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What did World War One really do for women?

Video 1 transcript

Presented by Kate Adie, Writer and Broadcaster

What is the use of fighting for a vote if we have not got a country to vote in? Just days after Britain declared war in 1914 the suffragette Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst cleared the way for suffrage campaigners and millions of ordinary women to work for the war effort.

As the nation's men headed off abroad to work on the frontlines years of undreamt-of opportunity - and hard slog - followed, where women began to taste independence and were also able to prove that they could do men's work.

They made shells and bullets, they drove trams, welded, they heaved coke and coal, entertained troops to the sound of gunfire and played football in front of tens of thousands.

All activities thought absolutely beyond a woman - until now.

Life on any frontline in war is tough – I know that – and the Home Front in World War One demanded both courage and endurance. Families shattered by bereavement, injured men coming home, and at the end, no national acceptance that women should hold on to the new status and skills they'd acquired. So – what did World War One really do for women?

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