

ment, the little headquarters pulled itself together and began to issue numbered memoranda. Now that there legally was a WAAC, the long-delayed funds could at last be allotted for a training center; the tentative Regulations could be published; the items of uniform could be approved for procurement and details released to the underwear-conscious press. More important, the still-nebulous group of preplanners could now be solidified into a real WAAC Headquarters, complete with charts and ready for rapid expansion. Thirty-seven civilians were also allotted, including another woman consultant, Mrs. Gruber, wife of Brig. Gen. William R. Gruber, to advise on military protocol and manage the Director's schedule. The office now totaled some fifty people.¹⁷

By any military standards this was hardly an impressive headquarters, scarcely the equal of that of a respectable Army regiment; and in spite of the exaggerated power that was attributed to it by the press and general public, its members by this time entertained few delusions of grandeur. As an insignificant civilian group, which included no general officer, they expected and got a low priority of attention as compared with the more vital phases of the combat effort, particularly in such matters as office space, cafeteria hours, entertainment allowances, and transportation.¹⁸

The office had at least a military-looking chief when, in June, there arrived the first WAAC uniform, especially made for Director Hobby. She promptly put it on, reported formally to the Chief of Staff, and came back wearing a colonel's silver eagles, which he had pinned on and directed her to wear. The relative rank of Director was thus established at that of colonel, although Congress had author-

ized pay equal only to that of a major. Both relative rank and pay were thus established as the same as that recently given to the Superintendent, Army Nurse Corps. The relative rank of full colonel was also necessitated by the grades of the Army officers on her staff, since Director Hobby would be superior in the WAAC chain of command to the commandant of the training center, Colonel Faith, as well as to her own staff, which now included Col. William Pearson as adjutant general and Col. Bickford Sawyer as finance officer.

No later Waacs ever suffered from uniform shortages as did Director Hobby at this time; there was in existence only one WAAC shirt, and in her travels her luggage contained little but an electric fan and an iron, which enabled her to wash, dry, and iron the shirt nightly.

Location in the Services of Supply

Meanwhile, the Services of Supply was considering a more important matter: the proper place in the headquarters chart to insert the square labeled WAAC. Competition for the honor of supervising the WAAC was not exactly brisk; it might be said that each agency outdid the other in striving to bestow this gift on its neighbor.¹⁹

¹⁷ (1) Various Hq Memos in WA 300 (5-20-42) Office Memos, sec 1. (2) Memo, G-1 for CofS, 13 May 42. WDGAP 352.01 WAAC. (3) Memo, TAG for Dir WAAC, 26 May 42. AG 291.9 (5-15-42). (4) Memo, OQMG for G-1, 16 May 42, and Inds. SPQRE 420 WAAC. Copy in SPWA 421 (5-16-42) sec 1. (5) WD SO 129, 17 May 42; Memo, WAAC Ln Off for Pers Div SOS, 15 May 42. Tasker Staybacks.

¹⁸ (1) Memo, W. Pearson for TAG, 19 Mar 42, and atchd answer. WA 029.21 (3-19-42). (2) Memo, Dir WAAC for SOS, 16 May 42, and atchd reply from TAG. WA 451 (5-16-42).

¹⁹ Intervs with Lt Col Woods, 14 Dec 45, and Lt Col Betty Bandel, 15 Dec 45. (Both former Deputy Directors.)