

Activity Book for Schools 5

Army Women Army Children

This drum belonged to an Irish boy who served as a drummer in the British Army a long time ago. Today, boys are not allowed to join the Irish army, but women can. As you explore the *Soldiers and Chiefs* exhibition you will discover children who were soldiers, women who were soldiers, and women and children who were connected to the army, but were civilians (not military people).



My Name:

Stand in the introduction area for the *Soldiers and Chiefs* exhibition and find two of the figures on the large glass panels:

- a drummer boy from 1811
- a woman soldier from 2001

Both of them are soldiers in the army. But a woman could not have been a soldier in the drummer boy's army. And a boy could not be a soldier in the woman's army.



- Find out about the changing roles of children and women.
- Notice that over the past 300 years some things stayed the same while other things changed.



Enter the next room to begin your investigation.

Children & Women in 'The British Garrison in Ireland'

1 Drummer Boys - Stop at the large display in the middle of the room.

In the 1700s and 1800s (a few hundred years ago) many young soldiers started their jobs in the army as drummer boys. They could join military organisations when they reached the age of eight.

How many scenes with drummer boys can you find on the Stokes Tapestry?



Be a History Detective

Clue

- Look for a parade, a battle and a table.

At this Time

- Boys could become soldiers in the 1700s and 1800s.

2 Military School Days - Stop in front of the boy who stands in the corner.

This boy went to the military school. Describe his uniform.



How old do you think this student was?

Was he reading the book during his free time or in school?



Be a History Detective

Clues

- Details of what he wears
- The description of the book on the white label

3

Army Wives - Stop at the next display on the wall beside the standing boy.

Find the panel 'Garrison Families' and compare the living conditions for the wife of an officer to that of a family of an enlisted soldier. An **'officer'** is a soldier who is in charge of **'enlisted'** soldiers.

Add a tick to the chart as you find each answer.

| | Size of room | | Comfort of room | | Privacy of room | | Location | |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Large | Small | Comfortable | Not comfortable | Private | Not private | In the barracks | Not in barracks |
| Officer's wife | | | | | | | | |
| Enlisted soldier's family | | | | | | | | |



Be a History Detective

What To Do

- Compare the furniture in the two pictures.
- Count the children in the enlisted soldier's family.

At This Time

- Some women lived in the Barracks because they were married to enlisted soldiers.

You Are in The Royal Barracks

The rooms on this floor of the museum once were living quarters for enlisted soldiers, including some with families. More than one family lived in a room this size, with the space between them divided by a curtain.

4

Military Manoeuvres - Cross the room and stop at the display beside the doorway you first came in.

Look for a painting of children on a panel called 'Mixing with the Locals'. The artist, Richard Moynan, shows an encounter between a group of boys and a soldier with his girlfriend.



Do you think the boys respect the soldier? Do you think they would like to be soldiers themselves?

Why do you think the three girls do not take part?



You can see this painting in the National Gallery of Ireland.



Draw one of the four different musical instruments that the boys carry.



Be a History Detective

Clue

- The expressions on the boys' faces and how they stand

At This Time

- Girls and women could not join the army.



Enter the next room.

Children & Women in 'Warfare in Ireland'

5 Women in Battle - Stop at the panel 'Warfare in Ireland' at the beginning of the room.

Look closely at the battle scene. **What would you do if enemy soldiers attacked your town?**

- Hide in your house
- Help the soldiers on your side of the battle to fight the enemy
- Leave town to get away from the fighting

The women in this painting decided to help the soldiers defend the town of Limerick in 1690.

What weapons did the women use to fight the enemy?



What else were they doing on the battlefield?



Be a History Detective

At This Time

- Women were not allowed to be soldiers.
- Women sometimes became involved in wars.

6 The Croppy Boy's Story - Cross the room and stop in front of the boy who stands near the big cannon.

Read the label at his feet: 'Croppy Prisoner, 1798'.

Before he joined the army, would he have gone to school or worked?



Does he look as if he was rich or poor?

If the enemy does not execute him, where will he be sent?

Could he join the army today?



Be a History Detective

Clues and Facts

- His face and posture
- His clothes
- His likely future (read the label)
- Today you can join the army at 17 (with your parents' consent) and at 18 years old (without their consent).



Leave this room, walk past the row of helmets and keep walking through the next two rooms.

Children & Women in 'Irish in the British Service'

7 The Drummer Boy's Job - Stop at the large painting showing some soldiers walking toward you.

The drummer in the big painting 'Listed for the Connaughts' was a young soldier in the Connaught Rangers regiment of the British Army.

A **regiment** is a group of soldiers in a permanent unit with its own history and traditions (like a school).

If you were a boy in 1878 would you have been qualified to join the army?

Use a tick to answer these questions to discover if you could have joined:

- Do you have flexible wrists?
- Can you walk a long way without resting while carrying a drum?
- Do you follow orders without question?

Which one of these duties do you think was **not** part of the drummer boy's job?

- Gave the rhythm when his regiment marched
- Gave signals in battle
- Played in the regimental band
- Played at special occasions on parade or in the mess

8 Women's Roles - Turn right and into the big space. Stop at a display on the right wall that shows a saddle.

At the display called 'Army Families Overseas' you can find out how women from families of soldiers in the British Army were expected to spend their time.

Who would have used the washboard to do army laundry?

- an officer's wife
- an enlisted soldier's wife

Was the woman who wore the jacket in the family of an officer or of an enlisted soldier?



When would she have worn this jacket?



Be a History Detective

Clue

- Read Margaret Kirwin's description of her typical day (on the washboard label).

At This Time

- Women were near the battlefield only because they were married to a soldier.
- Wives of enlisted soldiers were expected to do laundry and nurse the ill and wounded.

9

A Drummer in the Boer War - Follow the arrow on the floor to the row of displays on the left and stop at the drum.

This display is near the end of the room.



Draw the drum, which was carried by a drummer boy named Lutrell (his first name is not known).



Look closely at the drummer boy in the photograph on the label. What was he doing on his drum?



Leave this room, cross the bridge, walk past the aeroplane, and enter the next room.

Children & Women in 'The First World War'

10

Three Young People at War - Stop at the displays on your right with shadow figures on the wall.

These shadow figures and displays tell the stories of Molly, Seán and John. Each of them took part in conflicts during this time. Whose story would you like to explore?

- Molly O'Reilly – 'A Moment to Remember'
- Sean Healy – 'A Child at War'
- John McLoughlin – 'A Short Life and a Slow Death'

Select one person and answer these questions:

- a) Where did they serve? British Army an Irish nationalist organisation



b) What was the job assigned to them?

c) How was the object in the case related to their story?

d) How old were they?



Be a History Detective

Where to Look

- The photographs
- The objects associated with each person
- The descriptions on the panels

11 From Making Dresses to Making Shells - After the large gun on wheels, turn left and walk diagonally to the display opposite the green flag.

Look for information about Florence Lea in the small panel 'From Making Dresses to Making Shells'.

Compare the photographs of Florence and her co-workers to the photograph of the women at work in the National Shell Factory, Dublin on the panel 'The Crisis at Home'.

How many people can you see working in this room of the factory?

men

women

How much money did Florence earn as a dressmaker's apprentice?

How much money did she earn as a worker making artillery shell casings?



Be a History Detective

Clues

- The practical working clothes worn by these women
- The number of men, compared to women, shown in the shell factory
- The description of Florence Lea's jobs and salaries on the label

At This Time

- More women worked outside the home in jobs usually done by men.
- Young and strong women got jobs during wartime because the men were away, and the government desperately needed to make weapons.



Leave this room and go down the stairs.

Women in 'The Emergency: The Second World War'

12 Irish Women at War - Turn right at the bottom of the stairs and stop at the display with the nurse's veil.



Find and draw the medal awarded specifically to nurses.



Compare the symbols on the veil and the hat.

Which one did the nurse in the Army's auxiliary (volunteer) force wear? Veil Hat



Be a History Detective

At This Time

- Women could enlist in the army's auxiliary services, but not as soldiers in the Irish Defence Forces.
- Some women joined the Red Cross to serve as nurses during the war.

13 New Roles for Women in Wartime - Walk toward the window, around the curved wall, and stop at the first panel.

What are the three jobs for women shown on the panel 'Irish Men and Women at War'?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____



Find the British Army's recruitment poster for women drivers in the 'Mechanised Transport Training Corps'.

How does the poster make the job look exciting?

Do you think that Norah Pellew's volunteer job as an army driver was dangerous?

Did she have any earlier military or driving experience?



Be a History Detective

Clues

- Notice how the women wear uniforms suited to their jobs.
- Look at the equipment in the pictures.
- Compare the photograph and documents about Norah Pellew to the recruitment poster.

At This Time

- Women could enlist for a variety of jobs associated with the army.
- After the war women returned to their traditional roles at home and at work.

Women in 'Defending the Peace'

14 Women Soldiers - Walk toward the exit and stop at the display with a woman's uniform.

Look for a woman soldier's uniform in the display about 'Peacekeeping in the Lebanon'.

Look at the badge above the right breast pocket of her uniform to find her name.



What is her name?

Which Battalion did she belong to?



Be a History Detective

At This Time

- During the 1980s the Irish Defence Forces (and armies in other countries) began to recruit women.
- Women received the same training as men and served as soldiers in peacekeeping missions abroad.

Looking Back Over Time

Do you remember the boy soldier from 1811 and the woman soldier from 2001 that you saw at the beginning of the *Soldiers and Chiefs* exhibition?

Now that you have looked at several stories from the past about Irish children and women, and their roles in the British and Irish armies, did you notice an interesting change?

- More than 200 years ago (in the 1800s) boys could join the British Army as soldiers, but women could not.
- About 100 years ago (in the 1900s) young boys could no longer enlist as soldiers, but neither could women.
- Over the last 30 years, and today, women can join the army as soldiers, but boys cannot.

Check your answers with the History Detective's Report...



- 1 Drummer Boys**
Drummer boys (3) on Stokes Tapestry: a single figure on parade (on the left side, near the centre), in battle, and drinking
- 2 Military School Days**
The uniform: blue hat with red trim; jacket buttons with military school crest
Probably 10 or 11 years old
On his free time, because he is reading an adventure story
- 3 Army Wives**
Officer's wife has: large room with a variety of comfortable furniture; complete privacy; did not live in barracks
Enlisted soldier's family has: cramped quarters for seven people and only basic furnishings; no privacy; lived in the barracks
- 4 Military Manoeuvres**
The 'leader' of the boys seems unhappy or annoyed, either with the soldier or with the other boys.
The other boys seem serious about playing at being soldiers because they made the kinds of instruments used by soldiers in an army band.
Maybe the boys would not let the girls join the band! The women and girls are curious because they have stopped to look.
Four musical instruments: flute, cymbals, trumpet, drum
- 5 Women in Battle**
Rocks
Helping the wounded
- 6 The Croppy Boy's Story**
He probably worked on a farm.
Probably poor; his clothes look ordinary
Australia
No, he is only a teenager of 15 or 16 years old
- 7 The Drummer Boy's Job**
He did not normally play in the regimental band.
- 8 Women's Roles**
The wife of an enlisted soldier probably used the washboard.
She was probably the daughter or wife of an officer.
She may have worn this military style of jacket on military occasions.
- 9 A Drummer in the Boer War**
He used the surface of the drum to write a letter.
- 10 Three Young People at War**
Molly O'Reilly
a) A member of the Irish Citizen Army (ICA)
b) James Connolly (the head of the ICA) asked her to raise the flag over Liberty Hall, probably as a reward for her loyalty.
c) This is what remains of the flag.
d) A young girl
- Sean Healy**
a) A member of *Fianna na hÉireann*, a republican youth movement
b) He was a runner, carrying messages between Volunteer units
c) The hat was part of the *Fianna* uniform
d) 15
- John McLoughlin**
a) British Army
b) He was a Private in the Royal Irish Rifles.
c) He wore this scarf in the trenches of the First World War battlefield.
d) 16 – he was too young to enlist and joined without his parents' permission
- 11 From Making Dresses to Making Shells**
Two men and eight women
Two shillings a week (plus room and board)
50 shillings a week
- 12 Irish Women at War**
A civilian nurse who worked for the Red Cross Auxiliary wore the white veil with a red cross.
The olive hat is an army hat.
- 13 New Roles for Women in Wartime**
Chopping trees
Nursing
Driving a truck
Recruitment poster: open car, smiling driver
Norah's job: probably dangerous
Yes, Norah's experience:
In 1918, at age 22, she trained as an ambulance driver with the St. John and Red Cross Joint Committee.
Until 1920 she served in the Women's Legion in the British Army and drove an ambulance in France and Belgium.
- 14 Women Soldiers**
Magennis
The 53rd Infantry Battalion

ANSWERS

Want to know more?

For more information on exhibitions and education programmes, contact the Education and Outreach Department of the National Museum of Ireland.

Tel: 01 648 6453 Fax: 01 679 1025
email: bookings@museum.ie

© Education and Outreach Department,
National Museum of Ireland, Dublin. 2009

Cover image: Share drum, Royal Muster Fusiliers, 1900, National Museum of Ireland

