

Surname: Skinner	First Name(s): Dorothy	Army Number: W/147087	
Maiden name (if applicable): Scorthorne	Name used during service: Skinner	Rank: Private	
Main base: Watford	Training base: Pontefract Rhyl	Enrolled at: Doncaster	
Platoon/Section:	Company/Battery: (M) Searchlight Battery	Group/Regiment: Royal Artillery	Command: Ack Ack Command
Year(s) of service: 15/5/1942 to	Reason for discharge: End of Hostilities	Trade: Searchlight Operator	
Uniform Issued: Dress uniform; Skirt Tunic Shirt Tie Stockings Shoes Hat Battledress; Trousers Gaiters Boots Greatcoat Overalls Fur jacket	Photo: 		
Description of daily tasks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We were called at 7.00 am, washed, dressed, made beds and had breakfast. • 9.00 am on parade. • Sergeant detailed certain tasks for the morning: maintenance on all equipment, help to clean mess room, sleeping quarters and ablutions. • After lunch we studied aircraft and had quizzes relevant to our jobs. • Two girls were on guard all night to man the RT and to check for unwanted visitors. • We finished about 4.30 to relax and be on stand-by in case of raids. 		

Pay book:



Memorable moments:

- I joined the ATS in May 1942 and had to report to Pontefract Barracks where we did our basic training, were kitted out and had our various inoculations. I met some nice girls there and four of us were together until we were demobbed – Sally Cobbold, Dot Harrison, Hilda Davidson and me – all Yorkshire girls.
- We had to decide what we wanted to train as and I decided searchlights were better than the Ack-Ack. We were sent to Kimnel Park outside Rhyl. It was a very large camp which had been there since World War 1. It was very interesting. We would go out on night manoeuvres, being served with hot cocoa and a slice of fruitcake as a snack. We had dances and concerts for our leisure time. After 3 months we were allotted our sites where we were to stay. Ours was in the middle of a common between Watford and St Albans, which was troop headquarters.
- We arrived at 9 o'clock at night and it was a bit bleak. The soldiers had been left in charge, there wasn't a fire so we couldn't get a hot drink or food and we ended up searching for the nearest fish shop. However, we settled down. We had a Sergeant Ollie in charge and there were 15 of us so it was like a happy family.
- On nights off we used to go to the main road where the Crown Pub had dances every night.
- We had the pleasure of seeing HRH Princess Royal twice. When she came to our site our time off was cancelled, everything had to be spick and span, new chairs were brought for our mess hut and when she had gone they were all taken away and our old chairs brought back, which I thought gave a false impression.
- I was the searchlight operator. At first it was a bit nerve-racking putting the light on the planes when the raids were on but you got used to it
- Although the war was terrible, I enjoyed my life and it gave me a lot of confidence in myself.

Photos:



Dot Bunny Sally Hilda
Elsie Louie Dots