

Photograph of women working on aircraft

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WAR CABINET

STATUS AND FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OF THE A.T.S.

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR

- r. For some time I have been considering the question of giving fuller military status to the Auxiliary Territorial Service. This is one aspect of a wide review of the conditions of service of this womens' corps, a review which has as its object to attract recruits to the corps in order to make up the serious deficiencies in its establishment. At the same time, I am anxious to tighten up the conditions of enrolment of the corps to something approximating more to the terms of service of the soldier. There is a pronounced shortage, as my colleagues know, in the womens' organizations of all three fighting services, and to some extent the remedies which the three Service Departments are seeking are on the common lines suggested by a common problem.
- 2. The matter has been brought to a head by proposals made in the report of Air Marshal Sir Philip Joubert's Committee on anti-aircraft re-organization, to utilise members of the A.T.S. for duties of an operational nature in connection with the Air Defences of Great Britain. The Joubert Committee, impressed with the need for economising man-power in the period that lies ahead, propose that members of the A.T.S. should be trained and employed in a number of duties in gun operational rôles such as Track Recorders, Plotters, Teleprinter Operators, etc., and also as complete reliefs for soldiers as Fire Control Operators at gun sites; further, the Committee consider women might appropriately be used for complete Searchlight detachments. It is estimated that in this way the services of some 30,000 women could be quickly utilised with advantage, with appreciable easing of our man power problem, which is becoming more and more insistent, and that eventually some 100,000 women would be employed with A.D.G.B. on operational and other rôles.

The W.A.A.F are already largely employed on many similar types of duty in operation rooms, etc., but the suggested employment of A.T.S. members in operational rôles on gun and searchlight sites goes, I believe, further than anything now existing in the women's corps.



WOMENAT What did women in the services do?

Source 3

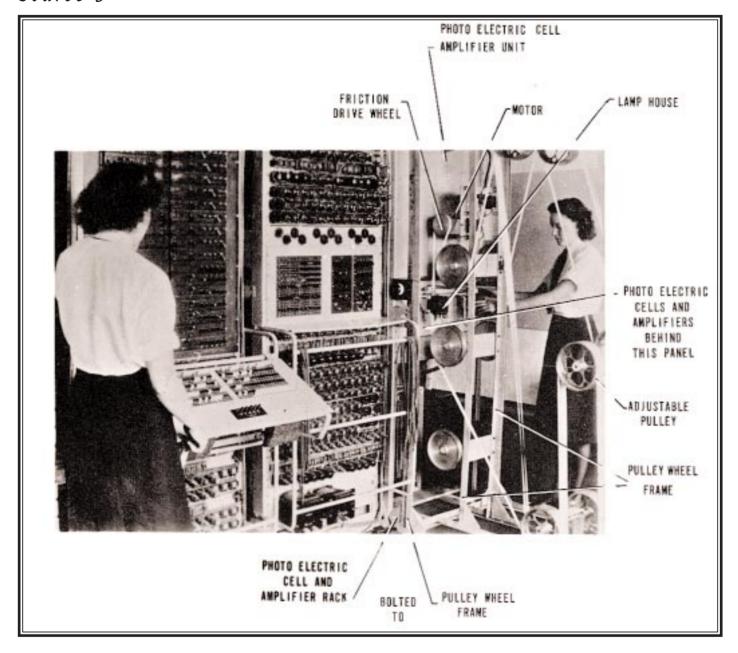
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	A.T.S. or Army Recording

Advert placed in various newspapers asking women to join the A.T.S.



Photograph of women working as 'spotters' (spotting enemy aircraft)





Women working with Colossus (a prototype computer) at Bletchley Park