

Irish Servicewomen in the Great War

STARTER CHART / basic facts for further research for: **CO. DOWN**

Sources include : <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/womens-army-auxiliary-corps-service-records-1917-1920/>

More than 80 percent of the c.60,000 First World War army service records for women who had served from 1917-1921 were completely lost when their archive was later damaged in a German bombing raid on London in the 1940s.

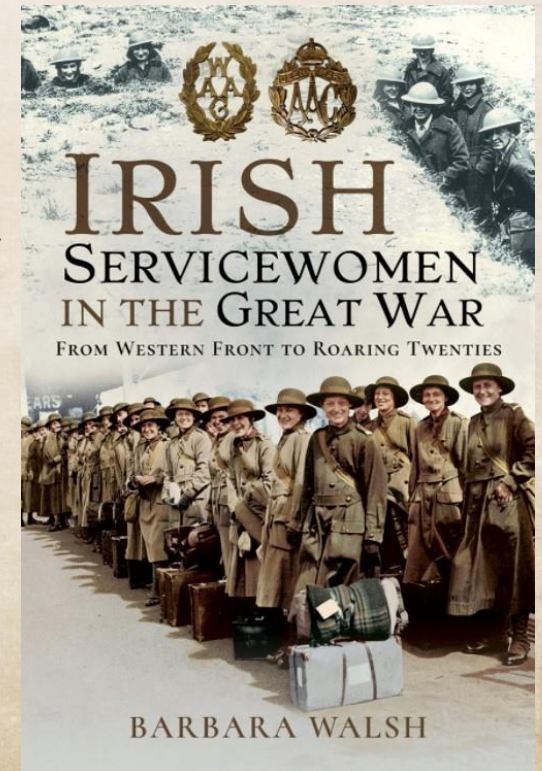
The number of surviving records for Irish-born women who served with the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (later Queen Mary's Army Corps) consequently only totals just over 500 names, mostly those of lower- ranking young women. Sadly, the memory of the contribution they had made in the First World War continues to be in danger of being completely side lined and forgotten, not only by the historical record and knowledge of the public but even by their own descendants today. It is a topic that local history and / or family history societies can help to redress.

Drawn from every level of society and from every creed and background, these ladies had come forward from all 32 counties of Ireland to offer skills at every level of ability in addition to high-tech expertise in key areas such as the telecommunication networks in France (telegraph and telephone) which linked frontline battlefields to army bases. Their work was categorised into separate sections:

- A = Office Clerks
- B = Catering /Cleaning
- C = Drivers
- D = Unskilled
- E = Telephone & Postal Services / Lines of Communication
- F = Miscellaneous
- G =Technical

The higher-ranking officers (the Officials / Administrators) are marked in the chart as: Off/I.

A usefully supportive background story of their experiences is published by Pen & Sword Books (2020)



DOWN: DETAILS for 15 identified recruits. Sources: National Archives, Kew, and online records for cemeteries

Cat:	Name /birth place and address	Date birth & Address in 1917 if different	Relig.	Previous civilian work	Army work	Applied & Service dates	Where served & post war	Army No.
A	COLE , Gladys Margaret Sybil. b. Newry, Co. Down	25/09/1895 54, Honeywell Rd., Wandsworth, London (Home)	RC	Worked in the Ladies United Services Club, Mayfair London	Clerk	May 1917 ~ 3 June 1917 to 2 Oct 1917 Enquiry 18 Mar 1920	Wimereaux (no medals) (Absconded & married a man called Bramble in 1917-1918. Led to a Scotland Yard Report	1430
Off/I	RUSSELL , Aline Mary, b. Downpatrick Co. Down	26/11/1895 Rath, Ballybarack, Dundalk LATER: 13, Lanark Mansions, Clifton Road, London W9	-	Former VAD who had earlier served in France, from Sept. 1915 to Nov. 1917	Administrator	Jan 1918 ~ June 1918 to Jan 1920	BEF HQ France	Off/I AA

B	BAGLEY , Martha Co. Down 79 Hugh Street, Holywood	29/06/1881 (Note age)	C of I	General Domestic Soldier's widow (36) with 2 children	Domestic	April 1918 ~ May 1918 to Nov 1919	Tipperary (Later dispute over pay due after discharge)	39040
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A	REYNOLDS , Ivy Mary b. Banbridge, Co. Down (sisters)	25/11/1899 11 Ann Street Newtownards, Co.Down	C of I	Clerk	F//woman Clerk	April 1918 ~ July 1918 to Feb 1920 (includes furlough due)	London	39049
A	REYNOLDS , Frances Elizabeth Pansy, b. Banbridge, Co. Down (sisters)	12/11/1899 11 Ann Street, Newtownards, Co. Down	C of I	Shnd/Typist	Shorthnd typist	April 1918 ~ Aug 1918 to Dec 1919	Larkhill, Wilts	39050

B	SCOTT , Sarah b. Bangor, Co.Down	20/11/1893 19 Ballycastle Street, Belfast	C of I	Housemaid Father a gardener	Cook	Mar 1918 ~ Apr 1918 to July 1919	Randalstown and Finner Camp Ballyshannon	39052
B	TAYLOR , Jean b. Cloughram, Dundrum, Co. Down	2?04/1891 11 Silvergrove St., off Dongal Place, Belfast.	C of I	Dressmaker and/or tailoress Father a farmer	Waitress	Nov 1917 ~ April 1918 to March 1919	Randalstown Bostall Heath where TF to WAAF	39054
A	POSTON , Isabel Co. Down Belfast Road, Comber	14/10/1899	C of I	Book-keeper	Ledger Clerk	March 1918 ~ July 1918 to Feb.1920	Aldershot, Woking, and Bristol	42398

B	THOMPSON , Victoria Evelyn, b. Co. Down The Green, Downpatrick	20/10/1899	C of E	Father a soldier	Waitress	June 1918 ~ July 1918 to Nov 1919 (One of 8 demobilised that day)	Tipperary	45591
B	FERGUSON , Martha (Maisie) b. Co. Down Mourne Wood, Killeel	12/05/1898	Presb	General housework	Waitress	Jun 1918 ~ July 1918 to Nov 1919	Officers' School in Ballykinlar	45917
B	BYRES , Elizabeth b. Co. Down James Street, Portaferry	14/02/1892	RC	Servant	Waitress	June 1918 ~ July 1918 to Aug 1919	Ebrington Barracks, Londonderry	45943

B	HANNA , Lizzie b. Newtownards Co. Down 71, Greenwall Street Newtownards	28/01/1900	Presb	– Father a shoemaker serving with the army	General Domestic	May 1918 ~ July 1918 to June 1919	Ballyvonare and Royal Bcks Dublin (Discharged for serious medical infection aged 19)	45947
?	CROZIER , Clara (<i>Very Prob.b. Co.Down</i>) <i>Sources :</i> https://astreetnearyou.org/ person/661485/Member- Clara-Crozier and https://www.genealogy.co m/forum/surnames/topics/ crozier/244/	No army Service Record	Presb			<i>From her service No. it is probable she only served from c. Oct 1918</i>	DIED 17/11/1918 Grave ID 93220696 Newry Reform Presbyterian Cemetery, Co. Down	48252
B	MAGEE , Kathleen b. Co.Down The Park, Rostrevor	22/05/1900	RC	Domestic Servant	Pantry maid Domestic	Jun 1918 ~ Sept 1918 to April 1920	Finner camp, Ballyshannon	48867
B	SHANNON , Bertha b. Co. Down Scotch Street, Downpatrick	5/04/1900	C of I	Unclear. Very probably no prior experience	Waitress	Aug 1918 ~ Sept 1918 only to Dec 1918	Fermoy (Found inefficient – early discharge)	48872

