

# THE TOUCHSTONE

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## Uniforms Which the American Women Have Adopted for Their War Work



UNIFORM OF MOTOR DRIVER OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE SHOWN AT THE LEFT: SUIT IS OLIVE DRAB CLOTH, NORFOLK JACKET AND SHORT SKIRT, CLOSE FITTING CAP, LEATHER PUTTEES AND LEATHER BELT.

*Courtesy of Franklin Simon & Co.*

CANTEEN WORKERS OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SERVICE WEAR A BLUE CHAMBRAY APRON WITH WHITE LINEN CAP: THIS PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN IN THE CANTEEN AT THE PELHAM BAY NAVAL TRAINING STATION.



APPROPRIATENESS is the foundation upon which the art of dress develops. Trailing laces and silver slippers for the dance; short tweeds and hob-nailed boots for the mountain climber; khaki and long white aprons for the war worker! How charming is the sight of each in its place, and how discordant is any reversal of that order. From the very beginning of civilization women have been taught to regard themselves as decorative objects. It has been considered a duty for them to dress with a view to pleasing the eye. Expediency has never been given the first consideration. This war, however, like a magician's wand, is undoing the slow work of the ages, changing the ideals of both women and men in the twinkling of an eye.

Women are throwing aside their garments designed for alluring effect upon the eye of the beholder in favor of those built stoutly for efficient service and sanely for practical wear. The spirit of war finds an echo in women's costumes as well as in myriad other important and trivial things. Common sense in dress is now looked upon as a virtue instead of an aesthetic mistake. The first consideration of the woman war worker is not whether she will look well in her costume, but, will it be serviceable, will it announce to all beholders the fact that she is honored by being permitted to serve her country.

The uniforms of the women war workers are badges of the highest order. Never has a diamond coronet been worn with greater pride than the metal insignia "U. S." at the collar of a woman war worker.

Emily Burbank, in discussing the decorative art of women's dress, says that every dress should be designed with the thought of the background against which the costume is to be worn. The background of women's service uniforms is war, war of the most terrible kind. How unseemly any attempt to make the costume pleasing to the eye at the expense of serviceability. Many of the uniforms of the women war workers have been inexcusably hideous, and there is no need for this. The newer designs are full of charm and it is safe to say that women never looked more attractive than when arrayed in the trim, neat and serviceable uniforms of the Red Cross and the various motor corps.

Thousands of girls in France and England are working in shapeless overalls; yet, because these are practical, they wear them proudly. Many are dressed in uniforms, smart as the most skilled tailor can make them. Women street-car conductors, taxi and cab drivers, police-women and letter carriers have chosen to wear uniforms that will give them the greatest facility of motion and the utmost service-



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OVERSEAS UNIFORM OF THE WOMEN WORKING WITH THE Y. M. C. A.: THE SUIT IS OF GREYISH GREEN WHIPCORD AND THE CAPE IS DARK GREEN: THE INSIGNIA IS THE RED TRIANGLE ON A COPENHAGEN BLUE GROUND: THIS UNIFORM IS SHOWN AT THE LEFT.



CHIEF YEOMAN'S COSTUME WORN BY MISS LORETTA WALSH, THE FIRST WOMAN TO ENLIST IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY: THE YEOMAN'S DUTY IS TO HELP IN THE ENROLLMENT OF THE RECRUITS FOR NAVAL SERVICE. SHOWN AT THE RIGHT.

*Uniforms made by Best & Co.*

ability, that may be worn through storm and oftentimes for days at a stretch, when they are unable to change, clean or press them. All such positions affect the length of the skirt, quality of material, strength of shoe and size of cap. Women who have worn short skirts, which permit them such delightful freedom, will go back with reluctance to the skirt that clings, impeding every movement, which does not permit a joyous swinging stride.

**I**N the bulletin issued by the American Red Cross, to the women who are about to enter that service, we read that the wearing of uniforms is optional, but that it has been discovered that the employment of simple uniforms is desirable for hygienic and other valid reasons; with this in view, they are being adopted. As Red Cross workers throughout the United States adopt a uniform, it will become recognized everywhere as the official dress of the Red Cross. Wearers should, therefore, be impressed with the necessity of dignified conduct, since any lack of dignity on their part will reflect not only upon the individual, but upon the Red Cross itself. The right to wear the uniform carries with it an assumption of responsibility for the organization: the abuse of such responsibility may be punished by withdrawing the uniform permit.

Red Cross workers on surgical dressings are distinguished by arm bands which indicate the different divisions of work, such as "knitting," "garments," "surgical dressings," and so forth. Long white aprons, fastened at the back, serviceable (and who can say that they are not becoming?), with three-inch wide belts, two pockets and a Red Cross worn at the base of the neck, is the distinguishing badge of those who work in this department. A long grey coat of whipcord, or Oxford cloth with invertible box-plait, leather puttees and close fitting cap with a Red Cross as its only ornament, distinguishes the motor service division. The canteen worker wears an apron similar to the workroom garment, except it is horizon blue and worn with a white collar and cuffs and a blue veil.

Necessity has led to the creation of some identification by which troop train commanders may readily recognize an officially authorized American Red Cross Canteen Worker. The insignia adopted is a red cross on a white shield with the letters "A. R. C. Canteen Worker" in blue across its face. These shields are worn conspicuously on hat, cuff or collar of the uniform, apron or coat. All troop train commanders are instructed to look for this badge of service.

**V**ARIOUS materials have been tried out that would have the appearance and the serviceability of khaki, khaki itself being reserved for the Army. Serge, whipcord, corduroy, denim, canvas, jean, twill and broadcloth have been tested with fair degrees of success. Dark browns, blues and greys are the favorite shades, because they are inconspicuous, serviceable and sometimes becoming. Every big office building has its especial uniform for its women elevator operators and starters. Women in munition factories wear either trousers or overalls, with sleeves rolled up, for there must be nothing flying to catch in the machinery. The farmerettes' costumes are generally blue galatea or denim made with bloomers and close-fitting waist all in one piece. The street uniform of most of the workers is a short skirt, Norfolk jacket, leggings and close-fitting cap. The different organizations and societies are distinguished by a badge or shoulder strap with the distinguishing insignia of their special order.

**T**HE women in France, in the canteens of the Y. M. C. A., have done splendid service, one of them having just received official commendation for her work. A letter from one of these women workers says that in Paris one sees only uniforms and mourning. The Y. M. C. A. women war workers' uniforms are of grey whipcord with French blue collars, ties, scarves and hats. In Paris they wear white shirts; in the field, blue ones. Pinafores are of blue chambray and on special "dress up" occasions they wear bright flowered chintz ones. The hut pinafores have little white collars and cuffs; bright



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cretonne aprons are used for dress occasions. The capes are of grey-green cloth with blue collars; the insignia is the red triangle. The uniform is recognized and honored by all, and occasionally is saluted by the officers, much to the delight of the workers.

The merchants in this country have taken great interest in producing designs and obtaining materials that will make the women's uniforms both beautiful and serviceable. The leading shops of New York City are doing good war service by making these uniforms for less than cost, going to great trouble in the matter of fitting. Farmerette costumes, Red Cross aprons, and overalls for women munitions workers are all to be had in standard sizes and at cost prices, so that a woman worker may be quickly outfitted. The various stores have followed faithfully the requests of different war organizations, working with them in every possible way, to the end that the women serving the nation may be suitably clothed.



OUTDOOR UNIFORM OF THE RED CROSS CANTEEN WORKER IS SHOWN ABOVE: OVERCOAT IS OF GREY WHIPCORD: ANY DARK COAT MAY BE SUBSTITUTED PROVIDED THE CANTEEN SHIELD IS WORN ALSO: CAP IS CLOSE FITTING GREY CLOTH ON THE GENERAL ORDER OF THE ROYAL FLYING CORPS: FOR SUMMER USE A PLAIN BLUE OR BLACK SAILOR HAT IS SUBSTITUTED.

WORK ROOM UNIFORM OF RED CROSS WORKER ON SURGICAL DRESSINGS IS SHOWN BELOW: A LONG WHITE APRON WITH TWO POCKETS, CUT WITH EITHER "V" OR SQUARE NECK, IS WORN OVER THE ORDINARY STREET COSTUME: THIS APRON IS ONLY WORN ON DUTY: THE VEIL IS RED, WHITE OR DARK BLUE, ACCORDING TO RANK: A RED CROSS IS ALWAYS WORN ON A SMALL WHITE SHIELD IN THE CENTER OF THE FORE-HEAD BAND.



SALVATION ARMY WORKER IS SHOWN AT THE RIGHT MAKING PIES IN FRANCE FOR THE AMERICAN SOLDIER BOYS' DELIGHT: THE WOMEN WORKERS, CLOSE TO THE FRONT, WEAR HELMETS TO PROTECT THEM AGAINST SHRAPNEL AND ARE ALSO PROVIDED WITH GAS MASKS.



The uniforms, so frequently seen upon the streets of New York City especially, though military in effect, are very different from those suits worn as a fashion supposedly "military in feeling." There is a great difference between the close-fitting service cap of the motor driver and the dashing cap worn with a "sport suit" known as the "aviator cap," although the motor driver's cap is somewhat the same in cut. Women wearing the uniforms are putting their heart and soul into the work and wear their serviceable clothes because their work can be done better and because they are proud to be recognized as serious workers in this great war.



*The Cap of an American W.W., I*

*Y.M.C.A. Welfare Worker*

*(image & caption added)*



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ABOVE IS THE UNIFORM OF A Y. W. C. A. WORKER: IT IS GREYISH BLUE CLOTH: THE INSIGNIA IS BLUE WITH BLACK, BAR AND GOLD LETTERS. THE COAT IS DISTINGUISHED BY ITS LARGE, USEFUL, POCKETS: IN WINTER A HEAVY CAPE IS WORN.



CANTEEN SERVICE IN-DOOR UNIFORM OF THE RED CROSS IS SHOWN BELOW: THE APRON IS HORIZON BLUE WORN WITH WHITE COLLAR AND CUFFS AND HORIZON BLUE VEIL: THE RED CROSS TWO INCHES SQUARE IS WORN AT THE NECK: THE INSIGNIA ON THE CUFFS AND CAP IS NOW WORN BY ALL CANTEEN WORKERS.

REMEMBER THE GIRL BEHIND  
THE MAN BEHIND THE GUN



(poster image added)

