

A History of Women in the UK Civil Service

This paper draws heavily on research carried out by Bea Morgan when working with Home Office Women. Bea in turn acknowledges the support of her partner who passed on her love of history and gave Bea confidence in herself, and also the support of Home Office Women who allowed her time to carry out this research.

The 1700s and Early 1800s

The general view in this period was that women should remain passive and docile and in the home, where she would be treated as subordinate to men. Any woman away from the domestic sphere and not behaving in this way was considered to be unfeminine and therefore in moral danger. Women were considered to be not much more than children with decisions made for them by fathers; husbands and when a woman was in service, her employers. There were few opportunities open to women at the time and these would have been limited to; governess; needlework; mill industry; laundry and domestic service. All work required women to be unmarried except for factory or home working for the working classes. The title of Mrs for the cook in a large household was an honorary title. Work was not considered a possibility for middle class married women. In the lower classes, married women did work, of necessity, in the mills and factories or take in 'home working', which would include making matchboxes, needlework or laundry. Where women did work they were considered to be a cheap and flexible labour force. (Holloway, p17)

The oldest government department, the Home Office, is known to have employed "necessary women" or housekeepers, although they were not classified as civil servants. In the early days the office of housekeeper was held by Mrs Elizabeth Emmitt, who paid Mrs Catherine Drinkwater to do the actual work. Mrs Drinkwater employed two assistants and was also the housekeeper for the Plantation Office and employed two assistants. The duties of the housekeeper included the cleaning of the rooms; lighting the fires and supplying clean towels; soap; sand; candles and other items required for running an office (Nelson, p56).

The Mid-1880s

The ideal role for women in the later 1800s remained that of wife. A girl's education was focused on marriage and a middle-class girl was expected to help her mother with light domestic duties and visiting, until a suitable marriage could be made. Any woman who did not marry was considered a failure and labelled a 'superfluous woman' because they had failed in their business of finding a husband. They held an inferior position within their families and, if they were fortunate, the unmarried daughters could become a companion to elderly parents; nurse to sick relatives or children; or participate in philanthropic work. Paid work was regarded as 'unnatural for middle-class

women'; it was considered a last and desperate resort that was undertaken when all other avenues had been exhausted. (Holloway, p36-38)

An impoverished genteel woman, such as a clergyman or clerks widow, or a middle-class girl whose father could not afford to keep her, could take work such as embroidery; millinery and governess, however this would reduce their whole family's standing in the community.

But there were signs of change, although strongly resisted by most men.

The new post of **pupil-teacher** was introduced in 1846 and children aged between 13 and 18 were trained as teachers. Scholarships were available to elementary training colleges, which enabled working-class girls and boys to train as teachers for elementary schools. These did not cover the full cost of the training, which effectively limited the courses to the children of the better-paid working class. This enabled working class families to send their daughters out to respectable work, which did not reduce the families standing. The middle-classes or those aspiring to gentility would not want to train their daughters until marriage was considered unlikely. This effectively stopped this group of women from participating in pupil-teacher training as this would not have been considered until after they were too late to be eligible. They also did not want them mixing with the 'labouring poor'. (Holloway, p41)

Needlework which had always been seen as women's work, was becoming commercialised and involved the professional tailor. As in other areas, women working in this area were seen as cheap labour and the 'skilled' male workers felt threatened by them. The reaction of male workers was to ban women from the unions, denying them the support to fight for better conditions and therefore women continued to be a cheap and pliable workforce. (Holloway, p24)

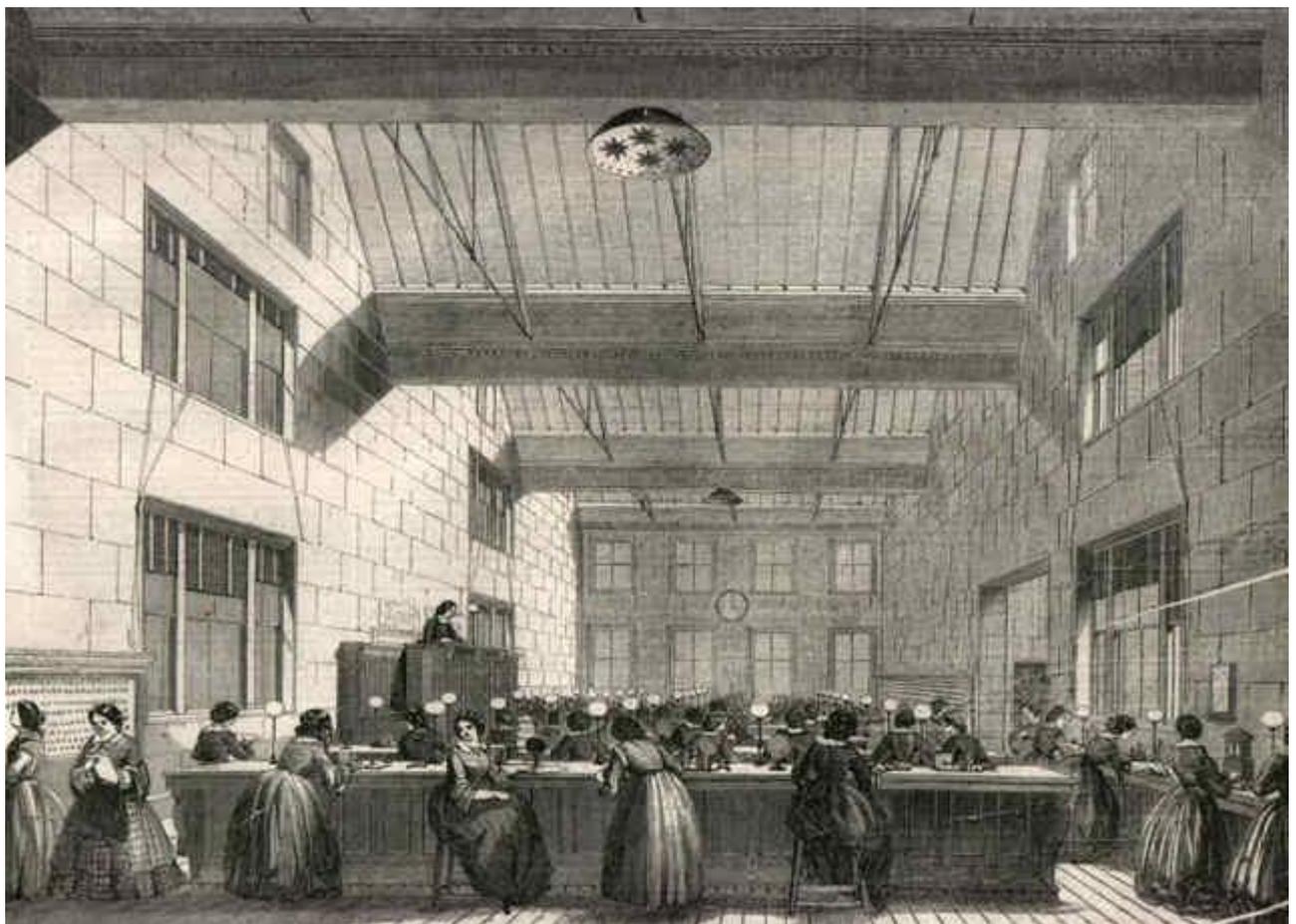
Nursing: Although it was not possible for Elizabeth Fry, a devout Quaker, to take paid employment, it was possible for her to do voluntary charity work, including in Newgate Prison and Guy's Hospital where in 1840 she started the first training school for nurses. The Fry nurses wore their own uniform and were expected to tend to both the physical and spiritual needs of their patients. Florence Nightingale even wrote to Elizabeth to explain how she had been influenced by Elizabeth's views on training nurses and took a group of 'Fry' nurses with her to the Crimean War.

The Married Women's Property Act 1870 determined that a woman's income was no longer the property of her husband, and that women could now inherit property. Married women were in 1883 allowed to acquire their own property other than by way of inheritance.

Queen Victoria took a close interest in Elizabeth Fry's work, meeting her on several occasions. Victoria wrote in her journal that she considered Elizabeth Fry to be a "very superior person". Through the work of Elizabeth Fry and her contemporaries it became possible for middle class women to work with local authorities on education inspection, poor law and work house inspection and

other types of 'social' work, provided it could be seen as charitable and was unpaid!

Telegraphists: The first women entered the Civil Service by the back door via the nationalisation of the Electric Telegraph Company. According to a statement quoted in the English woman's review in 1873, in around 1843 Queen Victoria, together with most of her daughters, had shown an interest in sources of remunerative employment for women and had expressed this interest to General Wylde' (Martindale, p16) a director of the Electric Telegraph Company from 1848 until 1870 (p30, www.distantwriting.co.uk/electrictelegraphcompany.aspx). It is known that Wylde did have royal connections and interested The Queen and Prince Albert in the Telegraph service (p30, www.distantwriting.co.uk/electrictelegraphcompany.aspx). "The offices of the Electric Telegraph Company were induced to demonstrate their loyalty [to the crown] rather than their faith in women by engaging girls [in employment in the telegraph offices]... and by 1870 there were 201 female workers" (Martindale, p16). These girls would have been appointed to their posts by recommendation and they would have come from middle-class families. Their wages were kept by their fathers. This would have been considered suitable for the unmarried daughters of the middle-classes, until suitable marriages could be made for them.



The Telegraph Gallery

The lady clerks at the new General Offices at Telegraph Street in 1859
They are working single- and two-needle instruments and
American inkers

Included in the description of the purpose built telegraph office is this statement;

The male and female telegraphists have separate staircases to gain their respective offices; that for the men leads from the principal staircase. The female clerks have a private staircase, leading from their large room direct to the street-door of the premises. By this staircase also they descend to a dining-hall and clock-room, which are provided exclusively for them. The ground floor is occupied by the sending-out offices and superintendent's room. The secretary's offices and the board-room are on the first floor.

(p43, www.distantwriting.co.uk/electrictelegraphcompany.aspx)

The telegraph Act of 1869 granted the Postmaster General a monopoly of inland telegraph business and required the postmaster to purchase any existing telegraph companies. With these companies came their workers, including the women (P16, Martindale) and all the women they employed became servants of the Post Office and therefore **Civil Servants** (Evans, p2 and Cohen, p153). The market forces of the day meant that the Postmaster General could secure capable workers at the minimum cost, by employing women, as they were cheaper than their male counterparts.

Having noted the successful employment of female telegraphists, the Postmaster General, Mr Scudamore introduced women clerks into the Clearing House branch of the General Post Office (GPO) in 1871 to deal with the telegram work (p1-2, Evans). He gave a report to the The Playfair Commission report of 1874-5 (Reproduced in the 1929 Royal Commission, p105) summarising the grounds on which he considered women's employment desirable, which included the following comments:-

- They have in an eminent degree a quickness of eye and ear and a delicacy of touch, which are essential qualifications of a good operator.
- They take more kindly than men or boys to sedentary employment and are more patient during long confinement to one place.
- The wages offered will attract male operators from an inferior class of the community and will attract females from a superior class.
- The superior class women will write and spell better than the inferior men, and where the staff is mixed will raise the tone of the whole staff.
- Women are less disposed to get together to extort higher wages.
- Women will not require increases related to length of service as they will retire for the purpose of getting married as soon as they get the chance. (He left this decision of retiring on marriage to the women and their husbands having remarked "we do not punish marriage by dismissal" (p147, Martindale).
- There will also be fewer women than men on the pension list.

These innovations were so successful that the types of work women were employed to do were expanded into clerical work. (Martindale, p17) These women were all nominated to their posts and were the daughters of professional men (p2, Evans). Despite Mr Scudamore's remark about not punishing marriage by dismissal, the rules on marriage were laid down in 1875, these included; 'A married women, who is not a widow is not eligible for any appointment in the General Post Office'; and any single women now established who marries will be required to resign. (Martindale, p147) It was at this point that resignation on Marriage became the general rule.

The Martindale Family

Louisa Martindale was brought up in a committed Congregationalist household that believed in religious and moral reform. After leaving school she involved herself in charity work as was proper to her families standing. It was here that she began to take an interest in the newly emerging women's movement. In 1871 she married a widower with four young children and had two of her own. Her children were Louisa, who became the first woman GP in Brighton and **Hilda**, who we will hear more of later. Louisa read the book, A Vindication of the Rights of Women by Mary Wollstonecraft, she felt that girls, including her daughters, should have the same educational opportunities as boys. Louisa was widowed before Hilda was born, which although difficult gave her the freedom to move her family to Brighton. This move enabled her daughters to attend the Brighton High School for Girls. (www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Wmartindale accessed 16/09/2010)

Once settled in Brighton Louisa became an active member of the Women's co-operative movement, and helped to start the Brighton branch of the Suffrage Society. She also set up a dispensary for women in Brighton with the help of two other feminists, Elizabeth Robins and Octavia Wilberforce. Her home became an important centre of the women's movement in Brighton. (www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Wmartindale, accessed 16/09/2010). Margaret Bondfield who was a shop girl in Hove at this time, attended the Martindale 'open house' on Sundays. She was later to become an MP and in 1931 she was appointed the first woman in the cabinet, The Secretary of State for labour. (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-28104806>)

The Langham Place Group and The Society for the Promotion of Employment of Women

In 1858 a group known as the Langham Place Group published the English Women's Journal, which printed articles on a woman's right to work and suitable occupations. By 1858 they developed a campaigning organisation known as the Society for the Promotion of the Employment of Women (SPEW). This organisation developed a network of regional branches in places such as Gateshead; Nottingham and Brighton. They provided the first apprenticeships and technical training to prepare middle; lower-middle and educated working class women for work in fields already open to them.

SPEW affiliated with the National Association for the Promotion of Social Sciences (NAPSS), which was sympathetic to the women's cause. They had a general committee that comprised twelve men and twelve women, with Lord Shaftesbury as the first president. SPEW provided the only platform where women could speak in public and many leading women from the suffrage movement learned how to make speeches on that platform. Public Speaking was not considered a respectable thing for women to do and their speakers were satirised in contemporary journals. By 1867 women made up 80% of the subscribers and controlled the society. Men lent it respectability with the weight of their names. SPEW was so effective that Queen Victoria agreed to become its patron. (Holloway, p44)

Some of the occupations where SPEW provided training were 'law copying', bookkeeping, accountancy and printing. However, it was difficult to find work for women because the men often felt threatened by the presence of the women and often threatened to quit if women were employed.

Civil Service Reform

In 1854 the Northcote -Trevelyan Report on the Organisation of the Permanent Civil Service was published. It provided the basis for the modern civil service and ensures that recruits are placed into a hierarchical structure of classes and grades, according to ability; and that promotion is on the basis of merit not on the grounds of 'preferment, patronage or purchase'. But there was no mention of women at all. Every reference to civil servants is to gentlemen, men or boys. It seems as though it was totally inconceivable that women (and girls) could even be considered as civil servants.

Jeannie Senior - The First Directly Appointed Female Civil Servant

In 1873 Mr James Stansfield was made the president of the Local Government Board. He was described by the historians Mr and Mrs J.L. Hammond as a "Victorian champion of sex equality" because, amongst other things he appointed the first female inspector on the education of girls in pauper schools and workhouses, Mrs Jane Senior (p 30, Martindale). Mrs Senior or, as she was known to her 'intimates', Jeanie, had a large network of pioneering social reformers among her friends including; Olivia Hill; Florence Nightingale; Julia Margaret Cameron (photographer); George Eliot; Kate Collins (Dickens's daughter) (www.timeshighereducation.co.uk accessed 11/05/10); Josephine Butler; and Lord Shaftesbury; (www.peerage.org accessed 11/05/10).

Wikipedia Entry: Jane Nassau Senior (1828–1877) was Britain's first female civil servant,^[2] and co-founder of the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants (MABYS). She was born Jane Elizabeth Hughes at Uffington on 10 December 1828. She married Nassau John Senior on 10 August 1848 at Shaw Church. Her relief work with soldiers returning from the Franco-Prussian War led to the foundation of the National Society for Aid to Sick and Wounded in War in 1870, forerunner of the British Red Cross; and her work with

impoverished children in Surrey led to her appointment in 1873, as an assistant inspector of workhouses. Senior was a friend and correspondent of the novelist George Eliot. She died of 'cancer of the womb' and exhaustion on 24 March 1877, aged 48; and is buried in Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey.^[3]

This appointment of Mrs Senior was an 'unpopular innovation' and considered 'unendurable' to the male civil servants (Martindale, p30) and was 'fiercely resisted' (www.peerage.org accessed 11/05/10). They provided such an 'unfriendly atmosphere' that Mr Stansfield was required to give Mrs Senior 'all the encouragement he could' (Martindale, p30). Before he left office Mr Stansfield made Mrs Senior's appointment to the civil service permanent so that "they could only get rid of her upon abolition terms..." (as quoted by Martindale, p31).

In the third Annual Report of the Local Government Board special attention was drawn to the 'thorough and courageous' report Mrs Senior produced and it was included as an appendix (p31, Martindale). This report was 'savagely attacked in the press and there was considerable correspondence in The Times where she was referred to as "that woman" (www.peerage.org accessed 11/05/10).

Jeanie Senior was also a founder member of The Red Cross and Dr Barnardo is said to have taken up Mrs Senior's torch when he opened the Barkingside Girls Village Home in 1876. Dr Barnardo is reported to have said that 'Boarding out... owes its introduction in England to the indefatigable labours of the late Mrs Nassau Senior'. (www.peerage.org accessed 11/05/10)



Portrait of 'Jeanie' Senior by George Frederick Watts (1857) held by The National Trust, WIGHTWICK MANOR nr. Wolverhampton.

The Playfair Commission

The Playfair Commission report of 1874-5 addressed the question of the employment of female clerks in the civil service. They are quoted as stating:-

We have taken evidence regarding the employment of female clerks. The experience of the Post Office... shows that women are well qualified for clerical work of a less important character and are satisfied with a lower rate of pay than is expected by men similarly employed. We, therefore see no reason why the employment of female clerks should not be extended to other departments where the circumstances will admit of it.

In the Telegraph Office, male and female clerks are employed in the same rooms without inconvenience. But, as regards the ordinary clerical work of an office, we are not prepared to recommend the employment of women unless they can be placed in separate rooms, under proper female supervision.

(Reproduced in the 1929 Royal Commission, p105)

The difficulty of segregating men and women was often used as a reason why women could not be employed.

The Post Office Savings Bank

In 1875 forty 'young ladies' were taken on in the newly created Daily Balance section of the Savings Bank, which was part of the GPO. This was seen as 'the agreeable fad of a few influential People' because it was clearly beyond the capacity of women to add and subtract figures and anything like a balance sheet would be outside women's comprehension. The controller of the Savings Bank later recalled his surprise that the pretty girls were taking the work seriously and adding up figures without making mistakes. (p25 Martindale)

The Post Office Journal of the day (The Civilian) printed objections to the women working which included the vigorous protest of the Controller, who with his staff points out that there are grievous dangers both moral and official in employing women. The gentlemen of the office even contemplate holding an 'indignation' meeting in protest. There was even a clerk who in giving evidence to the Playfair Commission stated that some women would be able to do some of the lighter office work, but that they would be unable to wield the 'heavy pressure, using very hard pens and carbon paper required for the job. (Martindale, p26, Martindale).

Miss M.C. Smith entered the GPO in 1875. A few months later it was decided to increase the number of women employed and to put them under the supervision of a woman. Although only 23 years old, Miss Smith was given the post of Lady Superintendent and put in charge of 64 women. After an

investigation into the work of the women's division, the report to the Postmaster-General said that 'women's division was admirably managed and that the work was both well done and economical'. Although women had been seen as 'unpromising' it was Miss Smith's demonstration of organising and training that demonstrated that women could do well in clerical duties. She was instrumental in enabling women to extend the variety of work they were allowed to undertake. Indeed she is said to 'never turn an opportunity for women down'. (Martindale, p26-27) By 1896 the female staff in the GPO, under Miss Smith had grown to 900.

By 1880, Mr Henry Fawcett MP (Liberal - Brighton 1865-74, Hackney 1874-84) was appointed Postmaster-General. He was an advocate of women's rights even challenging Gladstone over giving women the franchise. He was married to Millicent Garrett in 1867. Millicent Fawcett (Nee Garrett) was one of the leading lights in the women's emancipation movement who often assisted her husband in his work as an MP (www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk). (Millicent's sister Dr Elizabeth Garrett-Anderson opened a hospital for women in Euston Road London.)

Mr Fawcett as Postmaster-General stopped the practice of women requiring recommendations for working in the Post Office. He opened up applications to public competition by examination, the same way men gained their appointments for the first time.

By giving women opportunities and putting exceptional women in positions that could prove the worth of women to the civil service, opportunities for women gradually increased. This helped to start the change in public opinion on the employment of middle-class women. Which went from one where it was beneath a middle-class women to undertake paid work, into one where there was a possibility of some work becoming acceptable, provided you were unmarried. In the following years women were appointed to posts in the Registrar-Generals office; the Inland Revenue; the Local Government Board; the Board of Education; the National Health Insurance Commission and the Board of Trade (Martindale, p28 - 46)

Typewriters

The Ridley Commission considered the employment of women in their Report of September 1888 into the structure etc. of the civil service. In the evidence there is information on the large staff of female clerks employed in the accounts and other branches of the Post Office. The Inland Revenue also employed women, where they used 'typewriters' (this referred to the person operating what we know of today as a typewriter). (p106, Royal Commission on the Civil Service, 1929, introductory memoranda) Sir Algernon Edward West gave evidence to the Commission on how he was a very quick writer, although his writing was illegible. He said that "these 'typewriting women' can beat me two to one in writing and that shows the amount of work we can get from them". They were also said to be accurate and the Inland Revenue used the typewritten letters in all their correspondence with the Treasury. The

women were also cheap and required no superannuation (Pension) and could take the place of the male copyists. (Martindale, p65)

The Foreign Office informed the Ridley Commission in 1890, that they employed one 'lady typewriter'.

There was also one lady typewriter in the Department of Agriculture. She was secluded in a room in the basement and the chief clerk issued instructions that no member of staff over the age of 15 was to enter her room.

There was another unidentified department which employed women typewriters. They were supplied by the company that supplied the machines and were regarded as part of the machinery. It was considered that great care was needed to protect these (initially two) women and keep them free from the danger of interference. To do this the department ensured that the women had a separate room and toilet, in the upper part of the building. They were locked into the room with their meals served through a hatch in the wall. Their day finished ¼ of an hour before the men and no man was allowed to take work to them, without a special permit. The only time the women were allowed into the main office was to collect their pay. As their numbers grew they were marched crocodile style by the superintendent to collect their pay. It was decided to call these women just 'typewriters' so their gender would not be disclosed. The first two women were employed in the place of three men copyists and they turned out the work of four copyists. An added bonus of typewriting was that a second 'pressed flimsy' (carbon copy) of every letter was produced, allowing better records to be kept. (Martindale, p66-67)

The Home Office

In 1890 the Home Office ordered two typewriters. However, rather than having the machines operated by women, they set their 'boy clerks' to using them. It was felt that the subject matter in the Home Office was too distasteful for the eyes of women. And there was nowhere women could be suitably kept away from the rest of the staff.

By 1892 there were 'Female Type Writers' in at least seven Departments. Most of these were in temporary positions, so petitions were sent to the Treasury for increased rates of pay and for women to be made permanent staff. In March 1894 the Treasury created a class for women typists. At the same time they introduced the marriage gratuity and the requirement that "the service of a woman ceases as a matter of course on marriage". Resignation on marriage had been the general rule in the majority of departments although there were a few isolated instances where some women had been allowed to stay after marriage. By November 1895 the marriage bar was extended to all established female labour in 'public' departments, although it was not universally applied. (Martindale, p148, and p106, Royal Commission on the Civil Service, 1929, introductory memoranda).

The Home Office 'Experiment'

On August 29th 1833, the Royal Assent was given to the fourth of a long series of British Factory Acts. By section 17 the King was empowered to appoint four Inspectors of Factories – this has been seen as probably the most important step in the history of industrial legislation.

The Chief Inspector of Factories, in his annual report of 1879 says “I doubt very much whether the office of factory inspector is one suitable for women” and that the duties of a factory inspector would be incompatible with the gentle, home-loving character of a woman (Martindale, p51 -52)

Women and teenage girls working in the Bryant & May factory in Bow went on strike in 1888 over pay and poor working conditions including a 14-hour day and health dangers.

From 1891, women could no longer be forced to live with their husbands.

In 1893, after much discussion and with considerable hesitation, the first two women inspectors were appointed by Mr Asquith to improve the working conditions for women working in factories; sweatshops and cottage industries. This was despite objections from ‘official opinion’ and only tried as an experiment, with the consideration that the work was only fit for a “woman of mature age”. The first women factory inspectors were Miss May Abraham (who became Mrs H.J. Tennant) and Miss May Paterson and they brought with them valuable experience of labour questions in Scotland. (Martindale,p53,). The Factory inspectors were skilled people and employed for their knowledge. In contrast, civil servants were trained once they joined the service, no women were employed by the Home Office in general grades.

Hilda Martindale (daughter of Louisa – see above) joined the Home Office in 1907 as a factory inspector. She rose to the rank of Deputy Chief Inspector. The Chief Inspector appointed in the mid-nineteenth twenties was Sir Gerald Bellhouse and according to Martindale was fair-minded and an advocate of equal opportunities for women within the inspectorate. Both Martindale and Bellhouse donated cups for the female and male table tennis champions. Martindale also campaigned for the removal of the marriage bar. (A Bennett, p11-12)

In England the women were segregated both physically and appointed to deal only with women’s trades. They worked under their own woman head. In Scotland, a radically different arrangement was instituted. The country was split into six districts and one of those districts was given a woman inspector in charge of both men and women. This was the first experiment of aggregation in the civil service, where men and women worked side by side. (p64, Martindale)

In 1914 the numbers of women inspectors in the civil service, was given as 200, with 18 in the ‘Factory Department of the Home Office’. These women would have specialised in the working conditions in factories employing women and children. (p88, Royal Commission on the Civil Service, 1914). The Women Inspectors in the Home Office, were a separate branch of the

inspectorate and their numbers grew to 22, by the end of that year (Pellew, 158.).

National Health Insurance Commission

The National Health Insurance Commission was created by Parliament in 1911 with the civil servant, Sir Robert Morant as chairman. He obtained authority to request loans of the promising assistants from other government departments. These included four women Insurance Commissioners who were appointed to serve in the English; Scottish; Irish and Welsh Commissions. And they were to receive equal pay with their male colleagues: one of the very first times women were given equal pay. (Martindale, P64.)

Royal Commission on the Civil Service

The Royal Commission of 1912 looked into the conditions under which women should be employed in the civil service. (Martindale, P69) They took as their 'guiding principle that "the object should be not to provide employment for women as such, but to secure for the State the advantage of the services of women whenever those services will best promote its interests". They did not accept that "differences of sex should be ignored in recruiting for service". They also stated that "the responsibilities of married life are normally incompatible with the devotion of a woman's whole-time and unimpaired energy to the Public Services" and that the salaries of "women should be fixed on a lower scale than those of men ..." It also stated that "female clerks, where employed should be accommodated separately from male clerks...", although later they state that in particular cases such objections based on segregation, should not be a decisive reason not to employ women in the same branch of service (p 110 - 112, Appendix to part 1 of minutes of Evidence to the Royal Commission on the Civil Service, 1929)

The Commission did not agree on everything. There were significant reservations to the report on the employment of women. The differences of opinion were around how women were recruited and their salaries. The majority recommended open recruitment of women by separate examination, with a minority suggesting that there should be a limited number of places for women using the Class 1 examination. As for salary, a majority thought that there should be a Treasury enquiry into removing the inequalities of salary and that women should be paid the same as men for the same work. The minority opinion was a "scale adequate for men was excessive for women" because, after all, women did not have families to keep. There was also a minority opinion which favoured the extension of the employment of women into the upper ranks of the Service, but to a lesser extent than the lower ranks. The differences of opinion suggest that ideas about women's employment were beginning to change. (p 110, Appendix to part 1 of minutes of Evidence to the Royal Commission on the Civil Service, 1929)

McDonnell Commission

The McDonnell Commission of 1914 considered the questions connected with women's employment and were unable to come to a unanimous conclusion. Some felt that valuable experience was being lost, when a woman retired on marriage. There were others who felt that in the higher grades of work where the loss of specialist knowledge and would therefore be a significant public loss. However the overriding conclusion was that the consideration of the family and responsibilities of married life were normally incompatible with public service. (p149, Martindale) The commission also recommended continuing with a segregated workforce (p92, 1914 Royal Commission on the Civil Service).

The commission also addressed questions on entry to the civil service by examination. They suggested that both girls and boys should be eligible on submitting a leaving certificate from a recognised school. This would have shown that the applicant had been taught subjects proper to their age and received their education under condition likely to secure bodily health. However, the commission believes that the education system is unable to do this and therefore people are being withdrawn from school to be prepared specifically for the exams. (p93, 1914 Royal Commission on the Civil Service).

The Commission also looked at the questions around retirement on marriage, stating that as retirement was compulsory it would be an unfair to argue that women would not give a lifetimes service and for this to be used as an argument against the employment of women. They note that as only 2-3% of women leave for marriage and that it was in fact an advantage as it allowed 'new blood and vigour' into the department (Appendix 4B, general arguments). In their conclusion it states that 'the regulations requiring women to retire on marriage should be reconsidered' because it merely acts as a deterrent to marriage and that there is a 'consequent loss to the Nation of mothers of a specially selected class (Appendix B2, VII general conclusions).

(The Appendix to part 1 of minutes of Evidence to the Royal Commission on the Civil Service (1929) contains background information on previous commissions on the question of the employment of women (p105 – 134, Royal Commission on the Civil Service 1929). This is split into sections dealing with different commission reports in different time periods. On page 109 it provides a summary of the recommendations for the Royal Commission in 1912-15.)

World War 1

During the First World War the numbers of women in the civil service rapidly increased, as the recruitment of men had been almost completely suspended. The men were also volunteering and being called up for military service, further depleting the numbers of civil servants. Women were employed in much larger numbers although they were only employed on a temporary basis. The majority of these were in the clerical classes. By 1919 there were nearly 170,000 women working in the civil service, compared with 33,000 in 1911, but the number had fallen to 102,000 by 1921.

There were a few appointed to senior positions including one in the Civil Service Commission, in place of a first division clerk, an additional factory inspector and a number of language experts. In 1916 the post of Chief Inspector of Women's Employment was created to deal with the increasing demand for women workers as there were no men available. By the end of the war, women were engaged on all kinds of work, not only in the same room, but even at the same tables, in both the old and the new offices of Whitehall. The segregation of the sexes had been impossible to maintain under the circumstances of the war and it was finally recognised that employing women was of great benefit to the country. (p75-82, Martindale)

The war had opened new opportunities for a wider range of occupations for women and this led to a decline in the numbers of women prepared to be domestic servants. The wages were higher, with better conditions and greater independence for women. (Bourke, J. 2009, www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/britain_wwone/women_employment_01 accessed 03/02/10)

So you think you are poorly paid?

HOME OFFICE,
WHITEHALL,
17th Dec., 1917.

Sir,

We, the undersigned Boy Clerks, serving in the Home Office, respectfully beg that our scale of pay be reviewed with a view to the grant of a substantial increase.

The greatly increased cost of living makes the present rate of 15/- plus 4/- war bonus inadequate, and as many of us live away from home it means that we have to receive weekly amounts from home, which, with our class fees, makes a substantial call on our parents' funds; and some of us do not even receive any such help.

We also wish to draw your special attention to the comparative rates paid to several junior girls in the Office who are of the same ages as ourselves. Although we have passed a Civil Service Examination and perform equal and superior work to these junior girls, we think it unfair that they should be paid higher rates: though some of them do typewriting the same may equally be said of many of the Boy Clerks, and we respectfully point out that several Boy Clerks perform the same work as girls who are paid 30/- per week.

Trusting that this petition may receive your favourable consideration.

We are,
Sir,
Your obedient Servants

Sir Edward Troup, K.C.B.

This is a facsimile of a letter sent to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State under the signatures of some fifty-two boy clerks employed in the Home Office during the first world war. It illustrates not only a pre-Whitley concern with pay and conditions, but also some friction over the influx of women members of staff, which the Home Office had resisted for so long. The reply to the letter was swift, peremptory and negative.

It affords an illuminating insight into an age when pay for the lower grades was every bit as live an issue as it is today. It was a time when personal budgets were even tighter, and lunch for the boy clerks was frequently described as 'a penny bar of chocolate and a stroll down Strutton Ground'. A little earlier, when the Home Office had a resident Office Keeper occupying private quarters in the basement of the Whitehall building, it was the custom for his wife to provide free lunches for the clerks on a rotary basis.

HAPPY ENDINGS

Twenty years later, just before the 2nd World War, ten signatories of the 1917 petition had by that time secured some improvement in their financial situation by promotion to the Higher Clerical grade (equivalent to Executive Officer).

But, according to the 1938 Staff List, at least one of the original number was still soldiering on as a Clerical Officer.

There was one particular issue that was brought to the attention of the Treasury by 52 'boy clerks' in the Home Office in 1917. They petitioned the treasury protesting that the 'girl clerks' were paid higher rates than the 'boy clerks' despite the fact that the boy's had passed the civil service exam. (Home Office papers 321, 320/4 quoted in A Bennett, Cat's Eye, Special Edition, HOSSA. 1982, P11) This anomaly came about because the civil service was a reserved occupation so the boy's could not leave. There was also a need for greatly increased staff numbers to cope with the work the war brought. To attract the girls in this economic environment, the girls were paid more than the boys, although they were considered temporary and not established civil servants. However, this was short lived. After the war the girls were 'let go' to make way for the returning service men and the boys continued to be established. It was not until many years later that women were allowed to take the civil service exam, on equal terms with men.

The whole country was involved in the war effort and women rallied to the women's Army; Navy; and Air Services, taking on the administrative, clerical and support work. In the board of Agriculture women officials were appointed to encourage women to join the Land Army. (p75-79, Martindale) Even the suffragettes suspended their fight for emancipation for the duration of the war. The Treasury agreed to enrol women university graduates as administrative assistants and to the transfer of some women from departmental to specific administrative work. In the Home Office more women factory inspectors were appointed and the scope of their work was widened. They undertook the duties connected with men's trades and advised on the substitution of women in industry. (Martindale, p78,)

After The War

Then, after the end of the war, decisions had to be made about the distribution of peacetime jobs. A Women's Committee was accordingly appointed in 1918 to advise the Minister for Reconstruction. The committee accepted that returning heroes must have their fair share of the jobs, but argued that it would be foolish to turn the clock back and lose capable workers simply on the grounds of sex. It would be an even greater folly, they thought, to send away those women who had demonstrated 'administrative capacity of high grade' during the war. In the short term, therefore, women who had proved their worth should be eligible for appointment to government posts. In the long term, all civil service jobs should be opened to women on the same terms as to men.

But the Government were not persuaded and limited its acknowledgment of the contribution of women to the war effort to the two pieces of legislation. The first was the Representation of the People Act 1918 ('The Fourth Reform Act'). This greatly increased the numbers of those entitled to vote by abolishing practically all property qualifications for men and by enfranchising women over 30 who met minimum property qualifications. Women over 30 years old received the vote if they were either a member, or married to a member, of the Local Government Register, a property owner, or a graduate voting in a University Constituency. Full electoral equality for women did not occur until the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act 1928.

The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 then enabled women to enter the legal profession and the civil service and to become jurors – see further below.

But it was no possible to overcome the anger that was shown towards those women 'taking' jobs from men. Indeed, many women themselves claimed that priority should be given to single and widowed women over married women when it came to jobs. Isobel M Pazzey of Woolwich wrote to the Daily Herald in October 1919, saying that 'No decent man would allow his wife to work, and no decent woman would do it if she knew the harm she was doing to the widows and single girls who are looking for work. Put the married women out send them home to clean their houses and look after the man they married and give a mother's care to their children. Give the single women

and widows the work.’ (as quoted in Bourke, J. 2009, www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/britain_wwone/women_employment_01 accessed 03/02/10)

There were some occupations where the women employed passed resolutions asking for the banning of married women. This included the women of the Civil Service which passed a resolution asking for the ban in 1921. (Bourke, J. 2009, www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/britain_wwone/women_employment_01 accessed 03/02/10). This became known as the marriage bar. There were also other problems for women, during the war women had to be accepted as medical students, in the 1920's women were rejected on the grounds of modesty. And the National Association of Schoolmasters campaigned against the employment of female teachers. In 1924, the London County Council changed its policy from ‘shall resign on marriage’ to ‘the contract shall end on marriage’ this, of course, only applied to women (www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/britain_wwone/women_employment_01 accessed 03/02/10).

Towards the end of the war there were a number of committees set up to consider amongst other things, the different aspects of the work done by women and how women would be employed after the war. Of these the Machinery of Government Committee, chaired by Lord Haldane (1918 - 1919), advised on the improvement of Government, and recommended that the range and variety of ‘duties entrusted’ to women in the civil service, should be extended to ‘practically all departments’. It also recommended that the Class 1 Exam should be opened to women; and that for some posts, women were more suitable than men. (Martindale, p82-83)

By comparison the Gladstone Committee reported on recruitment to the Civil Service after the war, which was presented four months later. They concluded that although women had temporarily filled the civil service posts, the conditions under which they served were not satisfactory in themselves, to warrant any positive conclusions on the question of the employment of women. This was because of the hasty recruitment and inadequate training and supervision. There is also a suggestion that women did not cope with a sudden or a prolonged strain as well as men would and that they required a greater amount of sick leave. (Martindale, p83-84,) There was one other sticking point in their view, the possibility of placing men under the control of women. This meant that it would be necessary to continue the practice of having segregated departments and promotion lists. They concluded that “it would be unsafe to introduce women forthwith, as interchangeable with men, throughout the various Departments. And that a readjustment for this kind would require to be worked out by gradual processes and carefully tested stage by stage” (p115, Royal Commission on the Civil Service, 1929, introductory memoranda).

This demonstrates that there were two schools of thought on the employment of women. The first that women were very capable and that this had been proved during the war; the second was the historical view that women were

unsuited to work in the civil service and needing protecting; Public opinion was also beginning to change.

1919 – 194,000 Civil Servants (Civil Service Statistics, HMSO, 1971, p14)

The First Sex Discrimination Act

The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act was enacted in 1919. This said that no-one shall be disqualified from any civil or judicial office or profession on the grounds of sex. Major Hills introduced an amendment to introduce the words 'or marriage'. He contended that "in private occupations married women form the very best servants of their employers". He was also of the opinion that the choice of not marrying and having children or giving up her employment, was very hard on women (p150, Martindale). However within the bill there was this proviso which meant that it was possible for the more traditional views on women to continue to prevail.

notwithstanding anything in this section, His Majesty may by Order in Council authorise regulations to be made providing for and prescribing the mode of the admission of women to the civil service of His Majesty, and the conditions on which women admitted to that service may be appointed to or continue to hold posts therein, and giving power to reserve to men any branch of or posts in the civil service in any of His Majesty's possessions overseas, or in any foreign country; and

There was much discussion in the House at this time on the terms of the admission of women into the civil service. One of the things taken into consideration was the men now returning from war. The entry regulations for returning service men were extended to ensure that those men who had been unable to take the exam could be eligible. At the same time women were still required to face a selection board. This put women at a considerable disadvantage as the men knew what they would be tested on and received the training to enable them to pass. Women were not permitted to sit these exams. It was considered that it would give women better opportunities if, appointments were made by selection board. This was continued until experience showed women could acquire the knowledge to pass the exams. It was a further three years before women were entitled to sit the same exam as men.

The conditions of the 1919 Act enabled making some posts only available to men, by Order in Council and this was used to reserve overseas posts to men. It also became common practice for any posts which dealt with overseas affairs to be reserved for men.

Women in the Home Office - Aggregation

The Factory department of the Home Office was reorganised in 1920 and the Chief Inspector, Sir Malcolm Robinson was strongly in favour of giving the women more responsibility. The men's and women's sides of the inspectorate were amalgamated into a single organisation and women were eligible to apply for all posts, for the first time. There were some posts reserved specifically for women where they performed 'special duties' in regard to women's work. The inspectorate responded by doing their best to make the new arrangements work and allowed the 'heavy industries employers' who asked, to continue to be inspected by men. This was seen as necessary because the women did not have the technical engineering qualifications. There is no evidence that the women inspectors failed their duties in any way, and the Trades Union Congress General Council expressed the view that the women were as competent as the men. There was one other pioneering decision taken in the Home Office inspectorate; that women should be promoted on a basis of common seniority, with the men. They realised that there would need to be a special arrangement until there were enough women eligible for promotion on the grounds of seniority, to ensure a balance between the sexes. (Martindale, p133-135)

After all the objections when the first woman was appointed, they were now considered equal to men in the Home Office, when it came to factory inspectors.

Post-War Reforms

On the 26th August 1921 regulations were made laying down that all female candidates for any established post in the civil service should be unmarried or widowed and that any woman holding such a post should be required to resign on marriage. However they did make a proviso that exceptions might be made on the recommendation of the head of the department concerned and that the Treasury were satisfied that it was in the interests of public service. (pp152-153, Martindale) .

At the same time (1921) the Treasury decided that 'all posts in the commercial diplomatic service and the trade commissioner service would be reserved for men. It was felt that women's official services in this direction must be barred, as it was not in the public interest. (Martindale, p188-189) .

It was only in 1925 that the open competition for the administrative class was resumed after the war. Women were for the first time, able to compete on equal terms for the higher posts. In that first competition, 80 men and 27 women applied and of those 19 men and 3 women were appointed. However, the numbers of women competing were disappointing. Between 1927 and 1935, only 88 women competed and only 8 were successful. Enquiries showed that women were obliged to get work at once on leaving school, or to train for teaching for financial reasons. They rarely could afford the coaching advised for candidates to prepare for the exams, with the remote chance of passing. (p105, Martindale) With more publicity and loan funds made available for the most suitable candidates to pay for special coaching, the numbers of women passing increased significantly. (Martindale, p106)

Miss Margaret Bondfield MP talked about the plight of unemployed women in her Maiden Speech to Parliament on 21 January 1924. She informed the house that there were around a million women who had been unemployed during the previous three years and that with very little expense and a certain amount of administrative common sense, things could be improved. She noted that there was limited and conditional funding available for women's training but that this was in the form of small grants for training domestic servants. Miss Bondfield went on to say that it would be beneficial for women if the grants for training could be extended to 'home makers. There were also other areas where there was room for Government action, according to Bondfield, notably the clerical work that had been undertaken by women during the war, although she considers the women were unable to continue in that work after the war due to a lack of training. Women require opportunities for developing technical and general knowledge and that this could be achieved at little cost and great benefit to society. She also went on to say that the staffing of the factories inspectorate was inadequate to cope with the vast problems in industry to ensure that the existing labour laws could be upheld and that this was an area of government that needed more resources. Miss Margaret Bondfield went on to become the Minister for Labour (now known as Employment). She was the first woman appointed as a minister in the UK government. (<http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofBritain/Margaret-Bondfield/>)

The Tomlin Commission

The 1929 Tomlin Commission introduced the policy of 'a fair field and no favour' and argued that 'the existence of prejudice was not sufficient justification for excluding women from posts'. Along with this came an expectation for aggregation as opposed to segregation. (p101, Martindale) This has since been adopted as a principal requirement from all civil servants with regard all forms of prejudice. Their report recommended that the discretionary power should become an effective instrument, principally applied to the higher grades, particularly to posts requiring special qualifications. (Martindale, p155,)

'In December 1929 Sir John Anderson, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Home Office, told the Tomlin Commission that "undoubtedly the work of the women is quite satisfactory and certainly compares favourably with the work of the men". He also stated that "he was in favour of amalgamation of staffs, of recruiting men and women to the same grade in the future and of having the same ladder of promotion". In fact the women inspectors represented the Home Office at a number of international conferences and gave evidence before commissions and committees. Women were also appointed as probation inspectors when the probation branch was established and in 1935 there was a woman appointed as Assistant Commissioner in the Prison Commission. (Martindale, p135-136,) the original objections to women working as factory inspectors had all proved groundless.

In 1931 there was one exception to the resignation on marriage (Martindale, p153,). The Commission also recommended that special leave on full pay should be allowed for up to two months (three, if recommended by a physician) in the event of confinement (pregnancy). (Martindale, p156,)

Questions about women's employment continued to be considered and the National Whitley Council formed a Committee on Women's Question in 1934. They recommended an immediate review of all reserved posts and required the departments to publicly state the reason for the reservations and that the situation be reviewed in three years. At the same time they recommended that departmental examinations to address questions on how to remove segregation, which was to be reviewed in five years. (p102, Martindale)

Between 1934 and 1938, eight women civil servants were retained after marriage. This included professional and technical women and one woman 'principal, the first women administrative officer to be so retained. (Martindale p157 and Cohen, p191,)

By 1938 there were about 80,000 women employed in the departments of state and recruited on the same basis as men. It was expected at that time that the diplomatic and consular services would soon be opened up to women. (p203, Martindale)

World War 2

During the Second World War women as well as men faced conscription (Holloway, p13). Most single women at this time were involved in paid employment and were reluctant to move into factory work or the women's sections of the armed forces. The shortages in the labour force meant that married women were also expected to do their bit by taking on war work. The attempts to assist women combine domestic and paid work at this time included the introduction of nurseries; canteens; schemes to assist with shopping and part-time work. The introduction of part-time work enabled many women to continue working after marriage in the private sector.

The Marriage Bar was abolished in the home civil service in 1946, prompting this cartoon in the Home Office's internal staff magazine 'Red Tape'.



RAISING THE MARRIAGE BAR
 cartoon from 'RedTape' August 1946

When the statistics for 1970 are looked at more closely, we discover that women made up 40% of the civil service. 31% of the full time employees and 91% of the part time staff were women with 61% of the temporary posts held by women. They made up 99% of the typing staff; 73% of the clerical assistant's and 9% of the home service (Civil Service Statistics, HMSO, 1971, p9). The group with the highest numbers leaving the service were the typing staff with 20.5% leaving in 1969. A high number of permanent staff left between the ages of 20 and 24, particularly women, and again between 60 and 65, particularly men, amongst the clerical grades. Between these age groups there were significantly fewer people leaving the service. (Civil Service Statistics, HMSO, 1971, p36). In 1969 there were 178 women and one man joining as permanent typists. The vast majority of the typing posts were classed as temporary with 39 men and 6,201 women joining in 1969 (Civil Service Statistics, HMSO, 1971, p54).

The 1970 Annual Report from the Civil Service Commission provides the statistics on the open competitions for civil service posts. It shows that the number of applications from women to enter the civil service were much lower than the men who applied. For instance; in 1969 there were 63,709 men that took part in the exams; compared with 37,619 women. And of those 10,945 men and 8,645 women were appointed. Proportionately more women were passing the exams than men, although there were only a handful of women appointed in the scientific and professional classes. This means that although the numbers of women in the civil service were increasing, it was far more

likely for a women to be employed in the lower generalist grades. (p 30 – 51, tables of recruitment from the 1970 Annual Report).

Kemp-Jones, 1971 Report into the Employment of Women in the Civil Service

Questions were being asked about women women's opportunities_including; posts; promotion and mobility obligations. Amongst the questions considered were –

- how far women might be given more part-time employment in positions of responsibility;
- how it might be easier for married women to combine looking after a family with a Civil Service career;
- What retraining might be given to make it easier for women to return to civil service employment after a lengthy period of absence?

This report recognised that the civil service provided one of the best careers open to women at that time. But recognised that the conditions of employment and career patterns in the civil service are based on unbroken service throughout the working life of an individual. This working pattern is suitable for men and unmarried or childless women but would cause women with children to choose between:

- Combining full time work with the care of her husband and children, resulting in 'overstrain';
- Retiring and foregoing, possibly for all time, the ability to make proper use of her training and experience;
- Remaining in the clerical grades.

With any of these choices, a woman is likely to damage the reputation of women, as a group, as reliable recruits and employees, and there would be some loss to the Service, her employer. After all, the Service is investing in training civil servants and if women have equal access to the training, and then leave to have a family, that training would have been wasted.

The Report also argued that all members of the service should be treated on the basis of equality and therefore that the conditions of service should reflect the social patterns under which men and women live. This recognises that women, at that time, were expected to;

- Run the home and have children
- Raise the children, and often ...
- Bear the responsibility for dependents or relatives who are elderly or ill

The one aspect that they did not address directly was the loss to the nation when women did not have children, which had been seen as a significant problem in earlier reports.

Although the first report recognised that there would be some men facing similar problems, domestic responsibilities would normally fall on the woman in the family. Therefore they do not consider that it is within the reports remit to consider whether the recommendations should be extended to men (p3, The Employment of Women in the Civil Service, 1971 Report)

The report goes on to address issues such as recruitment and the historical limitations placed on women's applications. One particular restriction that is addressed directly is the continued reservation of some jobs for men. The reasoning behind these reservations was that the jobs were unsuitable for women because of;

- the physical working conditions
- the kinds of people women would have come in contact with;
- women not having the required experience or qualifications;
- unsuitability and/or inadequate accommodation

Following the enquiries about work reserved only for men, most of the restrictions were removed. The report recommends that all posts are open for anyone regardless of sex and that all appointments, whether on entry or promotion, should be made solely on the grounds of suitability and qualifications. (Kemp-Jones, p9-11,)

Although women were no longer required to resign on marriage, the civil service continued to pay women a gratuity when they resigned on marriage. By this point in time many women were staying on after marriage, despite the incentive to resign. Some women stayed on until they were pregnant, which meant that they were not eligible for the gratuity. I have also heard anecdotal evidence that it was possible to stay on after receiving the gratuity, although this meant giving up any possibility of promotion. The report recommended that changes to the pension scheme would provide deferred pension benefits and therefore would replace the gratuity and that it should no longer be paid. (p13, The Employment of Women in the Civil Service, 1971 Report). Until this point, women in the Home Office were still eligible for the 'gratuity' payable when they left the service on marriage. Although by this time they were not required to leave and they could choose to stay. If they stayed they could receive the payment, but they would no longer be eligible for promotion (anecdotal evidence from a colleague).

The Report's Recommendations were revolutionary for women;

- a woman should not be debarred from any job solely on the grounds of her sex;
- the provisions for leave and in particular unpaid leave, should be improved to take account of a woman's family responsibilities;
- opportunities for part-time work should be expanded for women with family responsibilities;
- the rules governing reinstatement should be modified to make it easier for a woman to return to suitable civil service work when her children are older.

(Second report of the Civil Service Department, 1971, P27-28)

HMRC Report

The issues of The Employment of women in the Civil Service were revisited in 1971 when The Report of a Departmental Committee was published by HMRC.

Home Office – Immigration Officer Experiment

1971 the first 10 Women Immigration Officers; which included Tricia Smith and Jill Montgomery (nee Ribbons) were posted as an experiment. They were classed as men for the duration of the experiment and the department did not officially acknowledge that women in these posts until 1973. Finally the last exclusively male posts in the Home Office were opened to women. The first Women Immigration Officers were based in Southampton.

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

This Act rendered unlawful certain kinds of sex discrimination and discrimination on the grounds of marriage and establish a Commission with the function of working towards the elimination of such discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity between men and women generally and for related purposes. [12th November 1975].

Included in this act was the requirement that women could not be treated less favourably than men and that men could not be treated less favourably than women. it also made it illegal to discriminate against people because of their marital status. The Act applied to employment; education and established the Equal Opportunities Commission to ensure the law was upheld. There were exceptions. Mineworkers and Ministers of Religion were exclusively men. The Police and Prison Officers had separate areas where women worked, particularly in relation to the women and children that came to the police and prison systems attention. It should be noted that midwifery was an occupation reserved exclusively for women.

The booklet Executive Careers, third edition, published in 1975 was updated from the 1970 and 1972 versions to take account of the Sex Discrimination Act (HMSO 1975). It included information on Immigration Officers and shows a picture of a woman Immigration Officer (p12). In the text, written by a serving Woman Immigration Officer is says “it is only within recent years that women have been recruited for this work, but the job has real appeal for both sexes. I think my male colleagues found me a novelty at first, but I am well integrated now!” (p13). There are a number of other case studies about people in the Civil Service including the “Tax Collector, and female into the bargain – who would have thought it!” (p19)

Dame Josephine Barnes in 1979 became the first female governor of a male prison.

Even as late as 1991, the Permanent Under Secretary of State, Sir Clive Whitmore felt it necessary to send a message to all staff about ensuring all Home Office staff have an equal opportunity to contribute to the department's work. He was re-affirming the department's commitment to equal opportunities and reminding all the staff that it is everyone's responsibility. In the document there is an action check list for managers and one for staff, which sets out expected behaviours in relation to equal opportunities, including opportunities for women. Paragraph 10 is specific to women and says:

'A programme of action to achieve equality of opportunity for women in the Civil Service has been progressively implemented since 1984. This has been followed in the Home Office but there is evidence that women are still under-represented at more senior grades.'

To address the under-representation of women, a number of measures were put in place including:

- Annual statistical monitoring of all staff in post by grade, sex (gender) and location.
- Analysing each year the performance and promotability markings.
- Monitoring the pattern and extent of part-time working and other alternative working patterns.
- Establishing, with other government departments a childcare facility for staff (both female and male) working in Central London, which includes provision for holiday play schemes. (there are facilities available in Croydon and Bootle)
- And a keeping in touch programmes for those taking a career break.

Similar monitoring was also introduced for ethnic minorities and disabled staff. The significance of this document is that despite the Equal Opportunities Act of 1975 and the actions taken since that date, women in the Home Office are still under-represented in the senior workforce. And that it is considered necessary to direct the staff on their actions regarding Equal Opportunities.

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Illustrations

The Telegraph Gallery. The lady clerks at the new General Offices at Telegraph Street in 1859_They are working single- and two-needle instruments and American inkers

Portrait of 'Jeanie' Senior by George Frederick Watts (1857) held by The National Trust, WIGHTWICK MANOR nr. Wolverhampton.

The petitioned the treasury protesting that the 'girl clerks' were paid higher rates than the 'boy clerks' despite the fact that the boy's had passed the civil service exam.

Excerpt from The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, which was enacted in 1919

Cartoon By A. Bennett, published in the Home Office's internal staff magazine 'Red Tape'.

Internet Resources

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