

occurred so rarely in the WAC, The Surgeon General believed that no course of instruction in the problem was needed, but merely a reference to it in lectures by the psychiatrist. There were some indications that in a peacetime career service the problem might require more specific action, but that a wartime "citizen's Army" would present no more problem than did the rest of the nation.

Accidents and Injuries

All evidence indicated that the rates of accidents and nonbattle injuries were almost identical for enlisted men and women in the Army. The rates as recorded for a six-month period in 1944 showed 72 injured per 5,000 strength each year for women and 70 for men, while an eighteen-month survey near the end of the war corrected this figure to show a slightly lower rate for women—about 50 per 1,000 per year for women against about 55 for men. No studies were made by The Surgeon General's Office that would have indicated the nature and causes of the accident rate for women.⁹⁴

The only detailed study in this respect was made by the Army Air Forces, which employed a WAC officer in its Ground Safety Division. There was found to be considerable difference in the type, place, and cause of injury for men and women, according to the Air Forces statistics in a limited survey. It appeared that women had less than half as many motor vehicle accidents as men, either on or off the post. When assigned to perform technical work, women also had less than half as many accidents on the job. In mess hall work and kitchen police, women might have more strained backs but had fewer other

injuries, so that total rates were much the same for men and women.

On the other hand, the advantage of women in driving and technical work was evened in the total rate by the fact that when a Wac was placed on some level or generally harmless area she would, a third again as often as men, fall down and acquire a sprain or strain. The Air Forces noted with curiosity that most of women's injuries had no relation to their jobs and that "one of the most common types is falls—falling on stairways and curbing, falls on ice, or stumbling while simply walking on the post. . . . About one half of all the injuries studied thus far are stumbling, tripping, and falling *on the same level.*"

Recurring frequently in reports were falls while entering and alighting from vehicles or jumping from the backs of trucks; falls due to running in barracks, especially on stairways; falls due to jumping off porches or down stairs; slips and falls on freshly mopped floors; back sprains due to improper lifting; slips while climbing on boxes and chairs to reach high places; and tripping, sliding, slipping, or colliding in games and sports. Surveyors were unable fully to account for this Wac propensity, noting only that "the question of why women have such accidents is complicated."

There appeared to be some relation to the fact that a wholly satisfactory women's military shoe had never reached some stations, and that in any case a woman's medium-heeled oxford was obviously less suitable for action than a man's shoe. Even if the proper footgear for sports had been issued, it appeared highly probable that the average woman was also less ac-

⁹⁴ Rpts cited n. 37(1). Figures are given in a chart that cannot be interpreted exactly.