



BRITISH LEGION-BAHAMAS 

***BAHAMIAN
WOMEN'S
CONTRIBUTION
TO WORLD WAR II***



BAHAMIAN WOMEN

WHO SERVED IN

THE BRITISH AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE (A.T.S.)

WHAT WAS THE A.T.S.?

The A.T.S. (Auxiliary Territorial Service) was the Women's Branch of The Royal British Army during World War II. It was established on 9th September, 1938 initially as a women's voluntary service and existed until 1st February, 1949, when it was merged into the Women's Royal Army Corps.

Jobs performed by these women included: cooks, office clerks, telephone operators, motorbike messengers, vehicle engineers, ambulance and lorry drivers.

Our Bahamian Women who served in this Division of the Royal British Army were captured in the book entitled: "The Brave Eleven" written by The Late Ruth Clarke-Goodridge, B.E.M.

Let us now take a look at our Bahamian Women who served in the Military arm of the A.T.S. during World War II, which began in 1939 and ended in 1945, through the eyes of Author-The Late Ruth Clarke Goodridge nee Thompson:-



BRITISH LEGION-BAHAMAS

***THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
PRIVATE RUTH CLARKE-GOODRIDGE NEE THOMPSON***



W/N.C. 272861 Private Ruth Thompson

W.N.C. Officer, Ruth Thompson, was born on the 6th January, 1921 in Rokers Point, Exuma in The Bahamas.

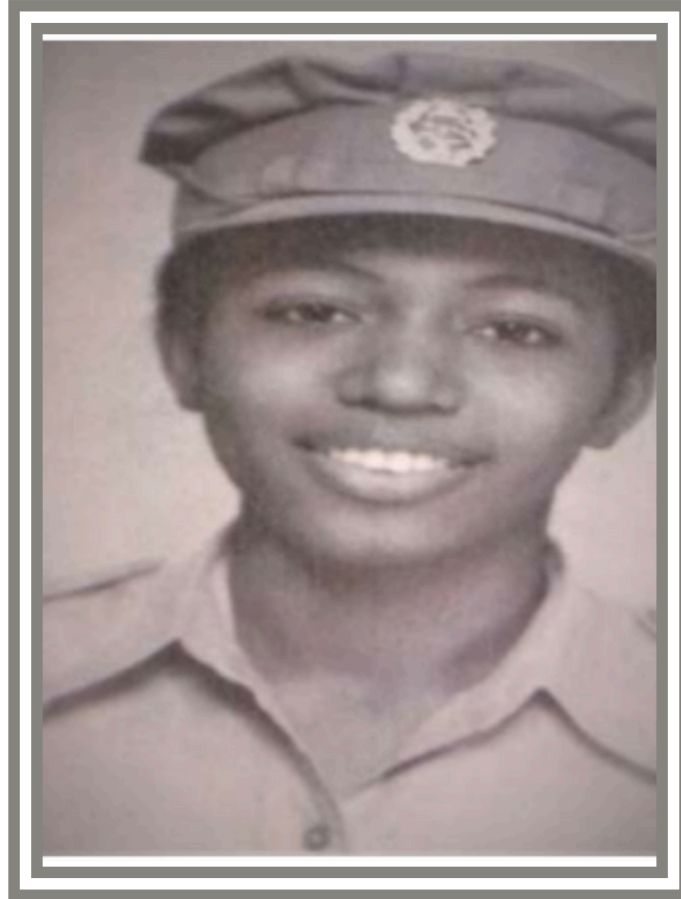
In 1944, she enlisted in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.), the Women' Branch of the Non-Commissioner Officers, (W/N.C.). She was stationed at the Garrison Headquarters Annex Up Park Camp, in Kingston, Jamaica.

When the War ended in 1945, Private Thompson returned to The Bahamas and continued her career as a Teacher in the Ministry of Education.

Later in her life, she documented her World War II experience and became the Author of the Book entitled: "The Brave Eleven." (Ref.: The Brave Eleven ps. 36-37).



***THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
PRIVATE ZOE MAYNARD NEE CUMBERBATCH***



W/N.C. 272863 Private Zoe Cumberbatch

W.N.C. Officer, Private Zoe Cumberbatch, was born in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad. In 1944, she enlisted in the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.). She was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex in Up Park Camp, in Kingston, Jamaica. She also served as Secretary to the Area Commander of The Bahamas Battalion in Nassau.

Private Cumberbatch, after her term of military service, returned to The Bahamas and later married the Late Sir Clement T. Maynard, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism.

(Ref.: The Brave Eleven ps. 28-29).



***THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
PRIVATE VERNELL ARMBRISTER NEE ALBURY***



W/N.C. 272835 Private Vernell Albury

W.N.C. Officer, Private Vernell Albury, was born on the 29th May, 1924, in Nassau, Bahamas.

In 1943, she enlisted in the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.) and was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex in Up Park Camp, in Kingston, Jamaica.

Private Albury also had the opportunity to serve at the Palisadoes Army and Navy Air Force Camp at Port Royal, Jamaica.

After the war ended in 1945, she returned to The Bahamas and resumed her Teaching career at the Ministry of Education.



**THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
PRIVATE DOROTHY LOUISE FULLERTON NEE COOPER**



W.N.C. Officer, Private Dorothy Cooper, was born in Nassau, Bahamas in 1923.

In the early 1940s, she recruited in Nassau, Bahamas, into the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.) and was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex, in Up Park Camp, Kingston, Jamaica. She also served at various Army outposts such as Palisadoes located in Port Royal, Jamaica.

When the war ended in 1945, she continued her military service at the Rehabilitation Office for Ex-Servicemen and women. She did not return to The Bahamas but married and lived in Kingston, Jamaica.



**THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
PRIVATE PEARL EUGENIE GRANT**



W/N.C. 272836 Private Pearl Eugenie Grant

W.N.C. Officer, Private Pearl Grant, was born in Nassau, Bahamas, on 24th July, 1922.

In 1943, she joined the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.), and was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex in Up Park Camp, Kingston, Jamaica.

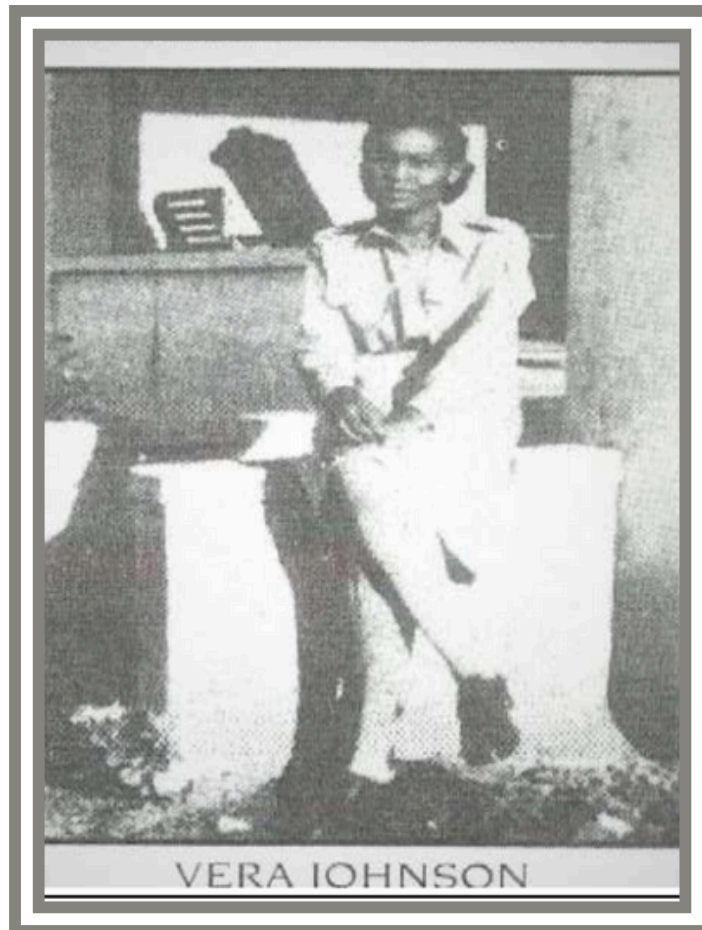
After a few months of training at the Camp, she further trained in Scotland, where she worked in the War Office. She also worked in Hounslow, London, in the War office there.

At the end of the War in 1945, she returned to The Bahamas and settled in West End, Grand Bahama.

(Ref.: The Brave Eleven p. 30).



***THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
PRIVATE VERA JOHNSON***



The Late W.N.C. Officer, Private Vera Johnson, was born in Nassau, Bahamas in 1925.

In 1944, Private Johnson joined the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.), and was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex in Up Park Camp, Kingston, Jamaica. She further received additional training in Newcastle Hills, located in North East England. After her training, she returned to the Up Park Camp, in Kingston, Jamaica, where she served in the military Ordinance Corp. until the War ended.

When the War ended in 1945, Private Johnson returned to The Bahamas and served in The Bahamas Government Sector.



***THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
PRIVATE GRACE FOUNTAIN NEE KNOWLES***



W.N.C. Officer, Private Grace Knowles, was born in Nassau, Bahamas, on 5th August, 1923, along with her identical twin sister Thelma.

In the early 1940s, Private Grace Knowles joined the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.), and was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex in Up Park Camp, Kingston, Jamaica.

At the end of the War, she returned to The Bahamas and worked in the Ministry of Tourism in its various Departments until her retirement in 1991.

She was honored with the Queen's Badge of Honor in 1996.



**THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
PRIVATE SYBIL FORD NEE LIGHTBOURNE**



W/N.C. 272837 Private Sybil Lightbourne

W.N.C. Officer, Private Sybil Lightbourne, was born in Nassau Bahamas.

In 1943, Sybil joined the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.), and was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex in Up Park Camp, Kingston, Jamaica. She served as an office Clerk/Typist at the Camp and also served in the Royal Engineers Corp.

At the end of the War in 1945, she returned to The Bahamas and was employed in The Bahamas Government Service.

(Ref.: The Brave Eleven p. 34).



***THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER(W.N.C.) PRIVATE
DOROTHY WISDOM NEE ROBERTS***



W/N.C. 272859 Private Dorothy Roberts

W.N.C. Officer, Dorothy Roberts, was born in 1924 on the island of New Providence – Nassau, Bahamas.

In 1944, she joined the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.), and was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex in the Up Park Camp, Kingston, Jamaica.

When the War ended, she took up residence in Kingston, Jamaica, for two (2) years. She returned to The Bahamas, thereafter, and served in The Bahamas Government Sector.



***THE LATE WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
PRIVATE SHIRLEY WRIGHT***



W.N.C Officer, Shirley Wright, was born on the island of New Providence – Nassau, Bahamas.

In 1944, she enlisted in the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.) and was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex in the Up Park Camp, Kingston, Jamaica.

Private Shirley also took up further military training at the Newcastle Camp, North East England. Upon her return to Kingston, Jamaica, she served in various army areas and was promoted to Corporal by the end of the War.

When the War ended in 1945, she returned to The Bahamas where she continued a career in The Bahamas Government Sector.

(Ref.: The Brave Eleven p. 39)



PRIVATE PATRICA BEDFORD



Private Patricia Bedford – A.T.S. – Northern Ireland

Private Patricia Bedford – A.T.S. – Northern Ireland

Private Patricia H. Bedford was born in Nassau, Bahamas.

During World War II, she served as a B-2 Wireless Operator in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.) in Northern Ireland.

(Ref.: Magazine entitled: "NASSAU" Vol. 12-No. 1- December, 1945 Issue provide by Paul C. Aranha)



**WOMAN NON-COMMISSION OFFICER (W.N.C.)
LATE ACTING CORPORAL DOREEN CARMEL RICKARDS NEE JONES**



W.N.C. Officer, Doreen Carmel Jones, was born in Nassau, Bahamas, on 19th September, 1924.

In the mid-40s, Doreen Jones joined the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (A.T.S.), and was stationed at Garrison Headquarters Annex in Up Park Camp in Kingston, Jamaica. She served as a typist at the Camp's office. She was promoted to Lance Corporal and then finally became Acting Corporal at the end of her military career when the War ended. (Ref.: The Brave Eleven p. 31).

When the War ended in 1945, she did not return to The Bahamas, but remained in Kingston Jamaica. (Ref.: The Brave Eleven p. 32).

As of March 2025, Acting Corporal Doreen Jones-Richards past away at her home in Kingston, Jamaica at 100 years old.



THE LATE QUEEN ELIZABETH II SERVED IN THE A.T.S.



Her Majesty learnt how to drive trucks after signing up during World War II -Credit: Getty Images

The British Legion-Bahamas Branch honors its late Patron, Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, as she will be remembered in playing her role in World War II.

At the age of 18, the Late Queen Elizabeth II, joined the Women's Auxiliary Service (A.T.S.) in London.

She was trained in London as a military Mechanic and a light truck and Ambulance Driver. The above photograph shows the Late Queen Elizabeth II in front of a truck that she drove during the War.

(Ref.: The Sun Newspaper Article-19th November, 2019)





BAHAMIAN WOMEN WHO SERVED IN THE BRITISH WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AIR FORCE (WAAF)

WHAT WAS THE WAAF?

The Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) – was the female branch of **The Royal British Air Force** during World War II. It was established on 28th June, 1939, but women were not recruited until 1941. Recruitment applied to women who were between the ages of 20-30 years old.

Women were trained in one of five Air Force sites, however, most of the training was at Wilmslow, England Air Force Base.

Jobs that were performed by women in this branch of the Royal British Army included: **parachute packing, radar, aircraft maintenance engineers, and communication duties such as wireless telephonic and telegraphic operations.**

(Reference: Wikipedia online Research)



BAHAMIAN WOMEN WHO SERVED IN THE ROYAL BRITISH AIR FORCE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AIR FORCE (WAAF)



(Photograph provided to the British Legion-Bahamas Branch by The Late Elizabeth (Lou) Moseley-Cuevas-2018)

There was another group of Brave Bahamian women who also served in World War II in the British **Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF)**. They appear in the above photograph that was taken before the War began in 1939. The above photograph was provided to The British Legion-Bahamas Branch by The Late Elizabeth (Lou) Moseley-Cuevas in 2018.

In the above photograph standing left to right are: Peggy Hilton, Ann Wanklyn, Bobby Duncombe, Mary Moseley (Bahamian World War I Female Icon), W. Brownrigg, Margaret Loughran, Rosalie Knowles, and Joan Straton. The women who are sitting left to right are: Peggy Moseley- Millar, Pat Duncombe-MacDuff, Joan Winder, Mary Brown-Simpson, and Grace Johnson.

Not included in the above photograph is Private Officer Mary Kelly.



BRITISH LEGION-BAHAMAS



BAHAMIAN WOMEN WHO SERVED DURING WORLD WAR II **IN THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AIRFORCE (WAAF)**



Photograph provided by Paul C. Aranah-Bahamian Historian

Top Row Women: A.C.W2s: Joan Straton, Ann Wanklyn, and Peggy Hilton

Bottom Row Women: A.C.W2s: W. Brownrigg, Joan Winder, and Mary Brown-Simpson



BRITISH LEGION-BAHAMAS

BAHAMIAN WOMEN WHO SERVED DURING WORLD WAR II **IN THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AIRFORCE (WAAF)**



A.C.W.2 Peggy Hilton
W.A.A.F.



A.C.W.2 Joan Straton
W.A.A.F.



Cpl. Joan Winder Transport Div., W.A.A.F.



A.C.W.2 Mary (Brown)
Simpson, W.A.A.F.



A.C.W.2 Grace Johnson,
W.A.A.F.



A.C.W.2 Margaret
Louchran, W.A.A.F.



THE MEN
IS A MEN
EN & WOMEN
PAID THE SUPREME
DURING WORLD WAR II
LEST WE FORGET

BRITISH LEGION-BAHAMAS

