

2. Black Down, Women and WWII



◀ *"I never thought for one minute that we'd lose..."*
Terry King

Although women did not go on active service during the war, they played an active and important role at home. Many women went to work in the factories to support the war effort.

Terry King was a 'hello girl', operating telephones for the General Post Office in Cheddar. Her husband Robert was on the Starfish crew. Fortunately, he was also a keen photographer and took the few photos we have of this top secret site. Hear Terry's memories on the Discovering Black Down website.

▶ As part of the Starfish project for Discovering Black Down, children from Blagdon Primary School designed their own posters to recruit women based on the type that were produced at the time.

▼ This painting by Laura Knight, 1943, shows a woman called Ruby Loftus supporting the war effort. It was commissioned to boost women recruits into the factories to replace the men on active duty at the front.



Mendip Hills AONB



OS MAP

Explorer 141:
Cheddar Gorge &
Mendip Hills West
Landranger 182:
Weston-super-Mare

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WAR WALK

A new War Walk on Black Down is available to download from the Discovering Black Down project website.

You can also see a film, listen to interviews with other people and download the other factsheets in this series.



The Women's Land Army



During World War II, while some women worked in the factories, others worked on the land to keep food production going. Women in the Land Army were known as Land Girls.

▲ *Ruth Weaver (formerly Statham) volunteered to join the Women's Land Army. She was posted to Somerset from her home in Manchester. Ruth arrived to work at Butcombe Farm in 1942, aged 18. In the picture below, Ruth (left) is threshing. You can hear Ruth read the poem she wrote about her experiences on the Discovering Black Down website. It is called 'Wartime Reflections'.*



Researched, written and produced by Ruth Coleman

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