

CHAPTER XIV

Integration Into the Army

The business of changing the WAAC to the WAC had been virtually suspended while the All-States Plan was rushed into the line to make sure that there would be a WAC to continue. In October and November of 1943, as some measure of recruiting success seemed assured, planners turned back to the business of converting the obsolete WAAC organization, with its own operating headquarters, into the new WAC.

Upon the moment of conversion, an unidentified enthusiast in The Adjutant General's Office issued to the field the blanket directive that all Army Regulations would apply to the WAC until new WAC Regulations could be published. This superseded Director Hobby's plan to use WAAC Regulations in the interval. Outcry from the field soon made embarrassingly clear that the matter was more complex than expected. The Adjutant General hastily rescinded the directive and replaced it with one reinstating WAAC Regulations on clothing, housing, training, medical care, and all other matters with the exception of enlistment, discharge, and military justice, where Army rules would apply. The embarrassment continued: even this limited application of unqualified Army Regulations proved impracticable. In the matter of enlistment, there was a different legally established age and citizenship requirement and several practical differences concerning de-

pendency and disqualifying defects; in the matter of discharge, there were differences in at least eight matters, including minority. As for pregnancy discharge, admission of infants to Army status was narrowly averted by resourceful field stations which gave discharges for disability to expectant mothers.¹

Having thus perceived that some amendments to men's rules would be necessary, various Army agencies began to fight out the necessary differences. Disputes over the uniform regulations became so heated that it was necessary to detach them from the remainder of the regulations for later publication in the new year. Other matters were gradually agreed upon during the last months of 1943.²

Abolition of Separate Grades

In the months before complete agreement could be reached, a makeshift circular in late September took the first step toward integration by abolishing separate WAC grades, a step that appeared more startling to Army personnel officers than its nature merited. Civilian personnel allotments were of course not divided to specify which positions must be filled by

¹ (1) AGO Memo W635-14-43; changes 1 (31 Aug 43) and 2 (17 Sep 43). (2) Ltr, 2d SvC to O Dir WAC, 22 Sep 43, and reply. SPWA 314.7 (1-7-43)(1) sec 4.

² Memo, G-1 for G-1 Enl Br, 31 Oct 43. SPWA 300.3 (1-7-43) sec 2.