

Elizabeth Marion Clough

1895 – 1987

A brief newspaper cutting dated 28th August 1917 states:

Bradwell can now add to its roll of honour a lady's name. On Saturday Sapper (*actually Worker*) Marion Clough, the Hills, Bradwell set out for France as a telegraph operator'

In fact Marion's is the only lady's name inscribed in the Roll of Honour in St Barnabas for those who served in World War I. We now know more about Marion's army career with the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) although where she lived on the Hills remains to be established. The Corps was established on 7th July 1917 under the slogan 'Every fit woman can release a fit man'. With losses mounting in the war attention had turned to women taking on jobs previously reserved for men. Marion must have already been thinking about how she could serve because by 13th July 1917 she had enlisted in the WAAC with the rank of Worker (category Telegraphist). She found herself briefly in 'D' Square Hostel, Stanhope Lines in Aldershot. By the 18th August she was out in France stationed at Le Havre where her work would probably have been concerned with Morse code signalling. As her uniform she was issued with a coat frock, two pairs of overalls, a pair of gaiters, a felt hat with a hat badge, three collars, two pairs of stockings, a pair of shoes (these leather shoes are said to have been almost unwearable) and a brassard (armband). With one 12 day leave in 1918 Marion continued at Le Havre until she was admitted to hospital at Wimereux, Rouen in 1919. It seems she was suffering from the Spanish Flu that took so many victims after the war. Marion was not one of the victims but she was invalided home in 1919 whilst still in what had by now been rebadged as the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps. She was demobilized later in the year in October but carried on a vigorous dispute with the Army about the pay she was entitled to for the time she had been on sick leave. She had received £7.19.5 for the period in question whereas she calculated it to be £9 4s 0d (£2 6s 0d a week as a Telegraphist). The War Office reply to her letter is faded and difficult to read but it seems her case was accepted. In 1921 she married Harold Hackney in Sheffield and they had two children. Marion led a long life and didn't die until April 1987 when she was living in Chesterfield.