



Jobs For The Girls ... Finally!



ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR WOMEN'S
WAR EMPLOYMENT
[INDUSTRIAL] GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

W O M E N

(AGES 18-35)

OF ALL CLASSES

who are not already engaged in
work of national importance

WANTED AT ONCE

— FOR —

MUNITION WORK.

Apply Secretary of Gloucestershire Ad-
visory Committee, 9, Southgate, Gloucester;
or to the Managers of any Ministry of Labour
Employment Exchange.

SOURCE 1. Posters like this one from Gloucester were found across Britain. Prior to WW1, middle and upper class women rarely worked, even though their poorer counterparts always did. By 1915 many more women came out of their homes and into jobs that men serving in the armed forces left vacant. They quickly proved just how capable they were.

TASK 1. What is exactly is munition work? Find out.

Source 2. This poster urges women to come forwards and help their country. By using **DIRECT ADDRESS, IMPERATIVES, RHETORICAL QUESTIONS** and lots of **PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE** it tells them what they should be thinking and feeling. It aimed to make them sense the danger the country faced and then feel **unpatriotic or guilty** if they didn't step up soon.

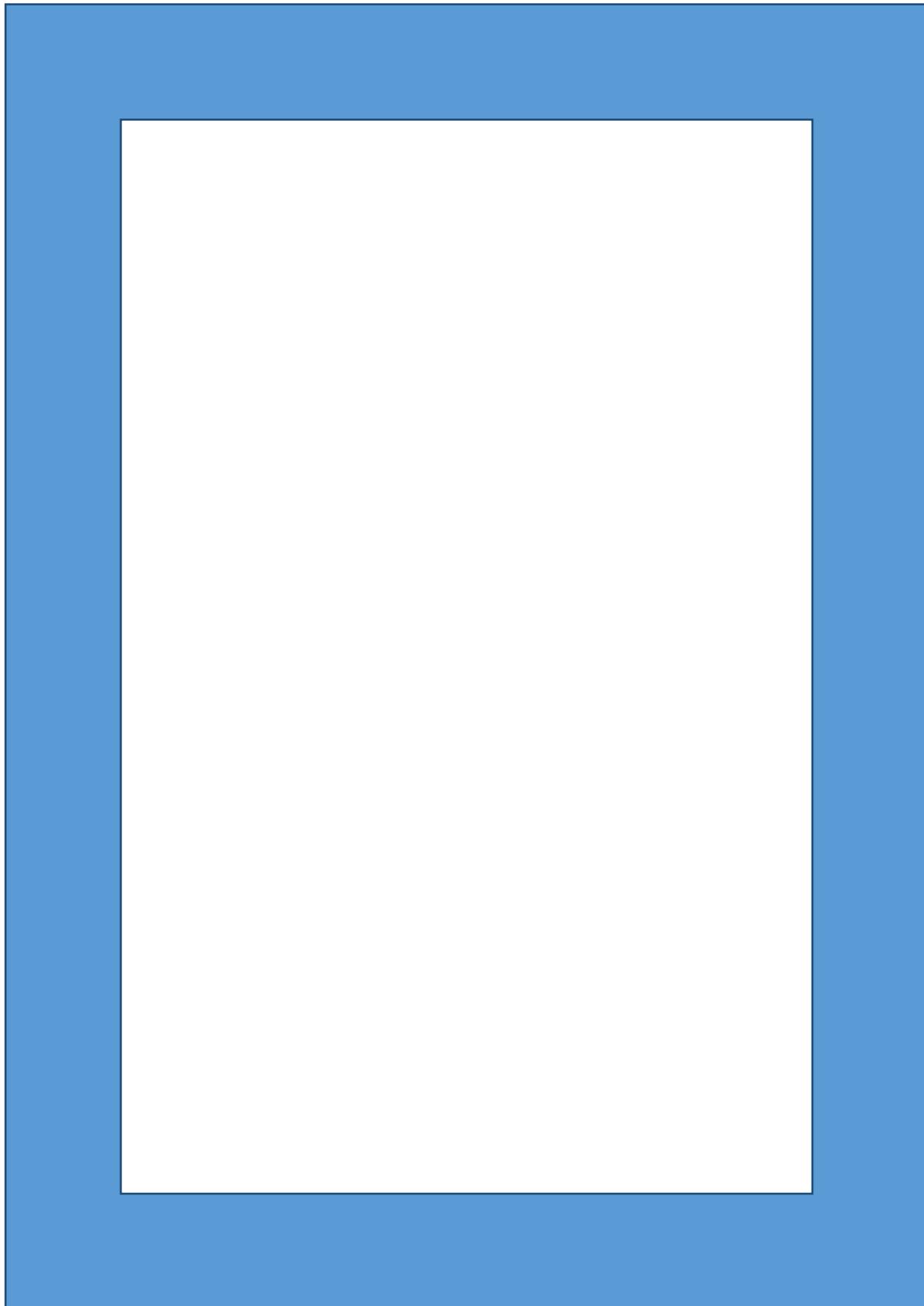


TASK 2. What does 'unpatriotic' mean? Where can you find out?

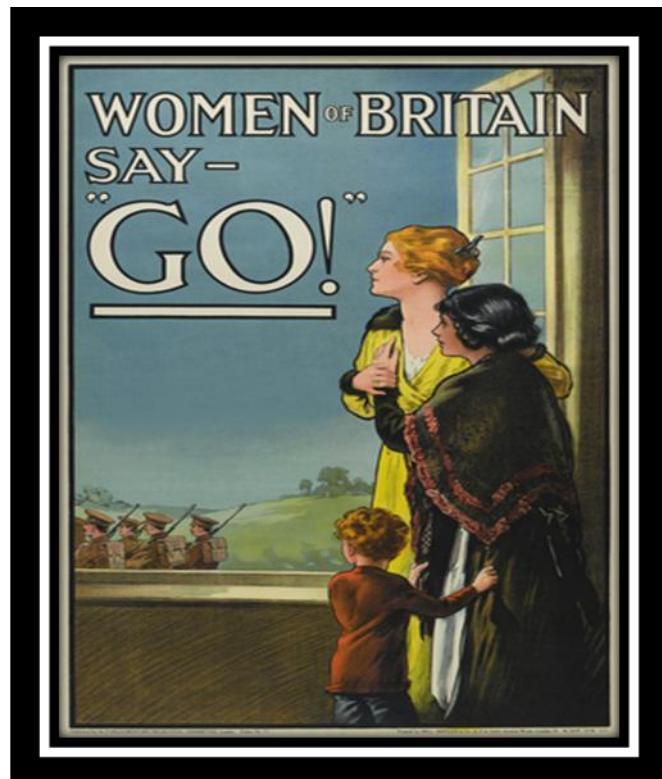
Do you think this poster is successful? Explain your opinion.

TASK 3. Other than the royal crest, there is no image to go with this poster. What do you think would be an appropriate one to use?

In the frame below create a design to go with this national campaign.



Source 3: Examine this famous poster from The Great War and the extract from a popular song of the time. They seem to be telling women about a particular job or duty they now had.



'Your King and Country Want You.'

Source 3a

We've watched you playing cricket and every kind of game
At football, golf and polo you men have made your name
But now your country calls you to play your part in war
And no matter what befalls you, we shall love you all the more
So, come and join the Forces as your fathers did before

Oh, we don't want to lose you, but we think you ought to go
For your king and your country both need you so
We shall want you and miss you, but with all our might and main
We shall cheer you, thank you, kiss you, when you come back again

Now discuss these questions with a partner before sharing your ideas with the whole group.

- **What exactly is the job or duty women were given?**
- **Do you think most women would believe the sources were right & happily do their duty?**
- **Would either of these sources persuade you to do this duty?**

Two female workers of the Great War.



These young ladies answered their country's urgent call for workers and appear very proud to be doing their bit. Looking healthy and happy, they really are a good advertisement for women's war work in Gloucestershire. **Question: Was the reality quite like this picture? Look at the next three sources to help you form an opinion.**

Source 4.

Sister Susie's Sewing Shirts For Soldiers

(A popular song and tongue twister from 1915)

Hear it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EATVIMX7zts>

**Sister Susie's sewing in the kitchen on a Singer,
There's miles and miles of flannel on the floor and up the stairs,
And father says it's rotten getting mixed up in the cotton
And sitting on the needles that she leaves upon the chairs.
And should you knock at our street door, Ma whispers "Come
inside"
Then when you ask where Susie is, she says with loving pride:**

Chorus :

**Sister Susie's sewing shirts for soldiers,
Such skill at sewing shirts our shy young sister Susie shows!
Some soldiers send epistles, say they'd rather sleep in thistles
Than the saucy soft short shirts for soldiers sister Susie sews.**

**Lots and lots and lots of shirts she sends off to the soldiers,
But sailors won't be jealous when they see them, not at all,
And when we say her stitching will set all the soldiers itching,
She says our soldiers fight best when their backs are 'gainst the wall,
And little brother Gussie, he who lisps when he says, "Yeth",
Says, "Where's the cotton gone from off my kite, oh I can gueth!"**

**I forgot to tell you that our sister Susie's married,
And when she isn't sewing shirts, she's sewing other things,
Then little sister Molly says, "Oh Susie's bought a dolly,
She's making all the clothes for it with pretty bows and strings."
Says Susie, "Don't be silly" as she blushes and she sighs,
Then mother smiles and whispers with a twinkle in her eyes.**

Have a go at saying the tongue twister chorus – Bet you can't!

Source 5. Munitionettes at work.



Source 5a Extract taken from the BBC online news. An account of working conditions.

Read the full piece at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-26225744>

‘Far away from the frontline, many of World War One’s victims were women. Wives, girlfriends, mothers and sisters of troops often found themselves in high risk jobs at munitions factories, which were prone to deadly accidents.

Many buildings weren’t designed to be munitions factories and were hurriedly converted to meet the need for weapons. Sometimes this had tragic consequences. As in this account of a munition works in Ashton –under- Lyne in Manchester:

The place was a converted mill and one of the major problems was the floors were wooden and obviously having nitric acid (TNT ingredient) near wood is very dangerous.

The walls of the building didn’t go right to the very top so any fire that started could spread very rapidly. The owners of the factory knew this and did everything they could to get modifications done...

Five tonnes of TNT became unstable and the factory was ablaze within minutes. A horse-drawn fire tender was sent but could do little to calm the flames. Seven children from St Peter’s were killed by the blast, some as they made their way home from school...

Most of the 46 victims, of course, were women. The majority of the workers in the factory were women’

Source 6 Extracts taken from The Telegraph online 1st Nov 2013. Article by Kate Adie 'The First World War Women Behind the Military'

Read this article at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/world-war-one/inside-first-world-war/part-three/10417361/first-world-war-women.html>



Flour mill workers looking dusty but very happy after a long shift and helping to feed the country!

Working-class women endured 12-hour shifts ... It was dirty, noisy and sometimes dangerous ... Yet there were extraordinary gains for many. Brought up in an Edwardian world, with Victorian views of weak and silly females unable to make decisions or shoulder responsibility, there was the opportunity to show that they [women] could do the work...

The munitionettes earned wages that enabled them to have some fun, buy trinkets and tasty food, and get a whiff of a brighter, more independent life.