

WOMEN, WAR AND THE WEST END

Celebrating Women's History



INTRODUCTION

This booklet aims to introduce and celebrate some of the female business owners, medics and designers of Glasgow's West End who kept the country running throughout World War One. It will present short biographies of the women while also providing some information about fashion, style and beauty during the WW1 era.

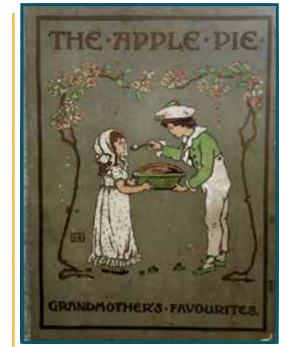
The booklet forms part of the Women, War & The West End project and associated exhibition at Hillhead Library all which have been generously funded by the Heritage Lottery in 2018. The project is run in collaboration with Four Acres Charitable Trust (FACT) and Friends of Glasgow West. Information about FACT and their work with restoring WW1 memorials is included in the back of this booklet.

The women of Glasgow's West End, like women throughout the country were hard-willed, brazen and caring to ensure that their community continued to not only survive but flourish throughout and after the WW1 period.

This is their story.

EVELYN BEALE (1870-1944)

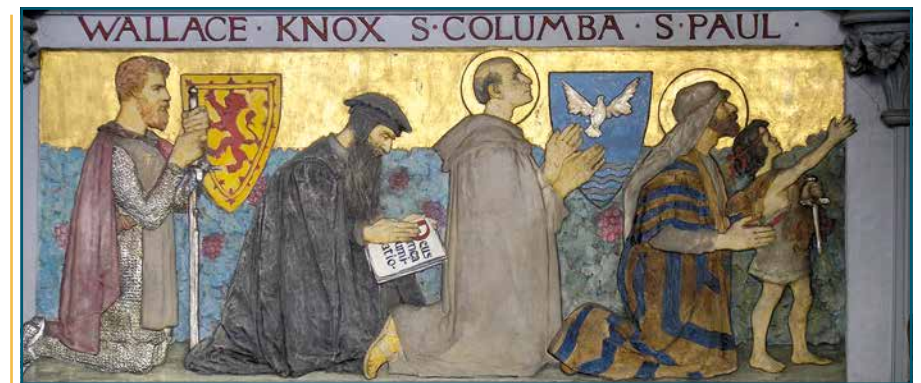
Artist and Designer, Mary Evelyn Beale studied at the Glasgow School of Art from 1917 to 1920, where she undertook day classes in Drawing & Painting and Modelling. Her address listed in the 1917-18 GSA student Register is stated as 23 Wilson Street, Hillhead and her occupation is noted as 'art student'. It is not until two years later that her address is recorded in the register as 'Studio:79 West Regent Street' indicating her move into the professional designing world.



She was an active member of the Lady Artist Society based in 5 Blythwood Square and exhibited widely across Scotland including McLellan Galleries, the Royal Scottish Academy and Scottish Society of Women Artists in New Gallery, Edinburgh. She also illustrated several well-known children's books of the time including The Apple Pie and The Fairchild Family.

She designed and executed the plaster WW1 memorial triptych frieze for Lansdowne Church, now Websters Theatre, in Great Western Road.

PLACE TO VISIT: Websters Theatre, 416 Great Western Rd, Glasgow G4 9HZ. By appointment only.



Researcher Karen Mailley-Watt, The University of Glasgow & The Glasgow School of Art

MAUDE WEBSTER (1883-1959)



Maude Webster was born in Glasgow's Southside in 1883. Little is known about her life before her marriage to Scottish stained glass artist Alfred Alexander Webster (1883-1915) in 1901.

The golden era of stained glass was about to come crashing down around the Webster family when Alf voluntarily enlisted in 1915 leaving Maude in Scotland with three young children. Their youngest son Alfred Edward Comyn was barely a month old when Alf went off to war. By the 17th of

March Alf received his commission as a probationary 2nd Lieutenant in the 3rd (Reserve) Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders, based at the Aberdeen City garrison. It's hard to track Alf's exact movements during the war but what we do know is that his war, like so many other young men of this era, it was short. On the 24th of August Alfred died of wounds sustained while on patrol eight days before.

Maude's sudden loss of her husband left her at home with a very busy and successful business to run all while bringing up three young boys. Like any war widow, Maude must've felt that the of running a business during such trying times to be a giant weight on her shoulders, but against all odds she not only managed to keep the stained glass business running but allowed it to flourish for the next generation of master stained glass artists. Maude not only managed to run the stained glass business successfully but she also brought up the three boys to become fruitful in their chosen fields.

PLACE TO VISIT: Websters Theatre, 416 Great Western Rd, Glasgow G4 9HZ. By appointment only to view the stained glass.

Researcher Karen Mailley-Watt, The University of Glasgow & The Glasgow School of Art

DR LOUISE MCILROY (1874-1968)



Dr Louise McIlroy served as a Senior Surgeon at two Field Hospitals with the Scottish Women's Hospitals. She trained at the University of Glasgow and lived in Lynedoch Crescent near the Woodlands area of the West End. She first went to Troyes in France to establish a Tent Hospital. The conditions seemed very challenging, Dr McIlroy complained in a letter that severely needed equipment was taking weeks to arrive. She even complained that the conditions were so windy, it was hard to write a letter ! In 1917, Dr McIlroy established another Hospital in Salonika in Greece.



Her achievements include being awarded the Croix de Guerre and the Medaille d'honneur des Epidemies for her work for the French Armed Forces. McIlroy was also the first woman medical professor in the United Kingdom. She died at the age of 93 on the 8th February 1968 in Glasgow Hospital.

PLACE TO VISIT: Memorial Chapel, The University of Glasgow.

'The belief that nursing was women's work but that medicine and surgery were not, was dying before the war, but it existed, and it was the war that gave it the final blow.'

Women and War (1918) by Helen Fraser

Researched and written by Matilda Heydon

DOROTHY DODDRELL (1894-?)



Designer, Dorothy Doddrell was born in Glasgow in 1894. She studied at the Glasgow School of Art (GSA) from 1912- 1924 undertaking a variety of classes including day classes in Design & Drawing and Painting. She was a very competent artist and commercial designer, working in different mediums from sketches to silk painting, and of course calligraphy.

Dorothy was absent from GSA from 1918-22 which may have been due to obtaining

commercial work with the prestigious Glasgow department store, Pettigrew and Stephens. Doddrell designed several catalogues covers for the company including Autumn Fashions 1919-20.

Dorothy produced several illuminated Rolls of Honour for various organisations and churches in, and around Glasgow, including Busby, Stevenson and GSA. GSA commissioned Dorothy Doddrell in 1925 to produce a beautifully illuminated memorial which depicts the 404 known names of GSA students and staff who fought in the war.



PLACE TO VISIT:
The Glasgow School of Art, The Reid Building, 164 Renfrew St, Glasgow G3 6RQ. Access may be restricted.

Researcher Karen Mailley-Watt, The University of Glasgow & The Glasgow School of Art

AGNES TOWARD (1886-1975)

Agnes Toward was born in 153 Renfrew Street, Garnethill, and grew up as an only child with her widowed mother. She studied at Garnethill Public School and despite having a dress maker mother with a successful drapery business on 356 St. Vincent Street decided to follow her own steps and became a short hand typist. This was a new line of work for women who were increasingly applying for office clerk jobs. The fact that ladies were taught to play the piano helped to consider that women could be skilled enough to take on typewriting.



On 1911 she and her widowed mother rented flat 1/1 on 145 Buccleuch Street, where Agnes continued to live until 1965. When news of the war broke at the end of July 1914 Agnes was 28 years old and had just secured her second job with a ship building company in the offices of Prentice, Service and Henderson on 175 West George Street.

Her correspondence from friends throughout the following years shows exactly what the war meant for a West End middle class working woman. Owing to Miss Toward's habit of keeping all sorts of things most people would throw away, it has been possible to piece together a very full picture of her life. She held on to household bills, rent receipts, recipes, wartime leaflets and newspaper cuttings as well as more personal papers and letters.

Agnes never married, which allowed her to dedicate herself instead to her work, retiring at the age of 73. Her story presents an interesting insight into the life of a woman who did not fit in the expected role of stay-at-home women. You can visit Agnes Toward's collection and the wonderful archive of tenement life in Glasgow, at Tenement House now in the care of the National Trust for Scotland.

PLACE TO VISIT: The Tenement House, 145 Buccleuch St, Glasgow G3 6QN.

Researched and written by Ana Sanchez-De la Vega

GEORGIE FYFE (1868-1963)

Georgie Fyfe was born on the 10th of April in Kelvinside, Glasgow. She was raised on Montgomerie Drive, which is now 1 Clevedon Drive near the botanic gardens of the city's West End.

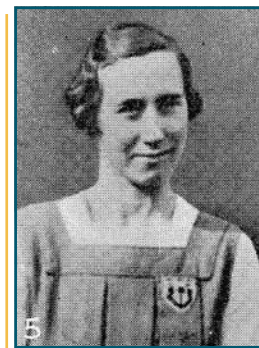
At the age of 46 Georgie was the Girl Guide Commissioner for the West of Scotland, an organisation she would be tied to both before and after the war, and a cause which continues to champion her now. When fighting broke out, Georgie was quick to join the Munro Ambulance Corps for wounded soldiers which was based in Belgium. Concerned about the civilians who she saw being affected by war throughout Belgium, Georgie turned her own car into what was coined the "Scottish Ambulance" and focused its service on the rescue of wounded civilians.

As well as her brave role in the Ambulance Corps, Georgie also played a large role in the running of a maternity hospital and hospice and the evacuation of bombarded villagers in war zones. Containing 400 beds, it is documented that several thousand individuals passed through the hospice in a matter of months, this is just one fact that confirms the Belgian Relief Effort and countless lives were touched by the important roles and strong character of Georgie. The maternity hospital had 20 beds for mothers and saw nearly a 100 little Belgians born. She evacuated more than 1,300 children to safety to France and Switzerland.

At the war's end, Georgie Fyfe was awarded the Croix de Guerre and the Ordre de Leopold for her courage and actions in time of great crisis. She returned to Glasgow and became County Commissioner and later County President of her beloved Glasgow Girl Guides. She died in 1963. Today a collection of 50 photographs cements her memory as a war heroine in the collection of the Imperial War Museum.

Researched and written by Erin Walter

MARJORIE LANGMUIR (1905-1984)



Marjorie Langmuir has a unique claim to fame as she not only represented Scotland in three different sports, she did so in the same calendar year. Born in Glasgow in 1905, she was educated at Hillhead High School where she developed her love of sport and was West of Scotland Junior Tennis Champion. However, it was in hockey that she made her mark at national level and was first capped in 1923 as an 18-year-old student. By the time she returned to Hillhead in 1927 as a PE teacher, she was a fixture in the Scotland hockey team, and went on to play

36 consecutive internationals. She also made quite a name for herself on the tennis courts and won the Scottish ladies doubles championship in 1926, while at badminton she first represented Scotland in 1930, going on to win eleven caps and twice won the Scottish mixed doubles championship. All this was done as an amateur, paying her own travel expenses while juggling the demands of a full time job.

Her great 'triple' international feat came in 1932. In March she caught the night train on Thursday from Glasgow to London, played mixed doubles and ladies' doubles badminton on Friday against England, then travelled overnight to Belfast where, on Saturday afternoon, she captained Scotland to a 3-2 victory at hockey over Ireland, scoring twice to help turn round a two goal half-time deficit. That summer she represented Scotland at tennis against England.

Her hockey career was crowned in glory in 1933, when she captained the only Scotland women's team ever to win in England. In fact, the 2-1 victory in front of 5,000 spectators at Merton Abbey was the only time Scotland defeated England, home or away, between 1909 and 1972. It was a sharp contrast to Marjorie's first game against England ten years earlier which ended in a 13-0 defeat. That autumn she led Scotland to a 5-4 victory over USA at Old Anniesland, her final match before retiring.

Researched and written by Dr Skillen, Glasgow Caledonian University

WORLD WAR ONE FASHION

How was women's fashion changed by World War One?

As the war changed women's lives, it also changed the way they dressed. For middle and upper class women who could afford to buy new clothes on a seasonal basis, the war affected their wardrobes in a number of different ways.

At the start of the war, there was a notable trend for all things military, and it was reported in one women's magazine that: *'The military note is getting more and more emphatic. Fashion is absorbing the soldier line here, there and everywhere, so long as it does not come from the regions of the Rhine.'* The kilted soldiers of the Scottish Highland Regiments were particularly idolised, and both kilts and tam o'shanter became highly fashionable items for women. A dressmaker called Miss Bower, who was based at 310 Sauchiehall Street, advertised her 'Highland Tartan Skirt - Made Like a Soldier's Kilt' in the smartest women's magazines. The military influence lessened as the war continued, and the often decorative military styles that were fashionable in 1914 and 1915 were gradually replaced by simpler garments.

By 1918, the idea of wartime austerity was perhaps the biggest influence on the way fashionable women dressed. There was no rationing or notable shortage of fabric for dressmaking, but prices went up, and propaganda posters and films informed women that it was patriotic to save rather than spend. The British Government attempted to tax 'luxury' items of women's clothing and introduce a standardised dress for women, but both these attempts were eventually unsuccessful. Taking a different attitude, fashionable magazines told women that it was more patriotic to continue spending money on new clothes because this supported the economy and was good for morale. As a consequence of these differing opinions some austerity 'trends' emerged that claimed to be at once fashionable and economical, and some women embraced a sort of 'shabby chic' aesthetic.



The remnant trend was particularly popular; consisting of garments made from odd lengths of leftover fabrics with an intentionally patchwork-like appearance.

One of the most significant legacies of the war was the acceptance of a more casual style of dressing. Rather than changing their outfit multiple times through the day, women found dressing solutions that suited their increasingly active and varied wartime lifestyles. This did not mean that women suddenly started wearing trousers or stopped wearing corsets, but that the construction and appearance of existing garments became simpler and more multi-purpose. Suits comprised of a skirt and jacket were very popular, as were blouses, jumpers and pinafore style dresses — all of which could be worn interchangeably rather than having to coordinate. Rather than fastening at the back as was the case with many pre-war garments, wartime fashions were made with front fastenings or no fastenings at all, so that women could more easily dress themselves. These changes were celebrated in women's magazines, where it was proclaimed: *'Was ever fashion more gloriously amiable and helpful?'*²

¹ The Gentlewoman, November 4, 1914, 526. ² The Gentlewoman, February 17, 1917, 156.

HAIR AND BEAUTY

The 1910s proved to be a transitional period for women with many social and economic factors changing culminating in 1918 where women over 30 were finally granted the right to vote. The beauty industry began to flourish as more and more women gained independence both financially and socially. Previously outdated Victorian morals were beginning to be questioned and as a result women's beauty ideals changed.

Prior to the outbreak of war it was fashionable for women to wear their hair long, often piled up loosely in pompadours, wrapped in braids and adorned with ornate combs and pins. Women were an active part of the workforce, mostly working within the textile industry. By 1918 more than 1 million women were working in munitions factories. Long hair was a safety concern in the workplace and as a result shorter hair became more fashionable. It was seen as both progressive and patriotic to wear hair short during the war, with some women opting to roll their long tresses up into chignons to give the illusion of shorter hair. Some even cut front sections of hair to mimic shorter styles. Moving away from the soft, natural volume of the Gibson Girl, women were using heavy styling products such as Brilliantine during World War 1 to create sleeker, more groomed looks. By the end of the decade women were embracing the bob - a scandalous hair cut worn by famous women such as dancer Irene Castle and actress Louise Brooks. Initially women would wear their bob closer to their shoulder line and as the Jazz Age crept in women began to crop hair into styles such as the shingle.

With more and more women working as part of the country's war effort there was an increase in patriotism surrounding a women's 'duty to beauty'. Skincare was popular during the decade with creams such as Ponds and Royal Vinolia promoting the benefits of their skin softening creams specifically for the girls in the factories. Women were expected to retain their feminine softness whilst working with erosive materials in, at times, unsafe conditions. Royal Vinolia went as far to say that their cream was 'the ideal toilet cream for munitions workers' (see image).

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.—FEBRUARY 17, 1918. 31



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Previously it was seen immoral to use makeup to enhance one's appearance with makeup mainly being worn by those on stage but times were changing. The advent of mass-produced beauty products such as cake mascaras, rouge and powder, cosmetics became more accessible and affordable. Lipsticks previously wrapped in wax paper making them difficult to wear on the go were now encased in a handy metal tube. Moving into the 1920s women began to wear makeup daily from brands such as Helena Rubenstein and Max Factor.

FACT WORLD WAR ONE MEMORIAL

As with so many historic churches in Glasgow, Dowanhill Church congregation had to meet the challenges of wartime and in the case of World War 1 these were well documented in the book "A History of Dowanhill Church" written by one of its ministers Rev William Dickie.

Four Acres Charitable Trust researchers undertook to document the history of the congregation in connection with an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund and this work was incorporated into a case study published in 2011 by Historic Environment Scotland entitled 'Cottiers in Context'.

Subsequently plans were made to build a permanent war memorial at the apex of the ground that was dedicated in the 1920s and have this in place for the centenary year 2018. This was achieved (picture below) within the context of an ambitious project to complete the stone Victorian Terrace originally named Foremount Gardens on Highburgh Road. The original war memorial plaque housed in the church and supplemented after World War 2 was copied in cast iron and affixed to the memorial which was dedicated in 2017. Four Acres Charitable Trust trustees have also campaigned to raise funds to restore an exceptional stained glass window by Alf Webster in the former Lansdowne Church now Websters Theatre.

It is hoped that the windows in Websters Theatre and the war memorial by Evelyn Beale will be available in years to come in Websters Theatre for the public to view. This exhibition is working towards that day by increasing awareness of the heritage we have in the West End and the exceptional monuments and art works that should not be neglected especially when they are a lasting testament to periods of great loss and upheaval.

Four Acres Charitable Trust was established in 1983 to save Dowanhill Church now Cottiers.

David Robertson, Director of Four Acres Charitable Trust



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The Doddrell Family
The Glasgow School of Art
The National Hockey Museum
The National Trust for Scotland

Photo credits

Front cover: The Scottish Women's Hospital's operation theatre at Royaumont, France with Dr Louise McIlroy, (TD1734/19/1/23) Glasgow City Archive.

Evelyn Beale: Front cover of The Apple Pie, illustrated by Evelyn Beale courtesy of Karen Mailley-Watt. Detail of the frieze in Websters Theatre, courtesy of Karen Mailley-Watt.

Maude Webster: Portrait of Maude Webster with her son, courtesy of the Webster Family.

Dr Louise McIlroy: Portrait of Louise McIlroy in her Scottish Women's Hospital's uniform, (TD1734/19/9/3) Glasgow City Archive. Photograph of The Scottish Women's Hospital's operation theatre at Royaumont, France with Dr Louise McIlroy, (TD1734/19/1/23) Glasgow City Archive.

Dorothy Doddrell: Portrait courtesy of the Doddrell Family.

Agnes Toward: Portrait courtesy of The Tenement House Collection, The National Trust for Scotland.

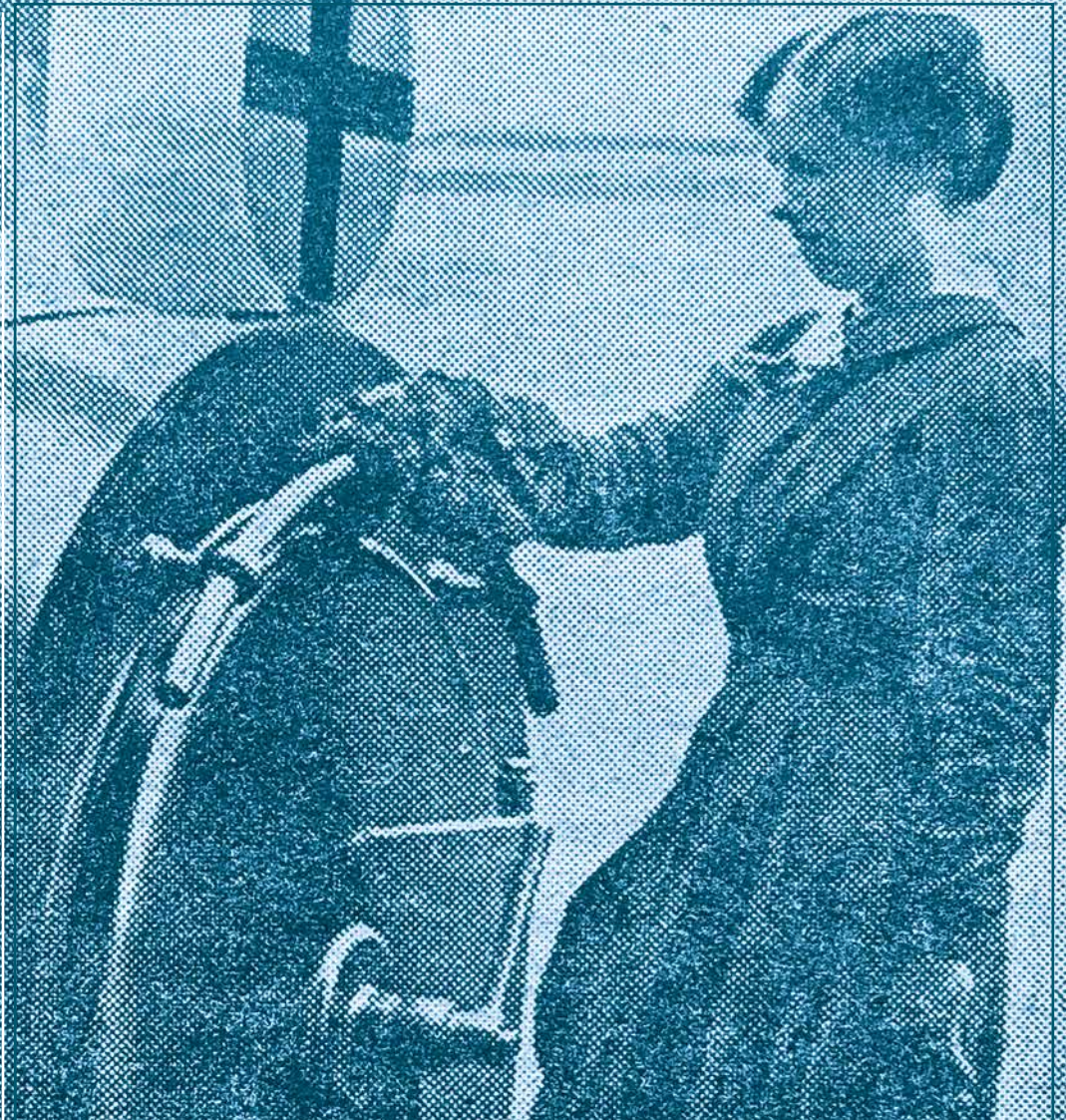
Marjorie Langmuir: Portrait courtesy of the National Hockey Museum.

World War One Fashion: Advert for Debenham & Freebody autumn blouses 1915. (11039921) © Illustrated London News Ltd/Mary Evans.

Hair and Beauty: Image courtesy of Casci Ritchie.

FACT WW1 Memorial next to Cottier's Theatre in Glasgow West End. Image courtesy of Karen Mailley-Watt.

Back cover: Newspaper clipping showing a female railway worker c.1915. Courtesy of the Tenement House Collection, The National Trust for Scotland.



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