

## *One Woman's War / Eileen's War*

### **About The Book**

*One Woman's War* (and children's edition, *Eileen's War*) tells the remarkable story of living through the Blitz, acting as a guide in a liberated Nazi concentration camp and hunting down V2 rocket launchers!

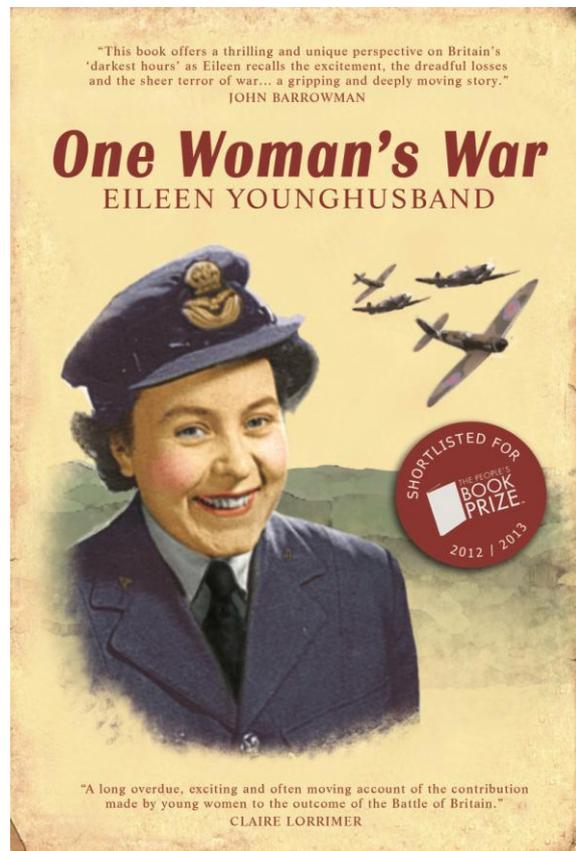
Eileen le Croisette was just an ordinary teenage girl. Living with her parents, she spent her days roller skating with friends, studying for exams and daydreaming about travelling the world.

But on September 3rd 1939 Britain declared war on Germany and everything changed. With Britain standing alone Eileen was determined to help defend her country. She joined the RAF as a Clerk Special Duties and found herself in the top secret Filter Room – a place so hush-hush she had to sign the Official Secrets Act to work there!

In 2011 Eileen said: "Our calculations were vital to help pilots in their Spitfires and Hurricanes find the enemy. We determined where air raid warnings would be sounded and where rescue boats would be sent to pick up downed Allied airmen. Truly these were life and death decisions."

On the map table in the Filter Room, Eileen saw the invasion fleet heading for the Normandy beaches on D-Day; she received the coded warning of the first V2 rocket as it approached London, and later was one of a handful of WAAF sent to hunt the V2 launchers in Belgium. Alongside this were encounters with celebrities like film star Rex Harrison and comedian Kenneth Horne, together with a personal story of love and loss to match any work of fiction.

As a teenager visiting pre-war France and Germany, Eileen had the first intimation of the horrors to come. She continued: "I caught glimpses of the sinister side of the Nazi regime. Every shop in the busy centre of Bonn had a framed photo of Hitler in the window." Eileen also noticed "Heil



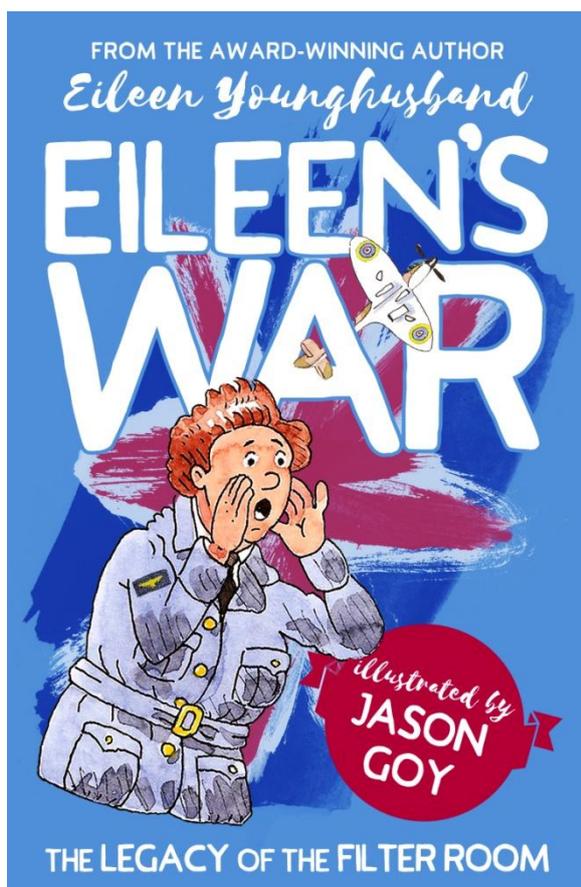
Hitler" salute was becoming accepted. She continued. "On one occasion two of us went into a greengrocers, gave a smart British Army salute and said: 'God save the King and a kilo of plums please,' in our accented German. The shopkeeper did not think it was funny at all; in fact he looked frightened and glanced around him to see if anyone had noticed."

## About The Author

Eileen Le Croisette was born in London in 1921. She left school shortly after her sixteenth birthday. She then worked in the head office of the Scottish Provident Institution in London. She worked as an au pair in France after her German teacher suggested she gain experience in speaking French and German to help set up his new business, the 'School Travel Service'.

She worked for the Boucher family until Hitler remilitarised the Rhineland, resulting in her returning home. On this journey she encountered many fleeing Jews.

Upon her return, she worked for Corke Sons & Co. as a secretary. Whilst working here, she visited Germany in the summer of 1939. She returned in early August 1939, three weeks before war began. Le Croisette experienced the first Blitz on 24th August 1940. This led to her deciding to join the WAAF.



Eileen graduated from the Open University at the age of eighty-seven, and wrote three volumes of memoirs, *Not an Ordinary Life* (2009), and *One Woman's War* (2011), the latter dealing more specifically with her wartime experience. She also wrote *Men I Have I Known* (2014). This took a sideways look at all the important men from Eileen's life including Dylan Thomas, Rex Harrison, Kenneth Horne, Winston Churchill and Edward Heath. She later adapted *One Woman's War* for children and in 2016, just weeks

before her death, *Eileen's War* was published.

Eileen campaigned on health and education issues, such as cuts to adult education, and she was awarded the British Empire Medal in the 2013 New Year Honours for services to lifelong learning. *Britain's Got Talent* finalist Nathan Wyburn created a portrait of Eileen from wartime images of her to commemorate her World War II work.

A life-size statue of Eileen as a young WAAF officer stands in a replica filter room at the Battle of Britain Museum at Bentley Priory.

### **What Other People Are Saying About These Books**

"This book offers a thrilling and unique perspective on Britain's 'darkest hours' as Eileen recalls the excitement, the dreadful losses and the sheer terror of war... a gripping and deeply moving story."

**John Barrowman, Actor**

"The Work carried out by the WAAF on Radar Operations WW2 was a major contribution in the defence of our country. The book is a testament to their valuable work."

**Dame Vera Lynn**

"*One Woman's War* is living breathing history, resonant with warmth and personality."

**Jed Mercurio, Writer**

"Eileen's story is an inspiration to us all. We must never forget the selflessness, determination and bravery that people like Eileen showed on a daily basis during the Second World War. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude."

**Carwyn Jones, Former First Minister of Wales**

Eileen's account is touching, heart wrenching and beautiful. It's hard to imagine that the life she lived was real, but it was.

**Amazon review**

One Woman's War is a brilliant evocation of war behind the scenes by a woman who has captured her life as a WAAF filter plotter superbly. A great story written by someone who lived through great dramas that shaped the outcome of the last world war.

**Amazon review**

### **Key Selling Points**

- Vivid first-hand account of one of the most turbulent times in world history.

- Intimate and unique picture of Filter Room and Bomber Command.
- Eileen was featured in a number of TV productions. These included *Britain's Greatest Generation* (BBC), *Welsh Heroes of World War II* (ITV) and *WW2: The Last Heroes* (Channel 4). She also appeared on BBC Breakfast, The One Show, Radio Wales and BBC Radio 4's Today programme.
- *Eileen's War* was created as a legacy book. It is designed to teach children about WW2. Alongside Eileen's life, it covers the rise of Hitler, the holocaust, the Blitz, D-Day and VE Day.

### **Comparable Works**

Call the Midwife by Jennifer Worth

All Creatures Great and Small by James Herriot

The Imitation Game

The Bletchley Circle

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