

SOURCE 5

Extract from a War Office document on employment of women in the RFC, April 1917

(PRO ref: WO 32/5530)

HOW TO USE THIS SOURCE TO HELP YOU ANSWER THE BIG QUESTION :

Look carefully at this source and consider what it tells you about how workers were affected by the war and how they contributed to the war effort. You should consider:

ASK YOURSELF:

- What does this source tell you about the work women were doing by 1917?
- What does this source tell you about attitudes to women workers in the war?
- Is this source useful for examining whether women workers were patriotic?
- Is this source any use for assessing whether women workers were appreciated?

SOURCE 5

ARMY COUNCIL INSTRUCTION.

No. of 1917.

WAR OFFICE,

April, 1917.

Employment of women with the Royal Flying Corps at Home, rates of pay and conditions of service.

The employment of women with the Royal Flying Corps at home has been approved. The conditions of service and rates of pay are as follows :—

1. Classes of employment.

- (a) Simple fitting work, assembling, sandblasting, vulcanizing and other similar operations, *e.g.*, acetylene welder, electrician, fitter, machinist, turner, tinsmith.
- (b) Dopers and painters.
- (c) Storeroomkeeping.
- (d) Fabric work (wing working, canvas stitching).
- (e) Tracers.
- (f) Assistant forewomen and forewomen.

In each class of employment there may be an assistant forewoman for every 20 women working at each place at each trade, and two assistant forewomen and one forewoman for every 40 women.

When the number of women working at a trade is less than 20 an assistant forewoman will be appointed only when considered necessary.

When the number of women exceeds 20, but does not attain 40, a forewoman will be appointed. A second assistant forewoman may also be appointed when considered necessary.

GENERAL SUPERVISORS.

When the number of women employed in one place in the classes of employment detailed above exceeds 200 one general supervisor will be appointed. She will be the intermediary between the women and the O.C., and all questions of discipline, for which she will be responsible, will be referred to her before they are referred to the O.C. She will not be concerned with any technical points connected with the work of any of the classes of women for whose discipline and general supervision she will be responsible.