

Source 1:

Single woman, companion and home helper, aged 56, Bristol, interviewed by Mass Observation in 1944

I think that marriage is a full-time career, though not as exciting as one outside the home, perhaps; and a woman cannot give of her best to two careers. On the whole, I think that married women will be only too glad to make their home the centre of her life.

Source 2:

Married woman, no children, aged 28, working as an aerodynamicist in Winchester, Hampshire, interviewed by Mass Observation in 1944

Where women have had careers, and where they are more suited to continue working than to spend time housekeeping and baby-minding, I think they should work. It is far better for a woman to continue with the job for which she is suited, and to pay the right kind of person to look after her home and children, than to become a drudge herself, if housework is drudgery to her. But I think a married woman should work no more than 40 hours a week, and she should always consider her family before her job. I am hoping for a development of Day Nurseries, all jobs open to married women and maternity grants.

Source 3:

A trade union leader in the north-east of England explains to the writer James Lansdale Hodson why men prefer women to stay at home.

Men hate their girls going out to work and impairing their own dignity as head of the house.

Source 4:

Bella Keyzer worked as a weaver in Dundee before WW2, then sent to work in shipbuilding during the war as a welder. She enjoyed her work but was forced to give it up in 1945. Here she recounts how her job came to an end.

[In the spring of 1945] there were about twelve women welders in the shipyard. We were sent for (asked to come) one morning and the personnel officer sat there at his desk. He lifted his head and he said one word - 'redundant'. That was a new word to our vocabulary. We really didn't know exactly what it meant. There was no reason given. There was no explanation. There was plenty of work in the yard.

Source 5:

Anthony Heap, a middle-aged local government officer living in London, clearly found his life more comfortable when his wife Marjorie became a full-time housewife again. We don't know what Marjorie through!

I am just beginning to appreciate some of the advantages that help to off-set the financial loss brought about by Marjorie's change over from office work to housewifery. I am able to have all my meals at home instead of going up to Mother's for breakfast and round to the British Restaurant for lunch, as well as no longer having to do any housework, such as washing, wiping-up, sweeping, dusting, fire-lighting etc etc. One certainly has a more comfortable time of it with a bustling (busy) wife around the house.