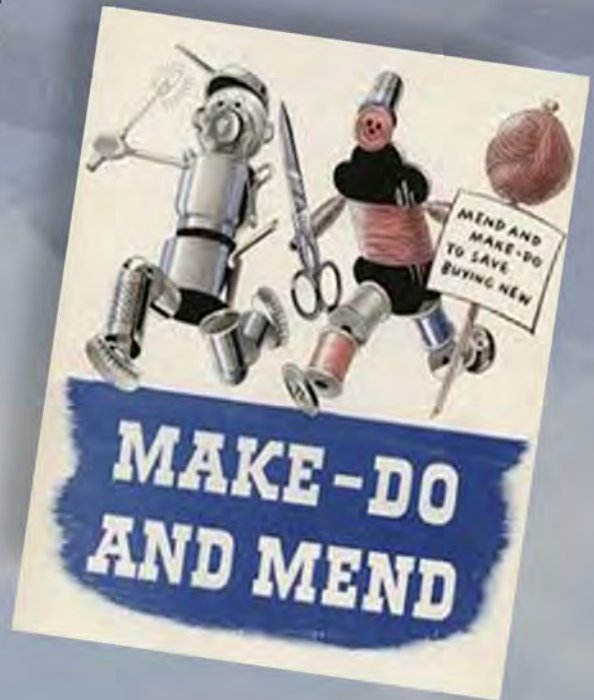




MAKE DO AND MEND

In addition to food, on June 1st, 1941, it also became necessary for clothing to be rationed.

The rationing scheme worked by giving each type of clothing item a 'points' value which varied according to how much material and time went into making it. Eleven coupons were needed for a dress, two for a pair of stockings, and eight coupons for a man's shirt or a pair of trousers. Women's shoes cost five coupons and men's, seven coupons. When buying new clothes, the shopper had to hand over coupons with a 'points' value as well as money. At first, every adult was given an allocation of 66 points to last one year, but this allocation was reduced as the war progressed.



The coupon allowance was at its lowest from 1945 and 1946. For the eight month period from 1 September 1945 to 30 April 1946 only 24 coupons were issued, meaning you only had 3 coupons a month. Throughout the war, special provisions were made for some people, including manual workers and theatrical performers. New mothers were also given 50 coupons. Government publicity offered advice about the complicated rationing system. Shoppers were constantly reminded of the need to plan their clothes purchases carefully and make difficult choices between garments of differing coupon values.



In order to eke out their precious rations, people rallied around and the "Make do and Mend" campaign really took flight. People learnt how to knit and sew to preserve their precious clothes for as long as possible. Men's trousers were turned into ladies skirts, old curtains made into outfits for children, parachute silk (from torn or unusable parachutes)

was highly prized and many wedding dresses were made from this material. Many an evening you would hear the click of knitting needles as reams of jumpers, cardigans, hats and scarves were knitted all over Britain. Scarves, socks and gloves were knitted in their thousands and packaged up to be sent off to the millions of husbands, brothers and sweethearts who were serving on the war front. Knitting wasn't just for women but both sexes and all ages enjoyed this useful pastime.



"Mrs Sew and Sew" was a cartoon character created to help educate people in how to "Make do and Mend." The Ministry of Information issued various leaflets to teach people basic sewing skills to enable them to make their clothes last longer and to make new ones using what they had so that they could keep their coupons for essential purchases. Leaflets explaining how to darn and patch clothes to cover up holes were among those issued – very useful for mothers of active children! Clothes were reinforced to make them last longer and in a fit state to be passed down to a younger brother or sister when outgrown. Holey socks were darned instead of being thrown away as we do nowadays.



Ladies used watered down gravy browning to colour their legs and an eyebrow pencil to draw a seam line down the back of the leg instead of spending their precious coupons on stockings.



HAVE A GO...

Click [Here](#) to see how you would cope with clothes rationing using our quiz sheet!
Email us your answer sheet – we would love to see what you would create!



Do you knit or sew already?
Send us some pictures of your handiwork

Do you have any elderly relatives or friends who were alive during WW2?
Ask them for their memories and write them down.

Do they remember the "Make do and Mend" campaign?
You might be surprised at what they tell you!

Don't forget to let us know how you get on by emailing us at
InvestigateAviation@lincolnshire.gov.uk