

usual skills found in only a handful of women: these included topographers, cartographers, sanitary inspectors, geodetic computers, chemists, and many others even more unusual.²⁶ A former watch repairwoman was trained in secret bombsight maintenance; six photographic airbrush artists illustrated technical manuals at Patterson Field; Russian interpreters found employment at ATC's Montana terminal. In California, the WAC's only dog trainer found that the AAF could also provide dogs to train.²⁷

Officers

WAC officers assigned to the Army Air Forces were admitted to more than sixty different types of jobs in addition to that of company officer.²⁸ These were all full-fledged officer jobs; as soon as WAC officers arrived in AAF headquarters, a written directive made it clear that they were to replace commissioned officers only, and specifically not warrant officers or civilians.²⁹

The majority were given administrative jobs in the fields of personnel, office management, mess, supply, and finance. Numbers were also found useful in jobs that involved dealing with people—special services, information and education, and public relations. A few WAC officers by the end of the war had worked up to positions of some responsibility; there was one air-base judge advocate, one inspector general, one base executive, and thirteen who held the coveted Specification Serial Number 2260, personnel staff officer.

Grades and Ratings

The wide scope of Air Forces jobs open to Wacs, both officer and enlisted, could be attributed chiefly to the AAF policy of

full integration and the resulting abolition of all separate WAC grades, allotments, and Tables of Organization. An AAF Regulation stated, "Practices which tend to apportion grades and promotions by sex rather than by actual duty assignment are undesirable, as they serve to impair efficiency and morale."³⁰ Actually, when the total was reckoned, men were found to be far more highly rated than women, for most AAF Wacs had come on the scene in 1943 and 1944 when most high grades had already been distributed. Air Forces men in the United States still had four times the percentage of master sergeants' ratings that women did; twenty times the percentage of technical sergeants; ten times that of staff sergeants, and twice that of sergeants. Among officers, men had five times as great a percentage of field grade officers as did women.³¹

It was Colonel Bandel's opinion that there was no reason why late-arriving Wacs should have had higher ratings than the men who arrived in the same years, and that Air Forces procedure "resulted in greater freedom in utilizing Wacs and men doing similar jobs," even though in fewer guaranteed ratings for women.³²

Toward the end of the war, officers of AAF's Military Personnel Division became concerned about the fact that WAC

²⁶ Memo, Chief, Classif and Repl Br AGO, for Dir WAC, 24 Apr 44. SPX 220.3 WAC (11-30-43) OC-H, in WDWAC 201.6.

²⁷ See Table 5, Appendix A, for division by occupational groups of total enlisted AAF Wacs in zone of the interior, 31 January 1945. The complete breakdown for both enlisted women and officers by SSN, race, and air command is given in the report cited n. 13(1).

²⁸ For a condensed summary of jobs held by AAF WAC officers in the United States, 31 January 45, see Table 6, Appendix A.

²⁹ AAF Hq Office Instr 35-25, 25 Sep 43.

³⁰ AAF Ltr 121-48, 29 Mar 45.

³¹ AAF Stat Digest, Tables 9, 10, and 15.

³² AAF WAC Hist, p. 34, n. 1.