we would be recalled to GHQ 2nd Echelon and open a second front.
- I was attached to the Record Office in St Johns Warwick. I was employed as a statistician where I recorded information received from the Orderly Rooms of the Battalion of the Northamptonshire Regiment and later I moved to the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. Each soldier was represented by a card – it recorded every detail of a soldier's army life ie personal details, rank, theatre of operation, trade, admission to hospital etc. At the end of each month a Return was completed showing the numbers of men in their locations whether they were at home, in training, on the high seas, theatre of operation hospital etc. This return was consolidated with other regiments within the compound and forwarded to the War Office so that they knew how many men were in the theatre of operations etc.
- I took sick parade each morning with the MO and dispensed medicines. Still retaining my job, I occasionally was in charge of the Sick Bay in Royal Leamington Spa.
- There was a patient named Larna Turner who confided in me. She said that she put her age down in order to join the ATS because she had no one to look after her in her old age and did not wish to be alone. She died and I attended the Military funeral.
- As an NCO I had other duties to perform such as night duty on the switchboard in the office and night duties in the Billets.
- I was in Warwick when a bomb was dropped very close to our house which turned out to be a dud. The Germans were on their way to Coventry. We lived on the main road to the south and the following morning a friend who lived in Coventry came to the door. I went to the road and was horrified at what I saw. My friend and her family with a car and a caravan were completely dazed and refused any help, I have no idea as to what happened to them. There were refugees walking along the road for further than I could see some with shoes, some without shoes, some in night clothes and others in anything they could pick up. They had walked 8 miles at that point. Worse was to come when they reached the river bridge not far from us when some of them committed suicide. There was utter silence.
- I went to Coventry that morning to find that it was heap of rubble as far as one could see except for the three towers of the cathedral. A new department store provided an air raid shelter in their basement where 700 people took shelter, it had a direct hit.
- My parents' home housed 11 billetees mostly policemen and army personnel. My father was fetched away from the work he was doing and put on war work. We each went our own way and lived day to day. Through the church Mother accepted 2 each of Australian, Canadian and New Zealand airmen when they were on leave.
- There was an occasion when I was in the Stores and Orderly Room for a short period. Having had experience in the Regimental Orderly Room, life in the ATS Orderly Room seemed very tame. The stores entailed a variety of things, shoes, uniforms etc visiting billets and camps. An army lorry from Budbrooke Barracks R. Warks. Regt. and two soldiers collected me for various jobs some of which had its funny side, ie when we were driving along we were leaving a trail of mattresses lying in the road. They had slipped off but the soldier in the back of the lorry could not save them. Coal had to be measured in the billets and camps this was done by eyeing up the remaining pile. Another time I furnished Alveston Manor, Stratford-upon-Avon for the ATS to inhabit, it is now an hotel.
- During my service as a statistician we had to record on to a Hollerith card as well,

which was passed to another office to be tested on what we now know as a computer. The machine could not be used until it had been tested for reliability.

- As a musician and independently of my service I accompanied an ATS girl who was a trained opera singer, played solos and accompanied artists in Workers Playtime in factories and from my pre-ATS days gathered together a dance band to play for a company of soldiers.
- Basil Dean visited my home asking me to join ENSA (Entertainment National Service Association) but the ATS Officers would not release me because in their opinion I was doing a more important job where I was. Unfortunately, ENSA was not formed for a long time after war was declared otherwise this is where I should have been.
- 1944/45 I was posted to RAMC Barons Court, London, opposite St Paul's School where General Montgomery was planning the second front. We were billeted in Gloucester Road near the Albert Hall. Here my duties were to prepare the administration for the return of the prisoners of war for leave or rehabilitation or hospitalisation.
- Early in 1945 my sister Olive Mary Goode nee Burton was posted to GHQ 2<sup>nd</sup> Echelon in Florence, Italy in time for the last big push.
- I was demobbed on 10 January 1946 in Guildford.
- There was a job to do and we got on with it. There were sad as well as happy times but one tends to think of the happy ones. We enjoyed ourselves as much as was possible.

**Photos:**



Flight/Sgt Douglas Burton, RAF  
(brother killed in action 1944)  
Orience Burton    Olive Burton



Company Parade in Leamington Spa