

Surname: Goss	First Name(s): Doris	Army Number: W/284167	
Maiden name (if applicable):	Name used during service: Goss	Rank: Sergeant	
Main base: Welsh Guards Training Battalion. Tel-el-Kebir, Egypt Military Intelligence, Jerusalem	Training base: Queens Camp, Guildford, Surrey	Enrolled at: Richmond, Surrey, Recruiting Office	
Platoon/Section:	Company/Battery:	Group/Regiment:	Command:
Year(s) of service: 14/5/1943 to Jan 1947	Reason for discharge: Normal post war demob with my age and service group	Trade: Clerk Class I	
Uniform Issued:	Photo:		
Description of daily tasks:	•		
Pay book:	Not available.		
Memorable moments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After initial training and a posting which turned out to be one of the War Office's mistakes – the job I was sent to do didn't exist and I nearly went mad with boredom – I was sent to the Welsh Guards Training Battalion to work alongside the guardsmen clerks in their office. The weekly gas mask drill made it difficult to answer the phone. • I had trained as a secretary before enlisting and was employed at The Times newspaper. The army mistakenly thought I was a reporter, hence my initial non-job. After that I did shorthand typing for various officers. • On 30th June 1944 everyone had to attend the Battalion Sports Meeting, athletics being part of the soldiers' training. It was a beautiful day. The Air Raid sirens sounded, the the all clear. As the runners were being assembled for the next race, a flying bomb buzzed over the field, then its engine stopped. Everyone shouted "run!" but as the bomb circled silently I was running the wrong way. Two people threw themselves on top of me for protection. The bomb fell, the blast deafened us, the dust blinded us. After a moment we saw a crater in the middle of 		

the field. 18 young officers and guardsmen had been killed and many more injured. There had been a new girl in our room who screamed in her sleep every time a bomb fell. She told us that her twin sister had been killed in the London raids, and she had a premonition she would die too. Today her turn had come and she was blown in two by the bomb. I remember my Sergeant looking at me and saying "Oh no, not you", and then I felt blood seeping through my uniform. The shrapnel just missed my lung but I was taken to the military hospital for an operation and heard young men in surrounding beds trying to answer the nurses' questions about their names and numbers as they lay dying. These things I shall never forget.

- Later, things quietened down in England and we were sent to the Middle East. The cruise across the Mediterranean was idyllic until they had to switch the engines off because we were on top of a minefield. The postings were exciting but not the work – mainly pilferage reports about thefts from camp in Egypt!!
- On to Alexandria, in Egypt, where we transferred to a train. It was all very colourful, and as we leaned out of the window to buy sphinx statues from the men in fez hats on the platform, another group of local gentlemen wearing long white robes climbed up the other side of the train and relieved us of some of our belongings.
- We eventually arrived at a camp in the desert called Tel-el-Kebir, thirty miles from the nearest town and part of a huge Ordnance Depot sending supplies for the war in the Far East. There we lived in tents for over a year. There were 26,000 men and 100 women. (Sometimes I wonder if that fact had anything to do with my becoming a nun soon after the war!) But at that time I was Sergeant in charge of a typing pool, my typists being two German prisoners who made mistakes on purpose, two French girls from Mauritius, a friendly little Indian gentleman who sent my mother boxes of tea for years afterwards and an Egyptian civilian called Sharoni. They would leave little notes on my desk complaining about each other
- One day I was called into the Brigadier's office to take shorthand. Standing in front of him was a soldier I knew. The Brigadier dictated evidence against him, about taking clothing from Army stores and distributing it to his friends. Returning to camp that night I heard that the accused had broken out of the guard house, got drunk and forced his way into the girls' camp with a gun to kill me. Luckily I never saw him again.
- Every day I was driven from work by a German prisoner, a delightful old man who would tell me about his grandchildren until I felt like one of the family. Then he would wish me a very good appetite as he drove back to his prison camp.
- Our food consisted of cold black tea out of a metal trough made to last all day (there was a tremendous shortage of water) and soft cold charred toast also made to last for the day. Sometimes there would be an orange which the Arab cooks had saved for the English girls to show their favouritism, as the rest of the company were Jewesses from Palestine. They would argue heatedly with the Arabs and so tended to be less well treated at mealtimes.
- When the Egyptian camp closed, we were sent to Jerusalem to work for Military Intelligence. It was a dangerous place to be, as terrorists were trying to get the British to leave. (Not that we had any particular desire to stay, but nobody asked us.) Our Headquarters were in the King David Hotel. One day, two phone warnings were received about bombs placed in the hotel, and twice everybody evacuated the hotel and lined up in hundreds in the street outside. No-one moved when the third "hoax call" came, and the churns of gelignite which Jewish terrorists, disguised as Arab milkmen, had placed in the basement exploded and killed ninety people, wounding many more. The war had ended by then, but we hadn't really noticed. Now the girls were allowed to go out on the town, provided they took two armed guards each. I remember coming out of a cinema between

	<p>my two armed guards and seeing a Palestine Policeman poking a gun into my chest. I thought, "This isn't really happening." The soldiers did some quick talking and discovered that a terrorist disguised as a British army girl had just killed a man on that very spot. I was glad when they persuaded the policeman that it wasn't me.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We got a free cigarette ration in Egypt which luckily, I never touched. I would send it home to my parents unless my Egyptian 'servant' found it first. In return my mother knitted me a khaki sweater – I put it in a drawer and the next day I spotted this Egyptian cleaner wearing it proudly as he walked around the camp. Never a dull moment!
Photos:	