



# Red Cross Home Workers

In the war working parties were set up around the country to prepare hospital supplies for injured men sent back from the battlefields. Volunteer Home Workers were recruited to make the goods needed. Their tasks were knitting, sewing and preparing hospital supplies. The finished items would then be collected at local Work Depots ready for distribution to places of need.

The supply and distribution of these goods was organised by the Central Work Rooms at Burlington House in London. Here the manufacture and distribution of goods was co-ordinated, making sure that items in demand were supplied on time.

and shirts: Workers were advised “to cut an exact copy of the paper patterns in a firm brown paper.”



Working parties also prepared hospital items such as bandages, splints and swabs. Here a group of Girl Guides prepare hospital supplies. © IWM (Q27923)

**TAPED BED JACKET** THE BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY

**MATERIAL REQUIRED.**—2½ yards material 36 inches wide, or 3 yards 30 inches wide.

**CUTTING.**—Full 1 inch allowed for turnings; hems at top of sleeve, end of sleeve, and all round bottom of jacket allowed for. Cut off 33 inches of material for back, fold remainder of material, lay on pattern as sketch and cut out.

**TO MAKE.**—First join the pieces on sleeves, then join up the seams, press seams flat and herringbone down each side. The hems should also be herringboned, front hem being 2 inches wide; shoulder, wrist and base, 1 inch. Turn down neck, turning on right side and neaten with tapes, placing it on easily at top edge so that it will lay flat on the lower edge of curve. Sew three pairs of tapes 12 inches in length down fronts, on the left side at edge and on the right side 2 inches in from edge, the first pair being at the neck and the others 9 inches apart; and four pairs down sleeves from neck to wrist, one pair at neck and one pair 2 inches from end of wrist, the others at equal distances between.

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They also ensured that garments were produced to a specific standard by issuing a pattern book to those working in small groups or alone at home. Knitting patterns were provided for gloves, sock (both bed and day socks) and slippers. Sewing patterns were available for making various nightgowns, bed jackets, dressing gowns

## Volunteer Home Workers in Six Streets

In May 1916 **Ellen Draper** (26 Bromley Street) volunteered to do home work “knitting, needlework and war hospital supplies”, while her husband, Robert, was serving abroad. In December 1917 she gave up this work after he was killed in action.

Other home workers in the area were:

**Jennie Morris** (82 Park Grove)

**Bertha Neal** (53 White St)

**Mary Richards** (27 White St)

**Ellen Pool** (9 White St)

**Florence Ward** (132 Kedleston Rd)

**Leah Hagley** (12 White Street) and her mother **Mrs de Soiza**

Local Work Depots where they could take their finished work were at 27 Friar Gate, 4 Full Street and Darley Slade (107 Belper Road).