

# 1920 biography about caroline gertrude ederle essay sample

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BUSTER**

American swimmer, the first woman to swim across the English Channel.

Born in New York City, Ederle began swimming as a young child and started competing as a teenager. From 1921 to 1925 she broke many American and world swimming records. At the 1924 Olympics in Paris, France, Ederle won a gold medal in the 400-meter freestyle relay and bronze medals in the 100-meter and 400-meter freestyle races. Looking for a new challenge, Ederle turned to channel swimming. After her first attempt to cross the English Channel failed in 1925, she tried again a year later and succeeded. In doing so she also established a record time for men or women. Ederle covered the 35 meters from Cap Gris-Nez, France, to Dover, England, in 14 hours 31 minutes. The previous record was set by Mathew Webb which took 16 hours 23 minutes. The feat made headlines and propelled Ederle to stardom in the United States. She later performed in a vaudeville act and taught swimming to children. Gertrude Ederle was born in New York City on October 23, 1905.

She was one of five children of Henry and Anna Ederle, German immigrants who owned a butcher shop on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Gertrude was a champion swimmer by her late teen years, and she competed in the 1924 Olympics. Where her freestyle team won three medals. From a young age she was passionate about swimming, which she learned at the local public pool and at the New Jersey beach where her family spent summers.

Competing locally, she had her first win at the age of 16, and between 1921 and 1925 she held 29 records. In 1926 she became the first woman to swim the English Channel; her record-breaking achievement brought her a period of fame and praise. Excited on-lookers welcomed her at the dock. She received praise from President Calvin Coolidge, who called her " America's

Best Girl” and invited her to the White House. For several years, America’s “Queen of the Waves” was a sports star and a cultural sensation with Babe Ruth or Charles Lindbergh.

“ I just knew if it could be done, it had to be done, and I did it.” – Gertrude Ederle