

principles of anti-aircraft defense. At some anti-aircraft firing points the entire training operation, with the exception of technical supervision by male officers, was handled by enlisted women: WAC control tower operators kept the tow-target plane on the course, while other Wacs gave the fire signal over the field telephone, and WAC mathematicians computed the correct angle of fire and the accuracy of fire.

Other AGF Schools

At the Field Artillery School, a few Wacs were used as control tower operators to guide liaison planes. At the Armored, Field Artillery, and Cavalry Schools, Wacs were employed as radio mechanics, taking care of records and requisitions involving radio equipment, and repairing and installing radios in tanks, bantams, and other vehicles, both in camps and in bivouac areas. Other Wacs were radio operators and instructors in the Cavalry and Armored Schools, and in the communications school of the Field Artillery School, training men in code sending and receiving.

At the Parachute School, Fort Benning, Georgia, over one hundred women were utilized in the parachute rigging and maintenance sections. Women originally recruited for this work, under the station-and-job plan, were former textile mill workers and did not prove very apt, some 40 percent being unable to complete the training, with the average female rigger being able to rig only six chutes daily, as compared to ten rigged by the average man. Women were not allowed to jump with the chutes they had packed, as men were required to do, on the grounds that this was not an essential part of the job for a woman, but were allowed to fly with

paratrooper trainees and watch them jump with chutes the women had packed. After station-assignment recruiting was discontinued and the requirements raised, women developed greater proficiency in this work and ultimately were considered "equally qualified with male personnel in rigging and better qualified in maintenance."

Women served also at various stations in such varied jobs as proofreaders on technical manuals, as photographic technicians, as sewing machine operators in a book stitching shop, as translators for the preparation of language courses, and as motion picture projectionists in training classes. One woman, as chief clerk of a department, was responsible for keeping track of its officer and enlisted personnel and 300 trainees, for checking the contents of all incoming and outgoing papers, for the computation of rations needed, and for maintaining records of completion of qualification courses. Another, a classification clerk, assigned all male cadre returned from overseas. One was personal secretary to two generals and a colonel. Another secretary prepared reports and took all testimony concerning cases brought before a board of officers.

Staff directors on field visits made a point of checking such job assignments against actual skills. While typists were usually well assigned, stenographers were frequently found to be dissatisfied, and staff directors reported, "The failure of staff officers to use stenographic ability persisted through the entire period of the war." Many complained of not being busy, saying, "I feel that the Wacs could handle much more work than is given them," or, "It is said there are five persons to each Army job and that statement seems believable." With these and a few