

WAR AND FASHION

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flatter him. But now she was taking an active part, and whether she was in or out of uniform her costume tended to be influenced by it, so that straight lines and trimness replaced furbelows and femininity.

The Corset is a Symbol

Wars are usually followed by periods of social change. If we look back over the history of costume we will notice that in times of settled prosperity and commercial well-being woman's costume becomes more elaborate, and the more elaborate and cumbersome her costume the more restricted her activity. Thus in times of social upheaval, woman's costume tends to grow less, and woman's greater degree of freedom is reflected in the greater freedom of her dress. We can see this in both the period following the Napoleonic Wars and that following the Great War. In both periods underclothes were reduced to a minimum, and the corset, usually a sign of woman's captivity, was either completely discarded or appeared as a mere reminder of its former self. The flinging away of the corset is a symbolic gesture. It means female emancipation and always accompanies it.

Once tight-lacing has gone there is no reason why waists should remain in their normal position. And a waist line either below the bosom, as in 1800, or round the hips, as in the nineteen-twenties, is in general more flattering to the younger woman than the older. The abnormal waistline is therefore a symbol of the revolt of youth against maturity.

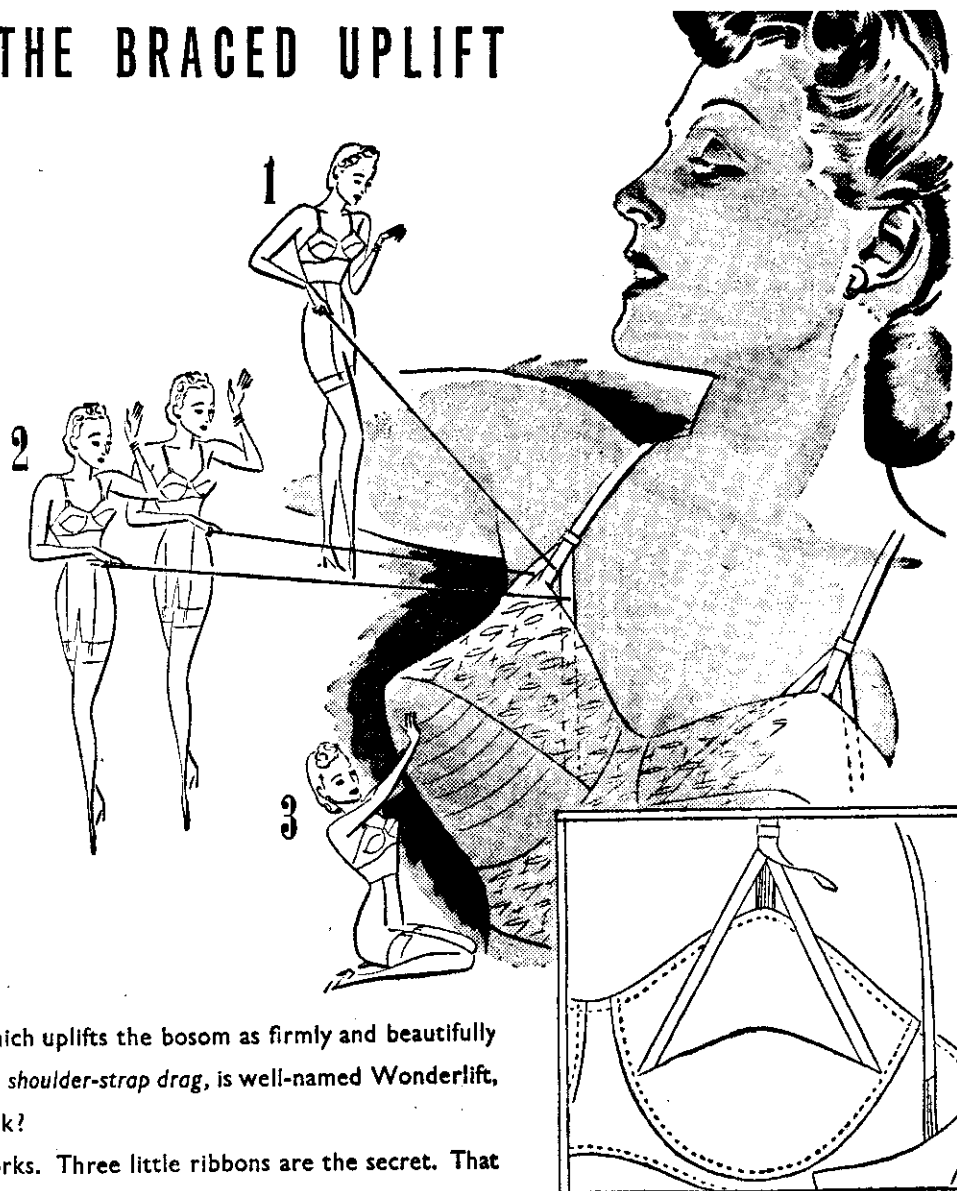
When Women Must Work

But whereas after the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars woman's emancipation gave her merely added freedom of conduct and action, after the Great War it gave her a job. Woman's costume in the 'twenties was striving to adapt itself to a wholly new conception of social life in which Woman suddenly found herself Man's rival. It was essential that she appear youthful and efficient, and so fussy futilities were abolished from her dress and every woman was clothed like a schoolgirl.

In the present war we are still in the first phase of war's effect on fashion—the increased emphasis on the sex-attractive power of costume. The waistline is normal, and silhouettes are feminine. We are still at the stage where we flaunt mementoes of war in our headgear, glengarries modelled on the air force, peaked felts imitative of those worn by men of the services. There is a jaunty army or naval flavour about the new jackets. But even from the beginning of this war, excessive femininity and elaboration have been modified by the economic factor, and shortage of materials and rationing in France and England have succeeded in hastening the coming of the second stage of war's effect on fashion. But as the war goes on we may assume that woman's ordinary dress will approximate more and more closely to the uniform as competence becomes an asset of greater value to the individual and the community than oomph, glamour, or sex-appeal.

—M.I.

NEW! THE BRACED UPLIFT



A brassiere which uplifts the bosom as firmly and beautifully as this, *without shoulder-strap drag*, is well-named Wonderlift, don't you think?

See how it works. Three little ribbons are the secret. That short centre one of elastic gives you the freedom to move and breathe and raise your arms—and how you appreciate that! The two ribbons stretched each side of the bosom (on the underside of the brassiere) hold that uplift section firm against the bosom, bracing those soft muscles all the time. Consequently, that uplift can never sag, the ribbons prevent it. So you're beautiful *all the time* in your Wonderlift—and *all the time* you're free!

- 1 Points to the elastic that gives the ease.
- 2 Points to the ribbons that brace the uplift.
- 3 Shows how, in effect, it is a lift from beneath.

Berlei
WONDER-LIFT REGD.
BRASSIERES