

19 June 2026

Project Report

#Women&Families UNTOLD Stories of the Irish in the British Army

Project outline

UNTOLD Stories of the Irish in the British Army will consolidate seven at-risk regimental collections in Northern Ireland, producing a dynamic visitor experience in the heart of Belfast and Enniskillen to promote peace and reconciliation through the exploration of shared heritage. Current collections do not sufficiently represent the story of women/families and there is a risk that this could be perpetuated in the planned design activity without dedicated attention. This project has facilitated cross-community co-design and relationship building activity with women/families to ensure their voices form part of an inclusive shared heritage.

Phase 1: Facilitated three workshops with female veterans/families using archival sources as a catalyst for conversation. Workshops assessed participant perception of their current representation in Northern Irish military museums and sought their input through innovative, creative visualisations of future museum exhibits. These creative visualisations are data in themselves and supporting data will be captured through audio recordings of the conversations (as a back up) and fieldwork notes. Analysis took an embodied approach, adding marginalia, working with the creations and playing with the data (Kara, 2020).

Phase 2: Provided input to the wider final museum design, the accompanying virtual exhibition and future programming via the outputs from Phase 1 and by observing community co-design workshops that opened up conversations about the relationship between women's stories and traditionally male-dominated narratives, as well as providing expert feedback on the design work.

Phase 3: Coordinate evaluation of the museum plans by women and families. This will involve collectively perusing and annotating museum designs as well as activity programmes. A report will be written by Dr Hannah West to capture observations/findings, feedback and recommendations for the museum.

Phase 4: This project is informing two academic articles. The first is about women in military history and the second about how to find women's stories in the context of military museums and archives.

This project addresses the currently unmet need for the voices of women and families to be represented in the inclusive shared heritage envisioned at the heart of UNTOLD. The branding research underpinning UNTOLD concluded that 'It is an opportunity to tell the truth 'warts and all' of the men and women, who for many varied reasons fought, and continue to fight, in the British service with distinction and considerable gallantry and sacrifice'. There is a risk to the new museum project achieving its aim to represent a shared and inclusive heritage if the stories of women and families remain absent in the design activity. What is more, in prior community feedback sessions, 70% of participants in group 1 stated that women should be

represented in the museum, and in group 2, only 22%, which attests to the lack of general awareness that women have played. This project has sought to redress this by researching the countless, currently anecdotal and as yet marginalised, stories of women's involvement across the long history of the various regiments from Waterloo to Afghanistan. Through this project we have worked with women, mothers and families to understand their vision for these untold histories and empower their voices as valid narrators of war and regimental history as part of an inclusive shared heritage.

Prior research

Dr Hannah West has conducted prior research exploring the involvement of women during Op Banner resulting in the publication of the following papers, including one written in collaboration with Dr Laura Patrick:

- [Full article: "The Non-Combatant on the 'Front Line': British Servicewomen During the Troubles in Northern Ireland"](#)
- [Full article: Invisible bodies of war: British servicewomen on covert operations in Northern Ireland](#)
- ['Petticoat patrols': Cultural memory and the politics of commemoration](#)

As a result of this research she has produced a number of creative representations of the findings including:

- ["Petticoat Patrols"](#)
- [You are so brave | Videos & Movies on Vimeo](#)

Collections findings

Dr Hannah West, supported by the CEEUPS archivist Elizabeth Cutmore, spent four days visiting four regimental archives:

- Royal Ulster Rifles Museum, Bedford Street
- Regimental Collection of The Royal Irish Regiment which includes: The Royal Irish Regiment, The Royal Irish Rangers and The Ulster Defence Regiment(UDR), Lisburn Barracks
- Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum, Armagh
- Royal Inniskilling Museum, Enniskillen which includes The Inniskilling Fusiliers and Dragoons.

Synthesising four days of deep dives into the archives seeking women's stories, Hannah found the presentation of a typology a helpful tool for conveying her findings to a lay audience in the workshops. This typology (the rebel; the used; the enemy; the educator; the thankful; the negotiator; the women of the battalion; the brave; the follower; the saviour; the operator; the funny; the hope-giver; the figurehead; the exotic 'other'; the object) usefully serves to underline the breadth of where we can find women's stories and is hence replicated as a means of capturing the findings. A visual representation was created as a resource for the workshops and is included below, followed by a series of case studies identified in the

archives. Bringing these examples together conveys clearly the diversity of women's stories in military history countering the dominant representation of military history as a story about men.



The rebel

The Sprig of Shillelagh, the Journal of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers on 1 February 1895 contained this account entitled 'Troubles with the Connaught Rangers (88th)'. It recounts a deployment in India when the Regiment had been on the move through the night on foot. When they arrived to pitch camp at their new station the women lit fires that were deemed too close to the gun park. From the sentry to the non-commissioned officer and ultimately the Captain, they tried to urge the women to put out their fires and relocate. But the women were insistent that they would not be moving until they had had a cup of tea. By the time the colonel of the regiment had intervened to order them to move the women had had their tea!

Troubles with the Connaught Rangers. (88th).

MY first acquaintance with the "Connaught Rangers" was in India. I travelled with some of them up the country to the Mutiny.

Sometime afterwards the regiment was ordered to the station my battery was in. The regiment encamped some distance from our gun park (as a rule, the tail end of a regiment comes in some hours after the head arrives). To all appearances, the tail would not come close to the gun park, but it did; and in the course of an hour after the men had pitched tents, the married bakeries (carts) began to arrive, and no place would do for them but close to our gun park (our sentry had orders not to allow any fires near the park).

As the bakeries arrived, each woman lit a fire. The sentry ordered them away, but they would not go. He therefore sent for the non-commissioned officer of the guard, and said, "The women will not put out the fires." I went to one and said, "Misses, you must put out the fire and shift, or else you will be blown away." She said, "Well, blow away, but the devil a shift will I do till I have had some *tay*."

What was I to do? I could not make her, and it would be very unlikely that I should try to force her away, for if I tried I might get her fist in my eye. So I wrote a note, saying that the women of the 88th Regiment lit fires near our gun park, and would not put them out or shift away, and sent it to the captain. The captain was of some very old Devonshire family—a younger son, or I suppose he would not have taken the trouble to study for the Artillery. He may have descended from Blake or Drake for all I know or care; anyhow he was a terror. He was a very small man, and had he gone to the recruiting sergeant to enlist, the latter would have said, "We don't want any powder monkeys just now." He detested the very sight of a big man.

He (the Captain) sent an answer to say, "You must have the fires out at once." I went to the women again with no better success, only getting as before. "The devil a foot till we have had our *tay*." I sent another report, and had the second line of waggons shifted between the post so as to get them away from the fires.

The Captain came to the guard room in a towering rage and sent for me. He started with, "Why the d— did you allow fires so near the gun park in the first place?" I said, "Because I could not help it, sir," then said he, "you are not fit for a stripe. Come with me, and I will make them shift." He said to the first woman, "How dare you light fires so near my gun park? You must shift at once." One said, "Must I? No sorrows move till I have had something to eat and drink for you or anyone else." "What," he said, "not

move when I tell you!" "No, the devil a foot till the water is boiled. I have been travelling all night, and want a drop of *tay* to remove the cockles from my heart." The captain put spurs to his horse, and galloped to the front, enquired for the colonel of the regiment, who sent orders to have the women moved away from the guns. By the time the orders reached them, they had had their "*tay*" as well as a good laugh at me, and they gave me this advice—"Don't interfere with hungry women any more."

New Irish Ballad.

To the Editor of the "Sprig of Shillelagh."

Sir—During a recent tour in the Emerald Isle, I came across a curious Celtic ballad, and I am extremely anxious to have it translated into the English tongue. I have submitted the ballad in its original form to several scholars of eminence, but one and all have given up the task of translation of the same.

Perhaps you or some other Irish scholar of the 27th Inniskillings can assist me.

I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

London.

Fat —

Whisht ye divvle yer rivirance arrah caubeen
Och comether shillelagh me jewel dhadeen
Polthogue-in-the-gob-asthore imirald ile
Musha divvle-may-care avic son-iv-the-sile

Bodad be-me-sowl botheration hurroo
Acorra goisoon yorrah brian-bora
Shule sgra cruiskeen-lawn be the mortal oehone
Paudeen gim-iv the-say-pon-my-con-shine mavone

Be-aisy mavoureen begorra slaughtraun
Augus sassensach coulin homerule colleenbawn
Garryowen throth drop-iv the craythur crubeen
Acushla macreee gommoeh soggarth potheen.

Spelling Prize.

The coupons were drawn by Master Gunner Wood, R.A. The following are the winners:—

1. Pte. W. Arthur, 57th Regiment, Kinsale.
2. Corp. J. Russell, The Banocks, Kinsale.

Next month one prize of 2s. 6d., four prizes of 1s. Misprints do not count. The advertisement coupon must be enclosed.

The used

The [Wrens of the Curragh](#) were a community of ostracised women existing for over 50 years, on the outskirts of the Curragh army camp. These women sheltered in 'nests' among the undergrowth on the Curragh of Kildare from the 1840s for over fifty years sharing resources to stay alive. This group, deemed outcasts from society, included unmarried mothers, prostitutes, alcoholics, convicts, travellers, seasonal workers and their children. Their plight was recorded by the journalist, James Greenwood, in the Pall Mall Gazette in 1897 bringing them to public attention but they are believed to be only the better-known community with similar groups existing in the vicinity of all major military bases at the time.



Image credit: [James Greenwood](#)

The enemy

In the 1914 book, *The History of the Royal Irish Rifles*, an account of the Regiment's time deployed during the Boer War details an incident involving an irregular Irish unit, Driscoll's Scouts. The account (see below) details the Regiment's encounter with a group of enemy Boers which included a number of women who had taken up arms, including evidence of these female fighters killing a British Sergeant Major. So, whilst the Royal Irish Rifles soldiers were male, they nonetheless encountered women in battle amongst the enemy forces.

'At daybreak some of Driscoll's Scouts opened proceedings by a chase of twelve miles after some Boers, all of whom they captured, excepting one, and also ten wagons. One lady jumped out of a wagon and sprang on a horse with a man's saddle and disappeared in the distance, waving a rifle; another one complained of her departure, as she had taken her rifle, with which she stated that she had killed three British soldiers. Three days later she was caught driving a Cape cart, and she shot dead, at a range of three yards, a serjeant-major, who rode up to speak to her. She was sent to Klerksdorp to be tried for murder.'



This photograph appears in a scrapbook of the 2nd Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles documenting their time in Poona, India in 1897. Women do not appear in the remainder of the formal Regimental photographs but here we see Mrs Farrell included as the school-mistress. Cross referencing the Standing Orders of 1st Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles from 1895 there is a Section XI dedicated to 'The Schoolmaster' which states:

- '1. The schoolmaster is responsible to the commanding officer only for the system of the school; and that the system is carried out in conformity with the Army School Regulations. He will prepare his own pay list, and pay the school assistants.
2. The schoolmaster and schoolmistress will take particular care that the children attend school in a most cleanly state. The parents of children they have occasion to find fault with in this respect must be reported to the adjutant.'

Similarly, the Regimental Journal of the Royal Ulster Rifles, Quis Separabit, includes this photograph of 2nd Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles in 1930, again in Poona, India. This shows women running a girl guides and boy scouts group, presumably the wives of soldiers.



The thankful

This photograph records the moment of handing over an embroidered flag from the ladies of Lezenne Lille to 2nd Battalion, Royal Ulster Rifles at Christmas, 1939 'in recognition of their kindness'.



The negotiator



Image credit: [Unknown](#)

Through my doctoral research, I uncovered 1971 Home Office correspondence in the National Archives recounting the role Lady Eleanor Butler, Countess of Wicklow had in attempting to negotiate a ceasefire time during the first Christmas of the conflict. Lady Wicklow was, at the time, Chairperson of an association of women's organisations in the Republic of Ireland, the Women's Voluntary Emergency Service.

'Lady Wicklow says that they are now wondering whether a great fraternisation demonstration ought not be staged so as to show the good-will of the women of the South and put courage into the women, Catholic and Protestant, who have been in touch with them from the north. She feels that well mobilised around Christmas this might have a big effect.'

'She is a masterful lady but her ideas are interesting. I suppose that women might take an initiative which could break the jam.'

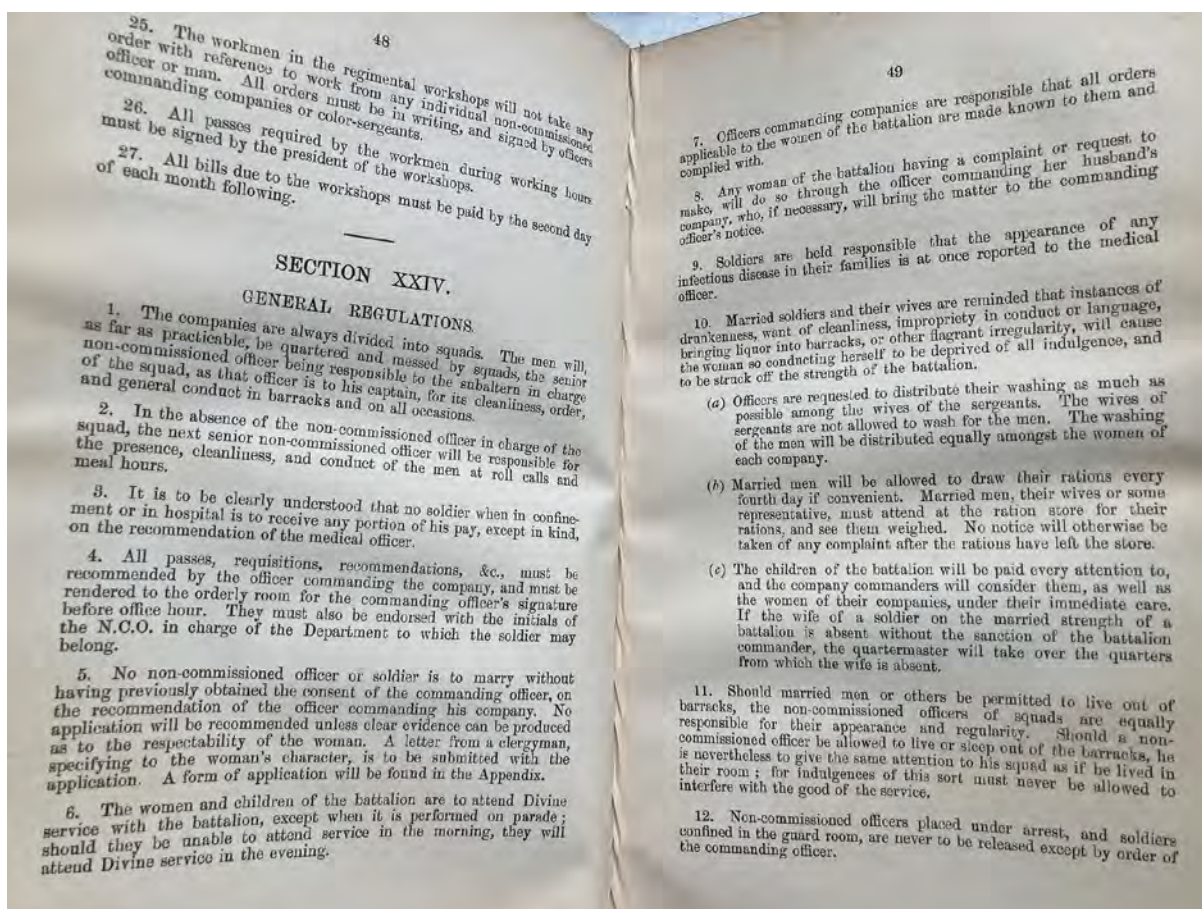
'She subsequently saw Lord Jellicoe [...] The emphasis in the talk with Lord Jellicoe had shifted to the possibility of arranging a truce. Lady Wicklow called yesterday to see Mr Sharples. Her main point was clearly the question of a truce over the Christmas period. At one time she made the case in terms which almost suggested that she was an emissary from the IRA! She emphasised that there was no hope of the Provisionals calling off their campaign without a gesture from what she described as the other side. She wanted the Army to stop its searches and arrests over this Christmas period and implied that the Provisionals could be counted on the response to this by ceasing their activities. This she said would give the women and children of Northern Ireland a respite from their present distress and might also be seen as proof that the IRA could be trusted to observe a longer term truce. She went as far at one stage as saying that violence in Northern Ireland could be brought to an end by Westminster Government coming to terms with the IRA - on what basis was not obvious but it seemed to be on lines of our agreeing with the IRA to replace Stormont by some other form of administration.

Mr Sharples made clear that there could be no question of a negotiated truce with the IRA either short or long term but said we would always welcome an initiative by women's organisations on both sides of the border in calling for an end to violence. Lady Wicklow said that she could not initiate such a statement limited to these terms because if she did so she would lose the support of the nationalist organisations with her association.

Lady Wicklow said that she would have to reconsider what sort of statement her organisation should put out. The impression she left was that this might go some way towards condemning violence but would also carry the implication that the Army in the North should stop its current search and arrest activities.'

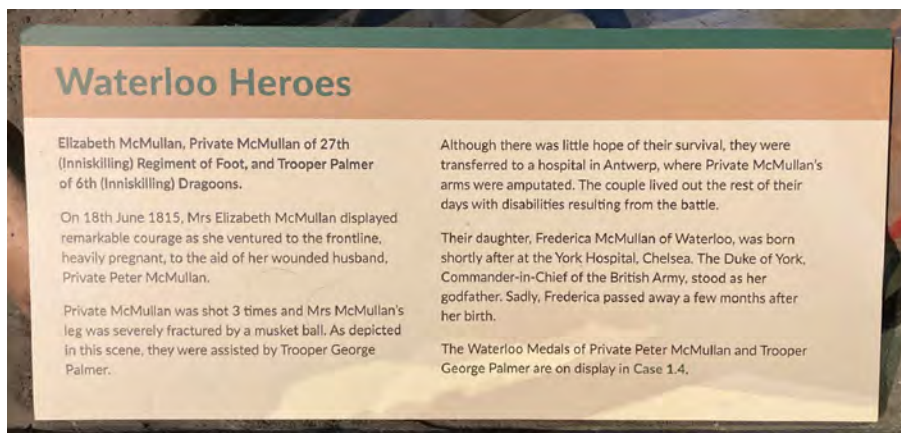
The women of the battalion

This excerpt from the 1895 Standing Orders of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, reveals the language with which the regiment referred to women i.e. as 'The women of the battalion'. They were not the women attached to, supporting or following the battalion, they were 'of' the battalion.



The brave

The Inniskilling Museum has a display dedicated to Elizabeth McMullan, who was present at the Battle of Waterloo as an Army-sanctioned camp follower, and came forward to rescue her husband who had been wounded on the battlefield, despite being heavily pregnant. She was subsequently injured by a spent musket ball fracturing her leg, however, the two of them were eventually evacuated. Having since spoken to the Waterloo historian Peter Molloy, I understand that there is an element of myth to this story but with sufficient contemporaneous documents to support the idea that an incident of this nature took place.





The follower

The 1827 Standing Orders of the Prince of Wales Own Irish Fusiliers, includes a section entitled, 'Soldiers marrying – Married Soldiers and Families' which states:

'*44. The lieutenant colonel is convinced that it will always be the wish of the officers as well as his own, to promote the comfort and happiness of the soldiers' wives and children, and in return, he expects good conduct, and a constant inclination on the part of the women, to employ their times in washing or cooking for the men.

*45. Any woman, (serjeant's wives excepted), who refuses to do so without a satisfactory reason, is not to expect assistance in case of illness or confinement.

*46. Officers commanding companies, will pay particular attention to the mode of living of the married men, in or out of barracks. If it is found that money intended for good and wholesome food, is spent in drink, or in idle purposes, or that the soldier's wife is wanting industry or respectability, the soldier will be made to join a mass mess?, and his wife will be deprived of the advantages of the well-conducted women of the regiment.'

The saviour



Elise Sandes was a founder of a welfare movement for soldiers which, amongst other things, established the Sandes Homes for Soldiers in Ireland. Her achievements are captured in the book, 'Elise Sandes and Theodora Schofield; 21 Years of Unrecorded Service for the British Army 1913-1934' and also in her own biography, 'Enlisted'. The former recounts a number of tributes to Elise that illustrate how a woman and her input are directly acknowledged as beneficial and important to the army, particularly more than the input of some men.

'An old soldier of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, still suffering from wounds received at Mons, sent this on her death, "It was well for us Miss Sandes was born. The kings of this world have wounded us sore, but she through God, was for our healing. She "Enlisted" indeed, she was one of us; we knew she came from God. He laid help upon a gentlewoman, and because of her, we became different, totally different" "For by faith she endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

'One of her outstanding pleasures at this time was the visit of General Sir Ian Hamilton, who came to Ballykinler to inspect the Gordon Highlanders, of which he is Colonel-in-Chief. We recall his moving tribute to the beloved Chief when she passed away in August 1934: "Miss Sandes has exercised a more powerful and beneficent influence

upon the Army during her sixty-six years of active service than many richly decorated generals. During that period, to quote the motto of one of our most famous Scottish regiments, as an influence for good she has been “Second to none”.

The operator

This is the category most people, public and curators, assumed we were looking for, and is thought to relate to more recent decades when women served in uniform alongside their male counterparts. Even when considering servicewomen though, especially outside of the Northern Irish context where there remains first-hand experience of women's role during Op BANNER, there are misconceptions about where and in what roles, women served (see [Petticoat patrols](#)).

This image is representative of women as ‘operators’, this taken on exercise with the Royal Irish Regiment in the 1990s.

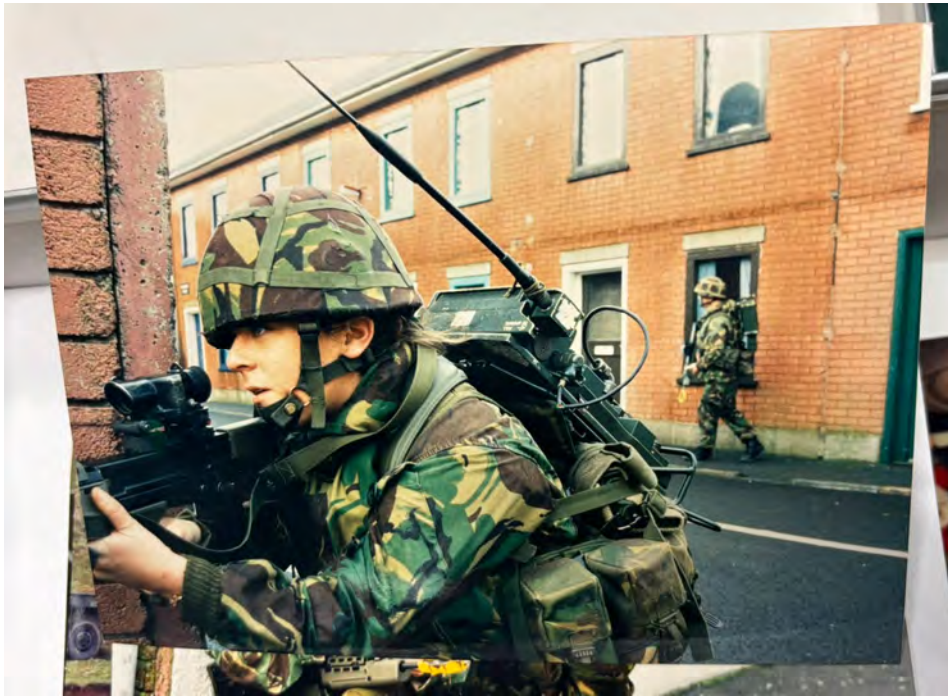


Image credit: Winsome Linton

The funny

Humour is something that recurred time and again in my previous research exploring the regimental scrapbooks of the Ulster Defence Regiment which reflect a real family feel. This example is a photograph of a female officer from the Royal Irish Rangers in the 1980s conducting the band, in uniform, but sporting a red nose!



The comforter

The 1902 Royal Commission on the Boer War examined the role of nurses and included the following reflections:

‘11133. So that while you recommend that there should be a body of good, well-trained male nurses, you think it would be of essential benefit that there should be also female nurses? – I believe so, and I do not think there is anything to prevent women going much nearer the front that has hitherto been assumed to be possible; if the proper class of women are enlisted into the Army Nursing Service, scandals such as would otherwise exist need not exist, and their utility is indisputable. They have as much courage in positions of danger as men, and the good that they do, not merely in the ways I have said, but in regard to the impression that they produce, the hopefulness they convey to the sick men who are in danger of death, is beyond words almost to express.’

‘4036. It fell more to your Department, I suppose, to send out the nurses? – Yes, I sent out a large number of nurses. We increased the number of nurses very much; when we found out we had so few skilled male nurses, we sent out female nurses in a larger proportion. We got out nurses from the Army Nursing Service Reserve. I do not know in fact what we should have done without it. That was an organisation most useful to us, and it supplied us with really capital nurses.’

The figurehead

A series of women from the Royal Family have been appointed as the Colonel-in-Chief of Irish regiments including the Duchess of Gloucester who was Colonel-in-Chief to the Royal Irish Rangers from 1989-1992.



The exotic ‘other’

The interaction between soldiers and local women in the communities in which they were deployed was visible in more informal records. For example, the Royal Ulster Rifles museum hold in their collection this photograph of men dancing with local women in Borneo in 1962.



Likewise, a diary extract from Lt Col Wallace of 5 Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, written during the Boer War (1899-1902), recounts an interaction he had with the native women they were staying with.

‘Their women are like slaves to them. They do all the work + wait on the men + then have their “[unclear]” afterwards. I tried to get bangles from them + said I would pay, but they said they had none. I know this was a lie. One of the scouts got hold of a girl + took one from her. I suppose her man had given it to her as she began to cry, so I gave it back to her + said I wouldn’t take one [...].’

independence. Mac had himself, fought the
 War of 1857, but he saw the helplessness of
 the Monks & advised them to get their friends
 chuck it. That foreign intervention was back
 of the Boer had been in the same position as the
 British it would have been of Ambok for them
 in place of Refugee Camps. Sam Cota his cousin
 was borned to with great attention. I rode King
 William to the Native location after tea. I tried
 out some bangles but it was no good. We then went
 off to see Springbok the Native head & some was
 a man camp to the east. He & his men were ad-
 dressed in the Native location with the others as his men
 are banians. Their women are like slaves to them
 they do all the work & wait on the men & then have
 their "scops" afterwards. I tried to get bangles
 for them & said I would pay, but they said they
 had none. I knew this was a lie. One of the scouts
 got hold of a girl & took one from her. I suppose the
 man had given it to her as she began to cry, so I
 gave it back to her & said I would not take one

Finally, amidst a scrapbook of 2nd Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles of their time in Poona, India in 1897, included many photographs of local women which given their posed nature were more likely purchased as postcards than photographed by the soldiers, but nonetheless reflect an interest in the local women.



The object

Through past research in the archives of the Ulster Defence Regiment, I had encountered a number of photographs of servicewomen winning beauty pageants for the different sub-units of the UDR. This objectification is bolstered by finding other examples of women in the imagery of pin ups.



Workshop findings

A series of three workshops hosted at the Belfast site of UNTOLD, brought together a cross-section of women. The first of these workshops hosted a 2nd World War Irish nursing history

group and the following two workshops were for a public audience and included former servicewomen as well as family members.

The workshops were structured around the following programme:

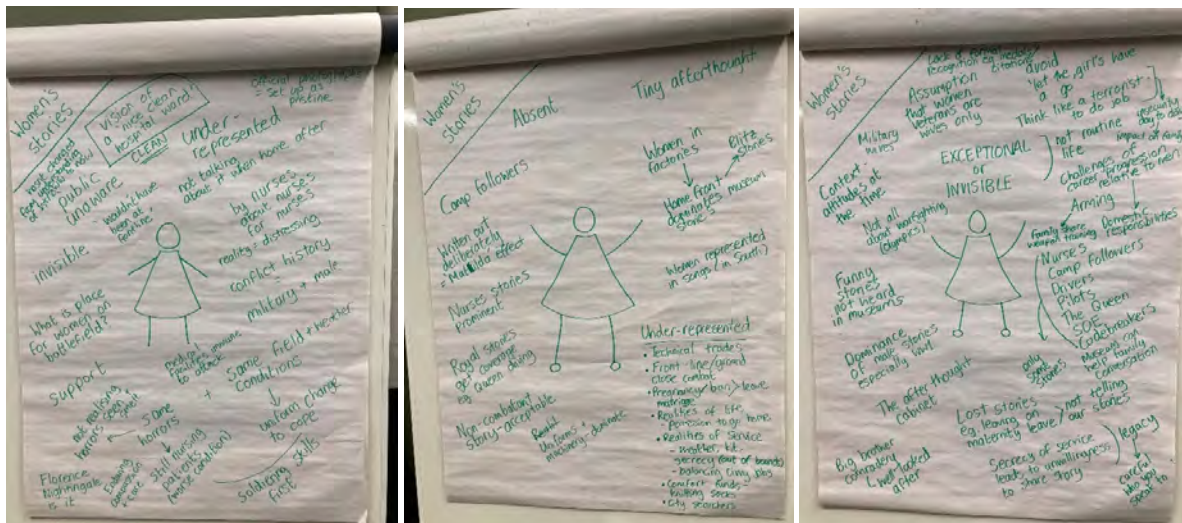
- Interactive brainstorm focusing on how participants feel that women are currently represented in military museums.
- A visualisation of the story that participants want to tell a child and an older tourist (with no military experience)
- A talk through the new museum floor plans with the opportunity to give feedback and contribute ideas for future programming and temporary exhibitions.

Women's representation in military museums

Across all three workshops a number of key themes emerged when we talked about how women felt they were currently represented in military museums:

- Invisible/absent. Discussion noted how women's stories are either absent from military museums or made exceptional e.g. Florence Nightingale. Women voiced how they felt they were an afterthought and had been deliberately written out.
- Acceptable stories. This referred to stories that fitted expectations, for example as nurses and wives or in the stories of the Home Front. And even when talking about women in these contexts, for example, nursing, field hospitals are represented as a vision of a 'nice clean hospital ward' which was far from the reality of the horrors experienced.
- Assumptions. Women spoke about the assumption that stories are all about warfighting and don't include things like humanitarian actions or Olympic security.
- Under-researched. A series of aspects of women's military service were noted as under-represented: technical trades; front-line/ground close combat; pregnancy and marriage bans; realities of life e.g. asking permission to go home; realities of service e.g. weather, kit, secrecy, balancing civilian jobs; comfort funds including the knitting of socks for the front; city searchers. Other gaps noted included funny stories, family style comradery, the challenges of career progression when compared to men, how the secrecy of their service affects telling their stories.

These three images capture the conversation as it was recorded live:



The story they want to tell

Conceptualising the story they wanted to tell children and visitors, workshop participants spoke about conveying the following messages:

- War is not just about fighting and shooting.
- Women are as capable as men.
- You can still be a mum and a servicewoman.
- There is a long history to women's involvement in the military even before they were permitted to wear uniform.

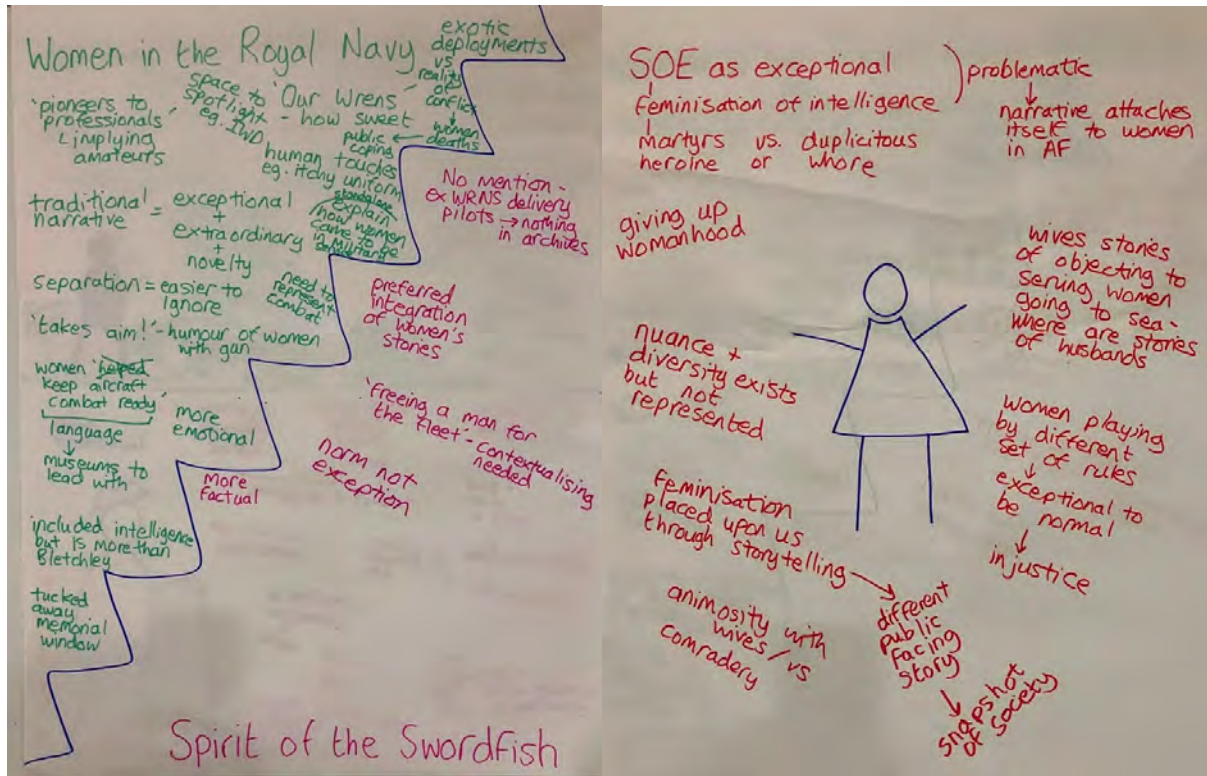
They also offered some practical recommendations which included women's stories being integrated throughout the museum, rather than being consigned to a single location. They also wanted to see women's stories from across the ranks, lengths of service, date of service, ages and roles.

Turning to the example of an elderly male visitor without military experience, workshop participants wanted to convey the messiness and complexity to women's stories including:

- Stories of resilience and bravery in the face of external and internal threats.
- The military need for servicewomen on operations.
- The long timeline of women's military involvement e.g. making uniforms in factories
- Juxtaposition between women as sex symbols e.g. as pin ups and models visiting for morale at the same time as women serving.
- Women as part of the regimental family e.g. moving with the regiment.
- The challenges of women's service e.g. ill-fitting kit and unacceptable behaviours
- Women's military service in Northern Ireland as pioneering 'front line' service 30 years before the lifting of the ban on women in ground close combat in the rest of the British Army.
- Women are part of the story and not an add on.

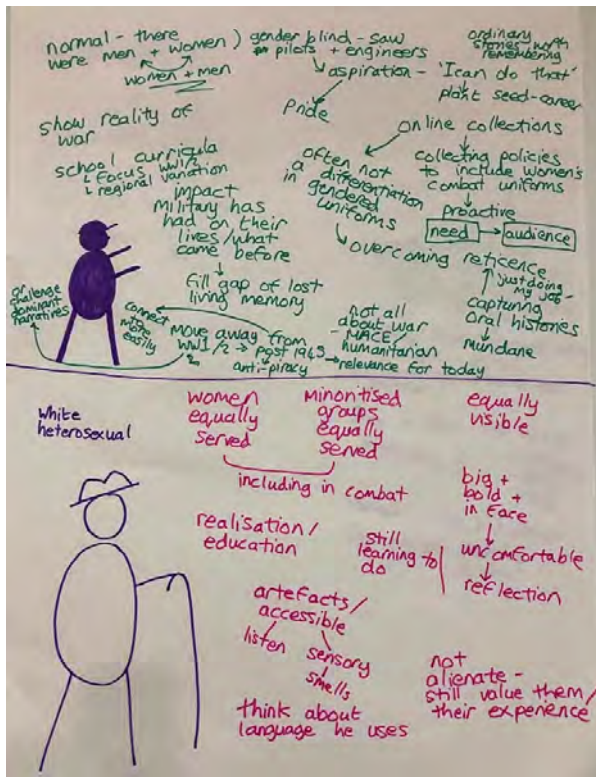
Below are the visual representations of the conversations as recorded in the workshops:

Swordfish. The former is a dedicated exhibition whereas the latter has women's stories integrated. Notably, participants were drawn to the 'Women and the Royal Navy' exhibition despite stating that they preferred an integrated approach, but this could be attributed to the density of women's stories available to them in this exhibition. They did comment that the standalone exhibition is easy to ignore and not visit. Participants reflected on the language used that reinforced popular stereotypes such as the sense that women were amateurs, as helpers, sweet, and a novelty.



This reflection on the exhibitions set up a conversation about how women are represented in military history and museums which is represented in the second image (in blue and red). The group talked about how storytelling about military women reflects societal views resulting in a feminisation of these stories and how nuance and diversity exists but is not represented. The example of the exceptionalisation of women as martyrs/heroines or duplicitous whores which even if drawn from history (such as the SOE) attach themselves to servicewomen today.

I then presented a snapshot of the findings from our research in the Northern Irish archives to broaden participant's thinking as to where women's stories exist across military history i.e. beyond women in uniform. We moved on to the question of what we wanted the audience to leave thinking, taking as our examples a child and an elderly, white, straight man. The group wanted to convey to a child the inspiring sense that they can do it but also present them with a sense of the realities of war. For the elderly visitor they wanted to foster reflection on why women's involvement has not been equally visible whilst not alienating them.



We also revisited the question of programming and temporary exhibitions with the workshop participants suggesting the following:

- Inclusion of role models that are not exceptionalised including men (especially as allies and characters) and women as well as other minoritised groups
- Representation of untold stories including the experiences of prisoners of war e.g. domesticated tasks such as sewing a washing, as well as the making of love tokens or the complex relationship between servicewomen and military partners (acknowledging military husbands, same sex relationships and servicewomen who are also military partners).
- An everyday/day in the life of different individuals based on when they served, their service, rank and role.
- Downtime pursuits including making uckers boards, rope crafts, Sod's operas
- Humour and black humour

What was most notable from this final workshop was the similarities in the sentiment of the participants even when the focus moved away from Northern Ireland. The sense of participants about how women are represented in military history and museums was underpinned by similar themes. This was further reflected in what women wanted to convey to visitors and see in the programming and temporary exhibitions.