

Finance Department

No statistics were preserved as to the numbers, if any, of Wacs on duty with the Finance Department in the service and air commands. Upon request, the Finance Department obligingly set up a quota of six for the WAC for its officers' course at Duke University, beginning in July of 1943. A little later, enlisted women were admitted to eight successive classes of the two-month enlisted finance course, to an eventual total of 305 women, of whom 266—about 87 percent—were graduated.

The only possibly unsuitable Finance duties for women were those in which it was necessary for the paying officer to wear or keep available a revolver or other weapon. Neither the Finance Department nor WAC Headquarters was able to see any reason why an otherwise qualified woman should not be allowed this privilege, inasmuch as the paying officer seldom was required to shoot anyone. However, the War Department refused to make an exception in this case to the general rule about "combat" assignments.⁸⁶

Corps of Chaplains

When the WAAC was established, the Corps of Chaplains noted that there were two possible modes of utilization: that women ministers be used as chaplains for WAAC training centers, and that enlisted women be used as chaplains' assistants.⁸⁷ The first of these was never seriously considered. The Corps of Chaplains reported that, when the First WAAC Training Center was established:

Quick to take advantage of the new situation were the organizations of women preachers, and a considerable amount of agitation followed. . . . The statutes omitted

any reference to the sex of chaplains, and at that time War Department directives did not make any specific statement on the subject. However, by tradition, as well as by general Army policy, chaplains were assumed to be of the male sex.

All applications from women ministers for commissions in the Corps of Chaplains were therefore refused. Ministering to the spiritual needs of the Wacs did not prove a problem to male chaplains, who stated, "Actually, the presence of Army women seemed to make very little difference in the work of most chaplains."

The use of enlisted women as chaplains' assistants was likewise originally disapproved by the Chief of Chaplains, who felt that it might prove compromising for a chaplain to be shut up alone in his office with a female assistant, and that even if it did not, the enlisted men who ordinarily revealed intimate problems to a chaplain would not do so if a woman was present. The assignment was not forbidden, but was left to the discretion of stations in the field. Within a few months, such assignments began to take place on the initiative of local chaplains and personnel officers.

Some of the women assigned were clerk-typists and general office workers, while others were musicians, such as organists and choir directors, or organizers of church activities. The Corps of Chaplains, after some experience with such employ-

⁸⁶ (1) Historical monograph, Personnel, General. Job A46-156, Drawer 4, ASF files of OCofFin, Jul 1940-Nov 1945. (2) Memo, Fiscal Dir for TAG, 21 Jun 43. AG 210.63 Army Fin Schs (2-9-43)(1). (3) Historical Monograph, Mil Tng, OCofFin, Tab G, Basic WAC Enl Fin Course. Job A46-156, Drawer 4, OCofFin.

⁸⁷ This section, including quotations, is based on: (1) Military History of the Second World War: Corps of Chaplains, Part III, pp. 95 ff. OCMH. (2) Memo, Lois Hill, Secy, for Dir WAAC, 10 Mar 43. SPWA 230.3.