



Gallery of Costume

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## Jam Works Overall 1900-1905



This factory overall is made of hardwearing twilled cotton, woven in blue and white stripes. The sleeves are full-length and the skirt long, in order to protect the woman worker's own clothes, as well as for food hygiene reasons. It was worn in the C W S Jam Works at Middleton Junction, Greater Manchester, around 1900.

By the early 1900s a wider range of factory jobs became available for women whereas hitherto the jobs available has been largely in the textile industries, involving heavy work in poor conditions. Work in the food processing industries would have been eagerly sought by working women who had to support themselves financially, and the Co-operative Wholesale Society had a reputation as being a good employer, offering fair wages and good working conditions. Female workers would have worn these overalls, with caps to cover their hair, and they would have had to be boiled regularly to keep them clean, which explains why they are so sturdily made. However, these precautions would not be seen as adequate in a jam factory today, where workers wear latex gloves, caps, overalls and plastic disposable aprons for today's more rigorous standards of hygiene.

#### **Full item descriptions:**

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