



**SUPPLY
LINE**

Factory Head Scarf

Many women workers wore scarves such as this one. Head scarves were useful in factories and at other industrial sites. They helped ensure that women's hair would not get caught in the moving parts of tools and equipment. They also helped keep hair clean in dirty and dusty environments.

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Factory Head Scarf © Canadian War Museum

Symbol of Women and the War Effort

The factory head scarf became symbolic of Canadian women's work during the Second World War. It was often used to represent women working in factories, shipyards, and other industrial settings. Visible in many photographs, it also appeared in **propaganda** posters. This includes the On All Fronts poster in the Discovery Box.

Women had worn head scarves long before the war. They were useful for many jobs, including housework. In wartime factories, they were a symbol of women in jobs traditionally viewed as "men's work." As more factories were built and expanded, women were encouraged to go to work on the factory floor.

Head Scarves for Safety

Women wore these head scarves for safety, and to help keep their hair clean. Head scarves helped ensure that longer hair would not get caught in the moving parts of tools and equipment.

Workplace rules often required head scarves or hats. Sometimes employers provided their workers with head scarves. Some factories had even stricter rules, including not wearing metal when working around explosives. This reduced the risk of creating sparks that could cause the explosives to detonate.

Many Different Fabrics

Wartime head scarves were made from different kinds of fabric. Cotton was preferred, because it was comfortable to wear and could be easily washed. Fabric with prints and patterns was more attractive, and also helped hide dirt and stains.

While head scarves could be made of new fabric, they often reflected wartime recycling. Worn-out clothing and other fabric items could be turned into head scarves. This was important at a time when people were expected to “make do” by re-using things. It also helped save money.

The head scarf in this Discovery Box is made of cotton, with a pattern featuring aircraft and the word “Victory.” It also has the Morse Code symbol for “V” (···-), which also stood for victory, and was used in wartime **propaganda**.

Canadians were encouraged to show support for the war effort in lots of ways, including through their clothing. Most women would not have bought fabric like this just for head scarves, but it is included in the Discovery Box as an example of such fabrics.

Vocabulary

Propaganda :

Information designed to influence people, used by all countries during the Second World War. Canadian propaganda encouraged enlistment and support for the war effort.