

ceiving WAAC units will be agreeably surprised to find how much these units can contribute to the war effort.⁶

Also, in spite of the inconveniences of supply and climate, the women's morale remained high. Psychiatrists later remarked that the women seemed pleased with the idea that they were approximating the hardships of Army men. Whatever the cause, the trainees joked through their sniffles, laughed at their own appearance, and felt great pride in their new status and enthusiasm for the Corps' future. At night, wrapped in blankets, they sat on the floor in freezing unfurnished dayrooms to sing Army songs, including one written by a member of an early class which soon swept the training center:

All you fighting men, keep on fighting to win,
For the WAAC is in back of you;
If a plane you fly, keep it flying high
For the WAAC is in back of you.
Spread the news around that we're victory
bound,
And our hearts we pledge anew
That our flag shall wave o'er the home of the
brave,
And the WAAC is in back of you.⁷

The character and ability of the incoming recruits also continued to receive approval. By the end of September there were more than 3,000 Waacs at Des Moines, including 792 officers, with more arriving daily. Some 3,300 more had also been enrolled but could not yet be called to active duty for lack of training space.⁸ The average ability of these recruits remained surprisingly higher than that of the Army or the civilian population. In the month of September, some 60 percent were found to be in the first two AGCT groups, I and II, having scores ordinarily required only of officers, and only 0.8 percent were in the fifth or lowest group.⁹

Furthermore, every recruit possessed a civilian skill expected to be readily useful to the Army.

The Second WAAC Training Center

It had been known since summer that a second WAAC training center would be required to meet the expansion program directed by the General Staff. The only site offered the WAAC was that of Daytona Beach, Florida, where it was proposed to train women in leased city buildings, rather than to dispossess the occupants of any established military post. It was also believed that the climate would prevent suffering from the current lack of winter clothing for women.

However, soon after Colonel Faith first inspected the proposed facilities, Director Hobby appealed to the Services of Supply for any other location, stating that a military atmosphere and reasonable discipline could not be inculcated at any such establishment. The town itself was a resort area, with streets perpetually crowded with sail-

⁶ Ltr, CofAdm Serv to Dir WAAC, 6 Oct 42. SPAAE 333.1. Such favorable impressions of Des Moines do not appear to have been exactly accidental. A staff note concerning other important visitors observes privately: "Des Moines will be prepared to . . . put on the same sort of show which has been arranged for General Grunert." Min, Stf Mtg, 6 Oct 42.

⁷ By Ruby Jane Douglass. *WAAC Parodies*, pamphlet published by WAAC Publications Office, Ft. Des Moines, May 1943. Copy in OCMH.

⁸ (1) Memo, Stat Br GS for CofS, 6 Oct 42. WDGSA 291.9. (2) Memo, Dir WAAC for CofAdm Serv, 28 Sep 42. SPWA 291.9 (9-28-42) E. Copy in SPWA 314.7 sec 3.

⁹ Table III, in *History of Military Training: WAAC/WAC Training*, Army Service Forces, prepared by Maj. Lavinia L. Redd, WAC, 5 Feb 46. OCMH. Hereafter cited as ASF Hist of WAC Tng. An even higher average score in July was due to the relatively large number of officer candidates, but by September there were only 350 in this group.