

eventually would have required enlisted men, but to the Waacs nothing was apparent except that they had filled former civilian vacancies. CWS inspectors noted in some surprise that the "insidious idea" that a woman should replace a soldier appeared to be "prevalent among all WAAC companies in the field." The situation was somewhat alleviated upon conversion to Army status, when "malcontents" departed Pine Bluff Arsenal en masse. Thereafter, the fact of Army status reassured the women that military jobs were being filled.⁵⁵

While the diminishing supply of recruits made it impossible to fill all further CWS requisitions, three more detachments later reported respectively to Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Huntsville Arsenal, and the Office of the Chief of Chemical Warfare Service.⁵⁶ The Chief of the CWS, Maj. Gen. William N. Porter, noted that as the Corps ended its second year, the quality and efficiency of WAC personnel was holding up well and that there was "a high degree of enthusiasm in their respective tasks."⁵⁷

CWS Jobs

The majority of these CWS Wacs were employed in routine post headquarters duties which differed from those of other commands only in subject and terminology. For example, at Pine Bluff Arsenal Wacs drove, serviced, and cleaned the large Army buses that connected the widely separated munitions buildings, transporting civilian shift workers twenty-four hours a day. Other Wacs ran the arsenal's military personnel section, handling records of both officers and enlisted men. Wacs in the quartermaster branch handled stock records, requisitions, inventories, shipping tickets, and reports. One

WAC sergeant ran the sales commissary; a corporal computed field rations for the post; others sorted the post's mail; the publications section was composed entirely of Wacs. One WAC officer was in charge of the motor pool; another was arsenal librarian; another the assistant to the chief of the payroll section. Two WAC officers inspected the seven post cafeterias and ran the officers' mess. Another WAC lieutenant was chief of the chemical production control section, co-ordinating manufacture and shipment schedules.

A minority of WAC jobs were the technical ones which concerned the real chemical warfare mission. "We got most of the scientifically trained Wacs there were," claimed the CWS staff director. For reasons which could not then be publicized, the CWS wanted not merely chemists but also pharmacologists, neurologists, and toxicologists. Other technical services frequently surrendered to the CWS any WAC scientist whose qualifications were too high to be utilized appropriately elsewhere.

Before admittance to the installations, a four-way loyalty check was required for each woman, which often caused a wait in staging areas of two months or more. Upon reaching CWS installations, women were surprised to find assembled many prominent scientists engaged in closely guarded research projects of great interest and variety. "Many of the women already had master's degrees," the staff director stated, "and I would estimate that they got about the same opportunities that a Ph.D.

⁵⁵ (1) Memo, Chief MPB CWS for CO WAAC Det, Pine Bluff, Ark, 17 Aug 43; (2) Ltr, Gen Porter, Chief CWS, to Dir WAC, 5 Jul 43. CWS 324.5 WAC (Jul-Sep 43).

⁵⁶ Memo, WAC Stf Dir CWS for CG ASF, Att: MTD, 29 Mar 44. CWS 324.5 WAC (Jan-Mar 44).

⁵⁷ Ltr, Chief CWS to Dir WAC, 6 May 44. CWS 324.5 WAC (Apr-Jul 44).