

Her discovery of the collapse of standards at training centers came too late. In the few brief months before the end of the summer, half of all WAAC officers were women without previous experience in jobs more responsible than those of clerks, typists, stenographers, and secretaries—including sixteen actresses, fourteen chorus girls, fourteen waitresses, and varying numbers of beauticians, charwomen, laborers, chauffeurs, and housekeepers, as well as one undertaker. Education had also declined from earlier standards. About 31 percent of WAAC officers now had only high school education or less—about 5 percent had less—while another 28 percent had not completed college; only 41 percent were college graduates. Still worse, 30 percent of officers were less than twenty-five years old.

Upon learning these facts, WAAC Headquarters took action to set up another campaign to get more officer candidates from civilian life, but before this could well come into operation, the Corps had reached almost the top officer strength it was to be permitted. The WAAC by the end of its first year had over 5,800 officers, who were, with the later failure of the expansion plan, to be enough for the rest of the war. Only a few hundred more were to be commissioned in the remaining years, so that many of the unsuitable officers so hastily commissioned did not remain second lieutenants, as General Faith had expected, but were pushed up gradually as the Corps expanded. Embarrassing as this deficiency was to everyone concerned, the WAAC had experienced no more problem in this respect than the Army; remarkably enough, even this lapse had not brought the average of WAAC officer education below that of Army officers. However, even a minority of unsuitable or

rank-happy officers were always to be extremely conspicuous in a women's service.¹²

Unsuitable Mentors

The expansion program also made it impossible to carry out Director Hobby's recent order that male officers in training centers be replaced by Waacs, the most unsuitable to be the first weeded out. The "man-woman factor," unprecedented in Army schools, afforded opportunities for maladministration which all too frequently were found to have been realized. General Faith later estimated that male offenders under his command totaled not more than 5 percent, and that these were immediately relieved from duty if discovered in misconduct. Nevertheless, scattered reports continued to be received from all training centers of cases in which women's advancement was allegedly based on matters other than merit.

The gravest situation in this respect was that at Daytona Beach, which was investigated at Director Hobby's request by operatives from the Military Intelligence Service in Washington as well as by the Fourth Service Command's inspector general. These inspectors' reports noted that certain of the Army officers in highly responsible positions were drinking and misconducting themselves with Waacs and were promoting to positions of leadership only those who offered them favors in return. Members of the Army staff, when written statements were taken, officially accused each other of "running around"

¹² (1) Memo, Capt Ruby E. Herman, WAAC Hq, for Dir WAAC, 12 Nov 43, with incl statistics, 12 Nov 43, made as of 15 Sep 43. Unnumbered folder, 1943 WAAC files. (2) ASF Hist of OCT, 1941-45, pp. 15-16, 74. OCMH.