



# AMMUNITION PLANT



## ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL Installation



World War I was the first real test for the Rock Island Arsenal following a successful execution of missions during the Spanish-American War. Rock Island Arsenal's mission has generally been to produce war materiel for use in the Nation's wars. However, during and just after World War I, the need was so great, that it also was tasked to produce a limited supply of artillery shells to replenish a depleted stock.

From mid-to-late-1918, the Rock Island Arsenal produced around 167,000 155-mm artillery shells. These were produced in "Shop L" (modern building 250). Much of the filling of these shells and fuze setting was done by Women Ordnance Workers (WOWs). Fuze setting was considered to be extremely dangerous and required a steady hand, something of which COL Hillman, arsenal commander, determined best needed WOWs to support. The precision necessary, according to COL Hillman, was something only a woman worker could provide.



Constructed between 1917-18

Made of all glass and concrete

Ammo only made in 1918

Few explosions during operation

No lives lost in dangerous work

167,000 155-mm shells produced

Repurposed for other shop work

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