

TK: Welcome to Brain Junk! I'm Trace Kerr,

AB: and I'm Amy Barton, and this is a Brain Storm! Today I am talking about Violet Jessup, who is known as Miss Unsinkable. She was a stewardess on many of the big shipping lines in the early 1900's. She was born in Argentina, but she was of Irish descent, so when her father got sick and died, her family moved to Ireland and her mom went to sea as a stewardess to support the family because there were nine children. Violet was the oldest, and when her mom started getting sick Violet took her place. And so, in 1908 at the age of 21 she went to sea for the first time for the Royal Mail Line, and in 1910 she started working for the Olympic as a stewardess, and she was on board on September 20, 1911, when the Olympic collided with the British warship HMS Hawke. There were no fatalities, and the ship didn't sink and she survived that. Went on to work, continued working as a stewardess. So in April of 1912 she was on the Titanic. She was 24 at the time, and four days into that we know what happened to the Titanic-she was aboard.

TK: Yep

AB: And the reason she survived that is she was from Argentina and she as Irish, so they pulled her up and used her as this example of how to behave for the non-English speakers. She was a cultural example of "This is the way you should be behaving" So she survived, when many others in her range,

TK: So staff?

AB: Mmmhmmm. Probably didn't. So survived the Titanic sinking. Went back to sea. She continued working as a stewardess, and this time in 1916 she went to sea for the British Red Cross on the Britannic, which had been converted a hospital ship. The Britannic, of course, also sank, and she was on that sailing. It sank in the Aegean Sea due to an unexplained explosion. It went down in 55 minutes, killing 30 out of the thousand or more passengers on board. Amazingly, Violet, she took a little break, only for a few years though. By 1920 she was back working as a stewardess. She appears to have worked until about 1950, and survived until 1971. She died of congestive heart failure at the age of 83. She survived the Olympic, the Titanic, and the Britannic. Isn't that amazing?

TK: I don't know if that's amazing, or kind of spooky. Like if I was her shipmate, you know...

AB: I would not want to sail with her.

TK: I don't know. I would be a little concerned. Or then is she just a really good luck thing. You know, when you hit the 1940's, she's clearly sucked up all the bad mojo. Maybe it's all gone.

AB: Pretty amazing. She does have memoirs if you want to read more, but this is a Brain Storm, so you just get a little tidbit with this one.

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