

control of The Quartermaster General did not offer particularly suitable conditions for the employment of Wacs.⁶⁷ An early survey by the Office of The Quartermaster General pointed out that it was not advisable to use Waacs in graves registration companies; they could not replace men in salvage collecting companies because personnel had to be armed and had to perform heavy work in battlefield clean-up; they could not be employed in laundry battalions, companies, or platoons because these were mobile units operating in combat areas. It was suggested that Waacs could be employed in fixed laundries in the continental United States, which normally employed 89 percent women, but these were civilian job vacancies. As for bakery units, it was decided that bread-baking was definitely a man's assignment because of the strength required. It was not felt that Waacs should take over operation of light motor vehicles, which were used to train men for combat areas.⁶⁸

Furthermore, as in the Signal Corps, employment was restricted by the requirement that enlisted women be assigned only in units. Most quartermaster depots employed only a small detachment of enlisted men, and in many depots only civilians were employed. The Office of The Quartermaster General stated that, if civilian replacement and use of small numbers were authorized, Waacs might be used in places where civilians were scarce, or to take night shifts and other work that civilians would not accept. The Quartermaster General did not particularly recommend such assignment, pointing out that provision of suitable housing and messing would be a problem for small numbers, and that it would be undesirable to mix Waacs and civilians because of the difference in pay and privileges.⁶⁹

Therefore, by the time of the conversion to Army status, the Quartermaster Corps employed only one WAAC unit, located at Camp Lee, Virginia, where the women worked in the Quartermaster School and the ASF Training Center. Although The Quartermaster General assured Director Hobby at this time that "On the whole the girls are pleased with their assignments and are performing them in a satisfactory manner," the unit at Camp Lee suffered more than usual losses at the conversion. One possible explanation was The Quartermaster General's admission that some 20 percent of the women had at that time not yet replaced men. The women at Camp Lee eventually came to be employed also by the Quartermaster Board and the Quartermaster Replacement Training Center at that installation. Only one additional unit was recorded—that of the Fort Robinson Quartermaster Depot.⁷⁰

The employment of WAC officers, who could be scattered about in small numbers, was more suitable to the Quartermaster Corps than that of enlisted women. In early 1944 the Office of The Quartermaster General stated that "within the next few weeks a shortage of QMC officers will develop. A number of units are scheduled for activation and demands for over-

⁶⁷ Text is based on (1) Seven documents found in OQMG files. (2) ASF WAC Summary.

⁶⁸ (1) Memo, Serv Installations Div OQMG for Mil Plans Div, 26 Jan 43, and 4 Incls. QM 321 WAC 1943. (2) Memo, by Brig Gen Henry D. F. Munnikhuysen, OQMG. QM 320.2 WAC 1942. (3) 1st Ind, "K.H." to SigC, 16 Nov 42, to Bsc Ltr, Chief MPD CSigO to OQMG, 10 Nov 42. QM 320.2 WAC.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ (1) Ltr, Maj Gen Edmund B. Gregory to Dir WAC, 16 Jul 43, QM 321 WAC. (2) Memo, Capt Laura Asbury, WAC Asst, for MTD ASF, 29 Mar 44. QM 320.2 WAC.