

Division's contention that publication of a circular is necessary to clarify standards."²⁹

Returns from the field indicated that the chief difficulty was not willful negligence, but either the absence of an adequate authorized induction examination for women or medical examiners' ignorance of proper standards of such an examination. Thus, early in 1943, rejection rates for mental diseases ranged from a low of 0.6 per thousand in the First Service Command to a high of 30.6 per thousand in the Sixth Service Command; either far more women in Chicago were deranged than in Boston, or the medical standards differed widely in the two service commands.³⁰ Evidence indicated that more stations were too lax than too strict: of all disability discharges granted until June, 1943, one half of the women discharged had been in service less than four months and three fourths less than five and a half months, which strongly suggested that the disabilities had existed before enlistment. Furthermore, analysis showed that 73.7 percent of all disability discharges were for two reasons only—gynecological and neuropsychiatric. This appeared to some to be rather strong evidence that medical examiners were more or less efficiently screening out the disabilities common to men and women, but were baffled by those peculiar to women.³¹

There were a few WAAC staff directors who felt that some examining psychiatrists, in the absence of guidance from The Surgeon General, were methodically screening out the more stable applicants. In one extreme case, a director noted that the local psychiatrist "maintained that the only way to determine a woman's stability was to require her to walk into his office naked, and to sit down and

answer his questions in this condition." He then, in order to test her emotional balance, asked her, "How often during the past month have you had intercourse with a soldier or sailor?" The staff director added, "We lost a number of nice young prospects who never came back after he interviewed them. I could just imagine what they told their parents about the purpose of the Women's Army Corps."³² There also continued to be a disconcerting number of unwise acceptances, such as the woman who reported to Fort Oglethorpe and nine days later informed authorities: "I am the Duchess of Windsor."³³

A company officer at Daytona Beach found that the parents of one of her recruits had removed her from an insane asylum to enlist her; when the officer called the girl and her parents to the orderly room and presented them with her discharge, the parents wept, while the girl, it was related, "leaped over and bit her mother."³⁴

To remedy such matters, Director Hobby urged The Surgeon General's Office to set up a specialist group to determine and publish detailed guides to the medical examinations required for women

²⁹ (1) Extracts from a large file of Tng Cen Rpts on WDAGO Form 40 (C.D.D.). SPWA 220.8 (9-30-43), 1943. (2) Ltr, 3d Tng Cen to Dir WAAC, 14 Apr 43; also atchd Memo, WAAC Pers Div to Dir WAAC. SPWA 314.7 (1-7-43)(1) sec 1.

³⁰ (1) Quarterly Rpt, Exam of Candidates for WAAC, Nov 42-Jan 43, SGO, Jan 43. WDWAC 702. (2) Memo cited n. 27. (3) Memo, SG for Dir WAC, 15 Sep 43. WDWAC 370.01.

³¹ Memo, Med Stat Div SGO for Dir WAAC, 18 Jun 43. SPWA 220.8 (6-18-43).

³² Interv with Lt Col Katherine Goodwin, ASF WAC Off (then Stf Dir 1st SvC), 8 Oct 45.

³³ Rpt of 3d WAC Tng Cen, Min, Stf Dirs Conf, New York, 1-3 Dec 43. SPWA 337 (11-10-43).

³⁴ Interv with Lt Col Mary Weems Fullbright (former CO of Tng Co.), Apr 51.