

for men. Now at last patterns in the usual women's sizes were developed—half sizes, misses', women's, and long sizes. These proved better, but the Quartermaster's Storage and Distribution Division insisted that the old size designations and stock numbers be used on the new patterns, to avoid complicating its storage and issue system, which was geared to handle only short, regular, and long.

Even with improved patterns, the jackets still remained stiff and unbecoming, and it was not until some months later that OQMG detected the trouble: the Philadelphia Depot was still writing specifications, which manufacturers were required to follow, that called for the use of the same heavy construction with canvasses and interlinings of the weights used in men's uniforms.

In late 1943 and 1944 a satisfactory uniform pattern was to be gradually developed, but its production by this time was, as The Quartermaster General said, now merely a matter of academic interest, as large stocks of the earlier patterns had been ordered in an effort to meet the scheduled expansion program, and no new procurement could be authorized until these were worn out.

At first sight of the original ill-fitting uniforms, Director Hobby in July 1942 had recommended to Requirements Division, SOS, that Waacs going to the field or on leave be allowed to purchase individually tailored white dress uniforms, at their own expense, as were male Army officers, Army nurses, and, later, the Navy women's services. It was believed that such a measure would eliminate the worst of the general criticism encountered earlier, since the dress uniform could be worn for public ceremonies and appearances.

Requirements Division disapproved this

request: "No useful purpose can be served in connection with efforts toward a successful prosecution of the war."²⁷ Three subsequent requests by the Director to General Marshall were stopped by the Services of Supply from reaching him, and the WAAC was not authorized a dress uniform until later entry into the Army automatically gave it to women officers.

The appearance of the WAAC cap was also much criticized. It was worked over by experts—the visor was made twice as thick and heavy, to prevent buckling; the side and top stiffening was increased; a new type of lining was devised. Still the cap remained almost impossible to clean and block. Director Hobby in January 1943 finally gave up the idea of a distinctive cap and requested a garrison (overseas) cap for all but dress wear. The Director pointed out that winter and summer garrison caps at a cost of 71 cents and 39 cents respectively would eliminate the need for issue of extra visored caps at \$2.32 and \$1.99 apiece. This request was refused by the Services of Supply on the grounds that it would increase the number of issued items. Although men got both dress and service caps, it was at the time believed that the War Department was shortly to cease issuing the garrison cap to men.²⁸

The WAAC shirtwaist was also the subject of dispute, and more than one Army man reported, quite accurately, "I never yet saw a WAAC whose shirt collar fit her." Commercial producers of women's shirts had always sized them by bust sizes rather than by collar size, since civilian

²⁷ (1) Memo, OQMG for G-1, 18 Jul 42, with Inds and covering Memos; (2) Memo, Dir WAAC for CofAdm Serv, 24 Aug 42, and Inds. SPQRE 421, in SPWA 421 (7-16-42).

²⁸ Memo, WAAC Hq for CofAdm Serv, 20 Jan 43, and Inds. SPWA 421.