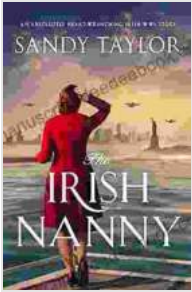


# An Absolutely Heart Wrenching Irish WW2 Story: The Irish Who Served and Sacrificed



## The Irish Nanny: An absolutely heart-wrenching Irish WW2 story by Sandy Taylor

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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As the dark clouds of World War II gathered over Europe, Ireland found itself in a precarious position. Officially neutral, the country's neutrality was tested on numerous occasions as both the Allied and Axis powers sought to gain their support. Despite their neutrality, thousands of Irishmen chose to fight in the war, driven by a sense of duty, adventure, or a desire to escape the poverty and hardship that had gripped Ireland in the years following the Great Depression.

## From Neutrality to the Frontlines

Irish neutrality did not prevent its citizens from enlisting in the British armed forces. Indeed, thousands of Irishmen had served in the British military for generations, and many saw no reason to stop when war broke out in 1939. An estimated 50,000 Irishmen served in the British Army during the war, while another 10,000 joined the Royal Air Force. Irishmen also served in smaller numbers in the Royal Navy and other British services.

In addition to those who enlisted in the British forces, thousands of Irishmen also fought in the war as members of the Irish Defense Forces. The Irish Defense Forces were responsible for defending Ireland's neutrality, but they also played a role in the Allied war effort. Irish troops served in Iceland, Newfoundland, and Northern Ireland, and they also provided support to the British military in various ways.

### **The Human Cost of War**

The Irish who fought in World War II paid a heavy price. An estimated 4,000 Irishmen were killed in the war, while thousands more were wounded. Many of those who survived the war were left with physical and psychological scars that would stay with them for the rest of their lives.

One of the most tragic examples of the human cost of war for the Irish was the sinking of the RMS *Lancastria*. The *Lancastria* was a British troopship that was sunk by German bombers off the coast of France in June 1940. Over 4,000 people were killed in the sinking, including an estimated 1,000 Irishmen. The sinking of the *Lancastria* was the worst maritime disaster in British history, and it remains one of the darkest days in Irish history.

### **The Legacy of the Irish in WW2**

The Irish who fought in World War II left a lasting legacy of bravery and sacrifice. Their contribution to the Allied war effort was significant, and their sacrifice should never be forgotten. In recent years, there has been a growing awareness of the role that the Irish played in the war, and there are now a number of memorials and museums dedicated to their memory.

The Irish who fought in World War II were not just soldiers. They were also fathers, brothers, husbands, and friends. They left behind families and loved ones who mourned their loss. Their story is a reminder of the terrible cost of war, and it is a story that should never be forgotten.

### **Individual Stories of Irish WW2 Heroes**

**Patrick Horgan** was a 22-year-old private in the Irish Defense Forces when he was killed in action during the Battle of Dunkirk in 1940. Horgan was part of a group of Irish troops who were sent to France to help evacuate British troops from the beaches of Dunkirk. Horgan was killed by a German shell while he was helping to load British troops onto a ship. He was one of the first Irish soldiers to be killed in World War II.

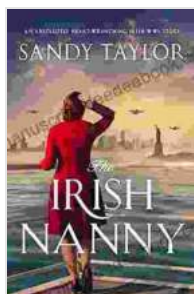
**Kathleen O'Sullivan** was a 24-year-old nurse in the Irish Red Cross when she was killed in action during the bombing of London in 1940. O'Sullivan was working in a hospital in London when it was hit by a German bomb. She was killed instantly. O'Sullivan was one of the many Irish nurses who served in the war, and her death was a great loss to the Irish Red Cross.

**John Kelly** was a 27-year-old pilot in the Royal Air Force when he was killed in action during the Battle of Britain in 1940. Kelly was shot down by a German fighter plane while he was flying over the English Channel. He was

one of the many Irish pilots who fought in the Battle of Britain, and his death was a great loss to the RAF.



The story of the Irish in World War II is a story of bravery, sacrifice, and loss. The Irish who fought in the war made a significant contribution to the Allied war effort, and their sacrifice should never be forgotten.



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