

portant communications center,"²⁵ and hub of the Army's entire wire, radio, and cable system. With its outlying transmitting, receiving, and operating installations in the vicinity, it made up station WAR, in immediate contact by radio with all theaters and by land-line circuits with every major installation in the United States. Wacs for this service met the highest of intelligence and aptitude tests, and their loyalty records were minutely investigated. With the first assignment of a few Wacs to this work, the Chief Signal Officer, Maj. Gen. Harry C. Ingles, reported "an immediate improvement. . . . The loyalty and application to duty of these Waacs created an example which resulted in a noticeable increase in production."²⁶ By the end of 1944, some 235 Wacs were employed, chiefly in teletype operation, including radioteletype, and transmission and relay of messages translated into perforated tape on highspeed perforators. The chief of the Army Communications Service, Maj. Gen. Frank Stoner, stated, "We have found the Wacs conscientious, efficient, and dependable . . . thoroughly capable of filling many positions which formerly required trained men."²⁷

The 2d Signal Service Battalion, which was under G-2 Division of the War Department for operations, employed some 1,000 Wacs at its stations at Arlington Hall, Vint Hill, and Two Rock Ranch. In general the secret work was routine, noisy, but of a nature requiring perfection in detail. The WAC staff director reported:

It was proven over and over again that women were far better equipped than men for routine but detailed work. They were not qualified for highly technical jobs in most cases, but were qualified for routine research and for specialists' jobs such as teletype and radio operator.

About fifty women were also assigned to the battalion's Miami detachment, which distinguished itself chiefly by attempting to operate with a male commander for the WAC unit, in violation of War Department regulations, to be found out only when improper administration resulted and was investigated.²⁸

Other Signal Corps stations also employed appreciable numbers of Wacs. The Eastern Signal Corps Training Center at Fort Monmouth employed an eventual total of about 300, chiefly clerical and administrative personnel to run the center.²⁹ The Holabird Signal Depot near Baltimore employed some 100 women for similar duties, and a quota of 75 was allotted to the Army Pictorial Service and Signal Corps Photographic Center on Long Island, for work in film libraries and laboratories.³⁰

The average Army post in service or air commands also employed a few Signal Corps Wacs, although in lesser numbers than enlisted men and civilians. For example, the staff of the Signal Corps office at Fort McClellan, Alabama, included 3 officers, 8 enlisted men, 5 enlisted women, and 55 civilians. All positions appeared to

²⁵ WDBPR Press Release, Wacs in the Signal Center; in *Washington Post*, November 12, 1944, and *Army Times*, December 16, 1944.

²⁶ Ltr, Gen Ingles to Col Hobby, 12 July 43. WAAC file and SigC 322 WAC.

²⁷ Release cited n. 25.

²⁸ (1) Interv with Capt Barbara Rodes, WAC Stf Dir G-2 WD, 22 Mar 46. (2) WDBPR Press Release, Enlistment. (3) Memo, Dir Pers ASF for CSigO, 6 Dec 44. SPAP 320.2 WAC.

²⁹ M/R, sub: Fld Trip to Ft Monmouth; also R&W Slip, MPB OCSigO for Pers and Tng Serv, 15 Jul 43. Folder, WAC Surveys, unnumbered files of SigC Career Management Br.

³⁰ WDBPR Press Release, Enlistment. (2) Interv with Capt Jane Reeves, SigC WAC Stf Dir, 3 May 46. (3) Memo, MPB OCSigO for CG SigC Photographic Cen, Long Island, 26 July 43. SigC 320.2 WAAC.