

War Memories across Canada Conversation Kit:

Dominion Arsenal Artillery Park National Historic Site Quebec City, Quebec



1914-1915
J. A. Millar/University of Victoria Archives - SC345, Acc.
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During the First World War, thousands of Canadian men went overseas to fight. These men left their lives and jobs behind. Many Canadian women went to work to fill the jobs left by the men. For some of these women, it was the first time they had ever worked outside the home. These Canadian women supported the war effort in many ways, including by working in factories. One of these factories was the Dominion Arsenal, where they had to fill ammunition cartridges for the battlefield.

Discussion Questions:

What was your first job? How did you feel on the first day? What do you think it was like for those women who had never worked before?

How do you think women's work during First World War changed their role in society, even after the war was over?

During the war, women worked in jobs traditionally occupied by men. When the war ended in 1918, women were forced to give up their jobs to returning soldiers. How do you think this felt for the women?

How have women's roles in war changed since the First World War? How have they stayed the same?

Activities:

Women took on many roles and responsibilities during the First World War on the home front. In addition to working in factories what else did women do to support the war effort? Consider farming and food production, health care, volunteering, and industrial work.

Research women's roles in the military and peacekeeping around the world today.

Visit the Fortifications of Quebec National Historic Site or visit a site in your community related to women in war—perhaps a farm or factory where women worked during wartime or a war memorial that honours women who served in war.

Resources:

Websites

Artillery Park National Heritage Site
<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/qc/fortifications/natcul/natcul2/natcul2a.aspx>

This website includes a video featuring interviews with women who worked at Artillery Park during the Second World War.



1917 - Parcs Canada/Parks Canada

Women workers in Canada's military ammunition industry – Parks Canada

http://www.pc.gc.ca/APPS/CP-NR/release_e.asp?bgid=1570&andor1=bg

A summary of women's roles at the Quebec Dominion Arsenal. Available in [French](#).

Women in the Production of Munitions in Canada

<http://wartimecanada.ca/sites/default/files/documents/Munitions.pdf>

A 1916 publication that includes historical photographs and armament descriptions.

Women and War – Veterans Affairs Canada

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/those-who-served/women-and-war>

This website is divided into sections focusing on different aspects of women's experiences of war—at home and abroad. The site includes personal stories, photos, and a timeline of women and war. Available in [French](#).

Videos

And We Knew How to Dance: Women in World War 1. National Film Board (1993)

https://www.nfb.ca/film/and_we_knew_how_to_dance

A full-length documentary about women who worked in munitions factories during the First World War

Women at War

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eW9jZVKliE>

Episode 3 in York University's six-part First World War video series, The War to End All Wars.

Women, wartime and the dream of peace

https://www.ted.com/talks/zainab_salbi?language=en#t-1018611

In this TED Talk, the founder of Women for Women International, Zainab Salbi discusses the "backline role of women during wartime".

Books

A Sisterhood of suffering and service : Women and girls of Canada and Newfoundland during the First World War, edited by Sarah Glassford and Amy J. Shaw. UBC Press, 2013.

Essays about women's experiences during the First World War in Canada and Newfoundland.

L' Arsenal de Québec, 1880-1945, published by the province of Quebec in 1947.

<http://www.ourroots.ca/e/toc.aspx?id=3303>

A history of the Quebec Arsenal. Available online [French](#).

World War women, by Stacey Barker and Molly McCullough. Canadian War Museum, 2015.

Issued also in French under title: Grandes guerres, grandes femmes.

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