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# Parsons shell loading plant brings big industry to SEK

This newspaper article from the Fort Scott Tribune details the size of both the buildings and the labor force to be used at the shell loading plant in Parsons, Kansas. Once built, the Parsons plant produced artillery munitions throughout World War II.

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## Parsons Shell Loading Plant Brings Big Industry To SEK

Virtual assurance of a shell loading plant to be located near Parsons brings into Southeast Kansas a factory employing from 4,000 to 6,000 persons and embracing a tract of land approximately six miles long and five miles wide. The government is expected to buy about 18,000 acres of land for the site.

Two government officials were said by the Parsons Sun to be in Labette yesterday and today to begin appraisal of land. They are T. E. Wilkins, chief appraiser, and W. B. Wallace, associate appraiser, of the acquisition department of the soil conservation service in Washington.

**120 Farms in Tract.**

The plant is to be situated southeast of Parsons, according to the Sun, which places its northern boundary close to the Frisco railroad east from the city and the southern boundary near the Joplin branch of the Katy railroad which runs east and west, north of Labette City. The northwest corner of the tract will be about a mile east from the southeast corner of Parsons. About 120 farms will be included in the tract.

It is believed the plant will be similar to those at LaPorte, Ind., and Burlington, Ia. Construction will be placed by contract in the hands of a construction company, which will hire the men and do the building, with about 600 carpenters employed.

Storage buildings for the shells will number about 40, each 50 feet wide and 220 feet long with concrete floors. The total number of buildings at the LaPorte, Ind., plant is 300. The greater number of buildings are used for incoming shells and powder and outgoing shells. High explosives are stored underground. The LaPorte plant also has 140 loading line buildings, with floor space of 16 acres. For the sake of safety the buildings of the entire plant are spread over the 18,000-acre tract.

The Sun says that many women will be employed at the plant. One of its big operations is the making of silk powder bags, and women are used in this work.

Under the plan of operation, shells and powder will be shipped to Parsons and the projectiles loaded at the plant there for shipment either to the Atlantic coast or to England. A proposed powder plant may be located at Pittsburg and the powder for the shells probably would be obtained there.

All that is needed to clinch the project is final approval by President Roosevelt. It has been passed by the Knudsen-Hillman office.