



## Jobs at the Armory

### DO NOW:

**An *armory* is a place where arms, or weapons, are made and stored.**

**List at least three skills that people might need to have to work in an Armory.**

### ANSWER:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Background Information:

**The Springfield Armory manufactured millions of firearms for the U.S. military in its 174-year history. Who were the people that were responsible for the assembly of all those weapons, however? What skills did workers need to have to be hired for work at the Armory, and what jobs did they perform while they were there?**

**As you read through the primary sources (*an immediate, first-hand account of a topic, from people who had a direct connection with it*) related to the types of jobs people had at the Armory, there may be some vocabulary words with which you are unfamiliar. Here are some of them, and their definitions.**

### Related Vocabulary

**Apprentice** – a person who works for another in order to learn a trade

**Aptitude** – capability; ability; acquired capacity for something; talent

**Civil service** – a system or method of appointing government employees on the basis of competitive examinations

**Per annum/per diem** – per year/per day

**Activity 1 Primary Source Analysis of Newspaper Articles – The following pages contain actual articles from the *Springfield Republican* and *Springfield Daily News* from 1917- 1941 advertising available positions at the Springfield Armory and explaining the qualifications needed.**

**A. *Springfield Republican* 10/6/1917**

**Armory Civic-Service Examinations**

The United States civil-service commission announces a minor clerical examination in this city of the 20<sup>th</sup> for both men and women for filling vacancies in the Springfield Armory at salaries from \$600 to \$720 per annum. Applicants must be citizens of the United States and have reached the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. A knowledge of typewriting is not required. For application and information apply to the local secretary or to the district secretary at the custom house, Boston, with whom the applications should be filled in time for him to arrange for the examination.

**D. *Springfield Republican* 9/6/1929**

**Armory Positions Open**

The United States civil service commission announces open competitive examinations for the following positions at the Springfield Armory: Fireman (stationary boilers), \$1500 to \$1668 per annum; helper (electrician) \$4 per day; material keeper, \$3.02 per day; proof assistant, \$5.60 per day, and tinsmith, \$4.88 per day. Information and application blanks may be obtained from the secretary of the board of civil service examiners at the armory or at the post office.

**B. *Springfield Daily News* 9/4/1915**

**For Armory Positions**

The U.S. Civil Service Commission announces examinations to be held on October 1, 1915, for the positions of laborer at \$2.00 per day, and guard at \$67.50 per month, in the Springfield Armory. For the position of guard it is desired to secure applications who are active men, physically sound, and less than 40 years of age and who have serviced in the U.S. Armory, navy, or marine corps. Applications who have had such service should submit with application certificate of discharge or other evidence to show that they have had same. For the position of laborer, application will be physically examined by a government physician and rated as regards ability and fitness to prefer heavy manual labor. Applications to have any change of appointment must be in sound physical condition, accustomed to hard manual labor, and males must be capable of shouldering and carrying with ease 125 pounds of weight. Applications having any defect or deformity plainly, unfitting them for hard labor will be rejected at once. For the position of guard, no mental test is given and applications will not be assembled for examination, ratings being made wholly on physical ability, training, fitness and experience. Applicants for both positions must be citizens of the United States. The age limit for laborer is 20 to 50 years. Applicant blank may be secured of the Chairman of the Board of Civil Service Examiners, at the Springfield Armory, with who applications for the position of guard must be filed on or before the 30<sup>th</sup>.

**C. *Springfield Daily News* 12/16/1926**

**Examinations for Armory Positions**

The United States civil service commission announces that there are examinations open for the following positions at the Springfield armory; barrel riffler at \$4.80 per diem; barrel straightener at \$5.20 per diem; gardener at \$4.48 per diem and polisher at \$4.40 to \$5.20 per diem. Full information concerning these examinations and the required application blank may be secured from the secretary of the board of examiners in the Springfield post office or from the chairman of the board of examiners in the armory, with whom the applications must be filed not later than January 11<sup>th</sup> 1927.

The commission announces that the examination for messenger boy for filling a vacancy in this position at the Springfield armory at \$600 per annum, is being again announced as no eligible were secured from the previous examination.

Anyone between the ages of 14 and 20 years may enter this examination but only boys between the ages of 16 and 230 may be considered for the particular vacancy for which the examination is announced.

**E.**

### Examinations for Armory Positions

The United States civil service commissions announces open competition examinations for gauge maker at \$6.72 to \$8.64 a day and toolmaker, \$5.76 to \$8 a day, for Springfield armory. Applicants must have completed a four-year apprenticeship or equivalent in the trade for which application is made. Information and applications may be obtained from the secretary, board of civil service examiners, at the post office or the Springfield armory, Springfield; from the manager, first civil service district, United States post office and Courthouse buildings, Boston, Mass. Applications must be filed at the Springfield armory by October 23.

**H.**

### Examinations for Armory Positions

Open competitive examinations will be held soon to qualify applicants for jobs as blacksmiths' helper and turret lathe machine operator at the Springfield armory, the United States civil service commission announced today. The former job pays \$5.12 a day and the latter from \$5.76 to \$6.72 a day. Deadline for filing applications for both examinations is Thursday, the 11<sup>th</sup>. Full details may be obtained from the secretary of the board of civil service examiners at the armory or at any first-class post office in Springfield and vicinity.

**F.**

### Examinations for Armory Positions

The U.S. Civil Service commission announces open competitive examinations for assembler, \$5.28-\$6.24 a day, and stockfinisher, \$4.64-\$7.20 a day, to fill vacancies in the Ordnance department at large, War department, Springfield Armory. Competitors will not be required to report for a written examination but will be rated on their experience and fitness. They must have had the following experience:

Assembler: They must have had at least one years experience in the assembly or disassembly of rifles, pistols or automatic weapons, including taping, drilling and fitting and gauging replacements for worn or defective parts and reassembly of weapons in perfect working condition.

Stockfinisher: They must have had at least one year of experience as a stock finisher on bench work..."

E. *Springfield Daily News* 10/9/1934

F. *Springfield Daily News* 1/21/1936

G. *Springfield Daily News* 8/30/1941

H. *Springfield Daily News* 4/2/1940

**G.**

### Gage Checkers Highest Paid in the Armory

Gage checkers-men who check to far less than a hair's breadth the accuracy of gages used in inspecting finished parts that go into the Garand rifle-had dethroned the men who make the gages as the highest paid factory workers at the Springfield armory.

This was revealed today in the latest civil service bulletin, announcing examinations for jobs at the armory under 31 separate classifications.

According to a civil service bulletin issued June 20, gauge checkers at that time were making from \$7.25 to \$9.44 a day while gage checkers were getting from \$8.40-\$10 a day.

Today's bulletin reveal that gauge checkers are now receiving from \$8.56 to \$10.16 a day while the scale of gage makers has remained unchanged.

The armory is now on an 48-hour week, and time and one-half is paid for all worker over 40 hours. In addition, workers on the two night shifts get five cents an hour extra. Thus a top-ranking gage checker working nights receives \$68.61 for a 48-hour week.

Die sinkers occupy third place on the armory's wage list, earning from \$8.48-\$9.76 a day. Toolmakers rank fourth, at a top of \$9.01 a day, while drop forgers and machinists share fifth place with a top of \$7.92 a day.

Applications for jobs at the armory will be received until further notice. Application forms and full

**Activity 1: Directions:** Use the newspaper articles listing jobs available at the Springfield Armory to complete the chart. The first one has been done for you.

Newspaper Date	Position(s) listed	Who could apply? (Men, women, not mentioned)	Qualifications (if listed)	Salary Listed	What Salary would be in 2020 <a href="https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/">https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/</a>
A. 10/16/1917	Does not say	Men, women	Must be citizens of the U.S. and at least 18 years old	\$600-\$720/year	\$12,084 - \$14,501/year
B.					
C.					
D.					
E.					
F.					
G.					
H.					

**Activity 1 Follow up questions:** After completing the chart about some of the jobs people had at the Springfield Armory, answer the following questions using complete sentences.

<b><u>Question</u></b>	<b><u>Answer</u></b>
<p><b>1. Why do you think that some jobs at the Armor had higher starting salaries than others?</b></p>	
<p><b>2. If the article does not list whether men or women can apply for an Armory job, do you think that means BOTH men and women can apply? Why?</b></p>	
<p><b>3a. Pick 2 jobs listed and give a sentence description of what it means to do those jobs. (use the Internet)</b>  <b>3b. Of the two jobs you chose, which one would you be most likely to do?</b></p>	<p><b>Job:</b>  <b>Description:</b></p> <p><b>Job:</b>  <b>Description:</b></p> <p>I am most likely to do the job of a _____.</p>