

# WHAT DID WOMEN IN WALES DO DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR? **IN MUNITIONS FACTORIES**



Poster advertising for girls and women to work in munitions. Printed in Caernarfon.



Workers at the **Vulcan Munitions Factory, Quarry Bank, Caernarfon**. They all have triangular war-workers badges.

[Mrs Nanno Hughes; ©: W. Williams, Photographer, Castle Square, Caernarfon  
By courtesy of People's Collection Wales]

At an inquest held at Swansea on Wednesday on Esther Devonald (33), of 32, Baglan-street, Swansea, a verdict was returned of death from jaundice.

**Esther Devonald** was a munitions worker who died of jaundice caused by chemical poisoning. Many munitions workers were affected and became ill, or died.

*Cambrian Daily Leader 7th June 1917.*

By **SPRING 1915** there was a serious shortage of all sorts of armaments, an event known as the **SHELL CRISIS**. Munitions factories were put under government control, and many new ones established, making everything from bullets to high explosive shells. Women and girls were encouraged to work in these factories, and thousands of Welsh women became 'munitionettes'. The work was well paid but dangerous and damaging to health. The largest National Explosives Factories in Wales were at Queensferry, Flintshire, and Pembrey, Carmarthenshire.

## **OLWEN LEYSHON**

a young worker at the National Explosives Factory, Pembrey. She is pictured wearing her uniform, which included trousers.

[womenandwar.wales](http://womenandwar.wales)  
[menywodarhyfel.cymru](http://menywodarhyfel.cymru)

**ARCHIF MENYWOD CYMRU**  
**WOMEN'S ARCHIVE WALES**