

THE NEW DEMOCRACY

WOMEN and WORK

GERTRUDE WILLIAMS

1530

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A generation ago millions gave their lives in a crusade to make the world safe for democracy. The crusade ended in complete victory; democracy appeared triumphant everywhere. And then something went wrong. Elation and enthusiasm gave place to disillusionment and frustration. The men whom their country needed became men without work; homes for heroes proved to be slum tenements; hundreds of thousands of the country's children remained below the poverty line. Within little more than twenty years of their triumph the crusaders of democracy were facing disaster on the beaches of Dunkirk.

It need not and must not happen again. This time the democracies must not only win the war; they must win the peace. The peacemakers of 1919 lost the peace for democracy because they failed to distinguish between the underlying principles of democracy and the outward forms in which it is clothed in a particular age. They thought they could re-establish the principles by simply restoring the old nineteenth-century forms. We are to-day paying the dismal price of their blunder. This time we must see to it that twentieth-century democracy is tuned up to twentieth-century conditions. We must recognise that scientific advance, hastened by the stimulus of total war, has created new possibilities and evolved new techniques of social organisation and planning which carry revolutionary implications for human society. Democracy will only live on and become once again a dynamic force if it can boldly turn those techniques and discoveries to its own purposes, using them to put an end to unemployment, insecurity and want, and to open up new frontiers of human life and freedom.

This is a task which cannot be left to the statesman and the expert. It is the individual responsibility of every citizen. The essence of a democratic community is that its citizens should take an active part in its decisions; and this is more imperative than ever in an age in which the state is everywhere extending the range of its activity. Active citizenship is the indispensable condition of freedom in a planned society.

But the citizen can only take an active part in the community if he is properly informed about the choices and possibilities before it. To contribute to this body of informed opinion, as a basis of social action, is the purpose of this series. It is written and edited by experts who believe it to be their responsibility as citizens to put their special knowledge before the widest possible public, using all the modern techniques of presentation to give vividness to their subjects. It is written primarily for the citizens of Great Britain, which, as the oldest of living democracies, has to-day a special responsibility to give leadership in working out the pattern of the new democracy. But it is also written for the citizens of every community who believe that democracy is the only valid principle upon which to run a modern society, and who mean to make it work.

Women and Work

Gertrude Williams

**With 13 pictorial charts in colour designed
by the Isotype Institute
and 65 photographs**



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List of Pictorial Charts in Colour

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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—the wife's work in the dairy is as important—

But the coming of power machinery, by taking industry out of the home and into the factory, made a new and sharp division between work and "life" and completely transformed both the character of the home and of women's work. A woman sitting in her own home can spin industriously and efficiently, stir the pot, and keep an eye on an adventurous toddler at one and the same time; but she cannot feed a spinning machine in the factory with one hand while she rocks the baby's cradle at home with the other, nor can she move rapidly from one to the other. Factory

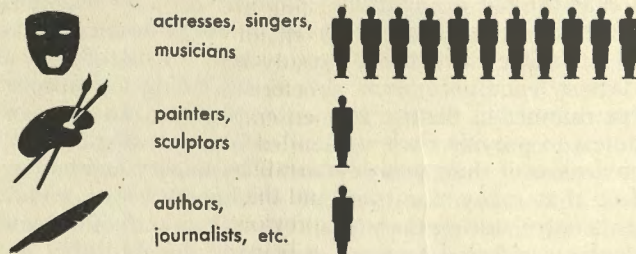
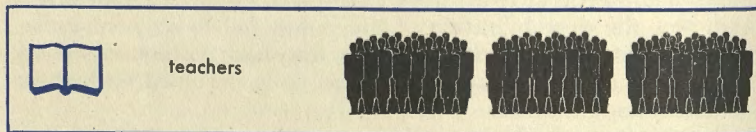
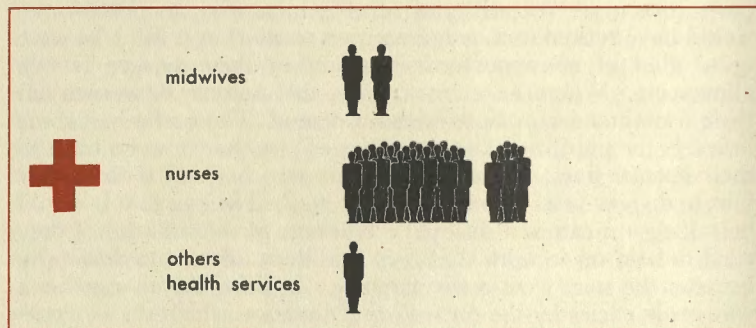


—as the man's in the field

life must be more organised; groups of workers must begin and stop at the same time; a definite part of the day is set thus aside for industrial work, and this means that as soon as she undertakes the care of a home and family she has to give up regular paid work because it lies outside the place where her main duties are performed. Moreover, the same changes which transferred her work to the factory have altered the nature of the work inside the home. Bread baking, beer brewing, jam preserving, clothes-making, etc., are now factory industries rather than household

Professions of Women in 1911

England and Wales

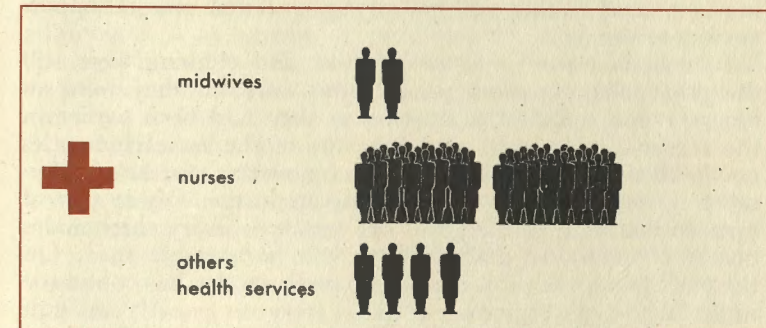
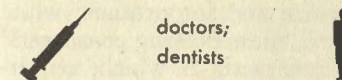


Each symbol represents 3,000 women
Each full group represents 60,000 women

CHART III

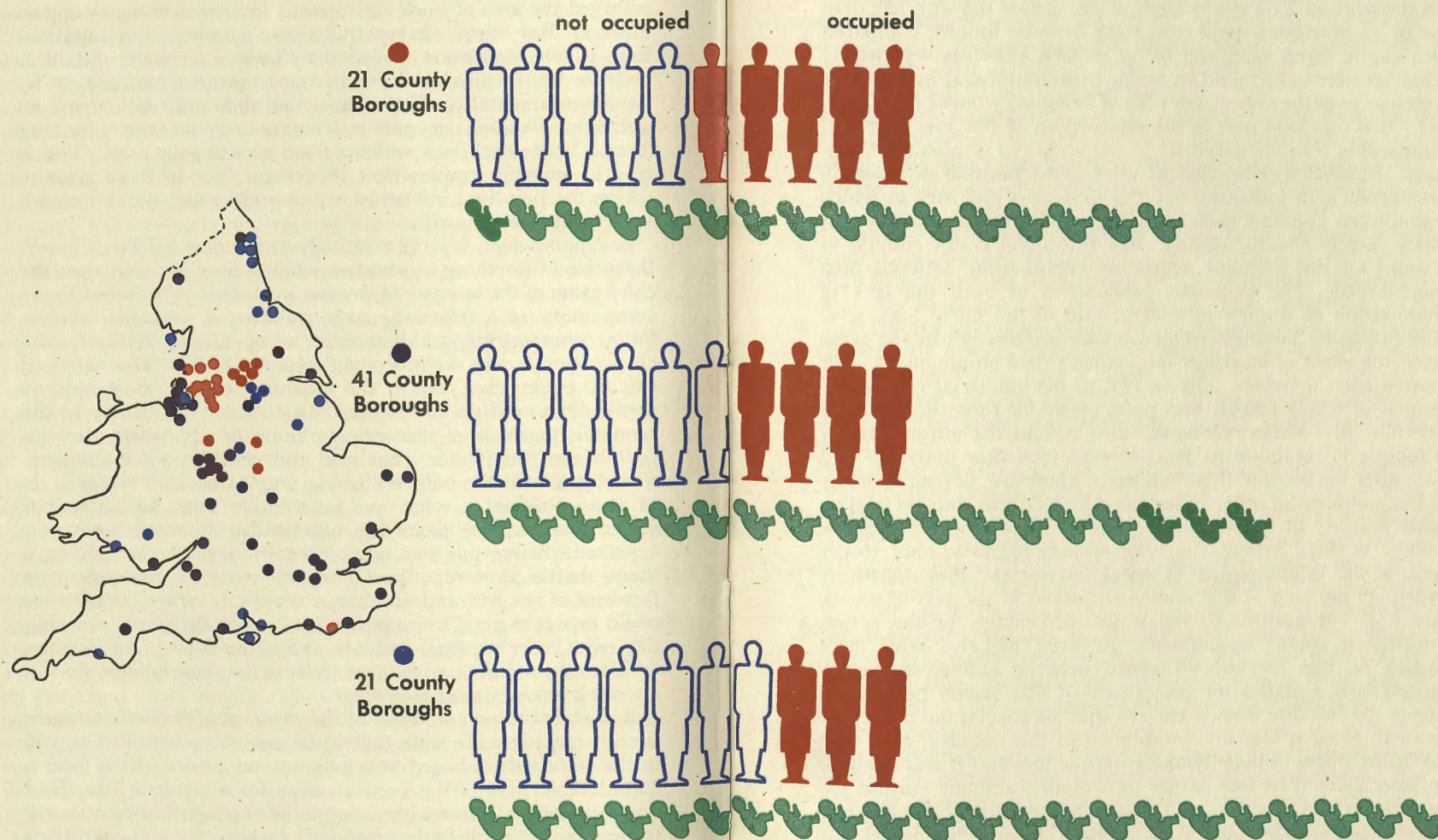
Professions of Women in 1931

England and Wales



Percentage of Women Occupied and Number of Births

in the 83 County Boroughs of England and Wales, 1931



Each woman symbol represents 1 among 10 women 14 years and over
blue outline: not occupied red: occupied

The baby symbols represent the children born to 10 women throughout their reproduction age

Birth Rate and Social Class

Births per 100 married men under 55 in 1921

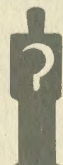
Upper and middle class



Working class



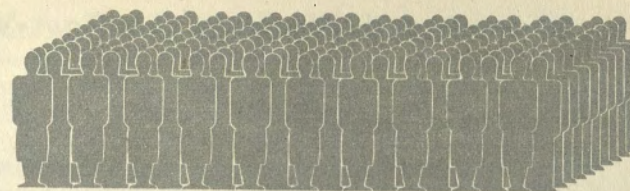
Agricultural worker



Miners



Textile workers



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