

# Stonehouse women made their mark

Since so many men went off to war there was an urgent need to fill their former jobs.

In 1917, for example, Vowles’ brushworks in Stonehouse reported that between 70 and 80 employees were serving in the Forces. So, for the first time, women were employed in jobs traditionally done by men — and found freedom from housework and from being “in service”.

## Delivering the post

Before the War Jessie Louisa Durham worked as a dressmaker. In 1914 she became one of the women who delivered the mail around Stonehouse.

Because of a shortage of staff, the Post Office had to reduce deliveries to twice daily.



## Quedgeley Munitions Factory

This opened in March 1916. By June there were 2420 workers — 2113 of them women.

When TNT poisoning was identified as a hazard, the numbers dropped. After a newspaper appeal, the work force rose to 6364 in March 1917. Pay was £1 for a 48 hour week .

A railway station was built at the factory so that workers from Stonehouse & Stroud could get to work easily.

**Mrs L Shill** of Stonehouse received a medal from the War Office for her service in knitting stockings etc for soldiers on active service.

**Miss Kathleen May Jenner Davies**, of Hayward’s End, Stonehouse, served as an ambulance driver in Serbia and France. She was awarded the Samaritan Cross by the Crown Prince of Serbia in 1918.

After the War, she compiled a Book of Remembrance book of the fallen soldiers with their photos.

