

ment, reported, "It was soon found that they could be used as Chaplains' Assistants to the same degree as men in the Army."

It was observed that women in the Army played much the same part in a post's religious life that civilian women did in the average community: they attended services more readily, formed more than a proportionate share of the choir, and in general were willing to lend more support to church activities. Under the circumstances, the employment of women as full-time chaplains' assistants ceased to excite comment. Estimates indicated that Wacs formally assigned to work with the Corps of Chaplains did not number more than a few hundred.

Only the Army Air Forces formalized the employment program to the extent of sending women to a school. Women already assigned to this duty were permitted to attend the AAF Chaplains' Assistants School for training in choir work, maintenance of records, and other necessary activities. These women represented all of the three major religious groups in the United States and both the white and the Negro races.

The Provost Marshal's Department

There was no official indication that Wacs were ever employed, in World War II, to replace male military police except at WAC training centers, where such employment was more or less necessary to avoid embarrassing male police. Early in the WAAC's existence, G-3 Division of the

War Department had suggested that it was undesirable to assign men in the younger age groups "to units or activities not to be used for combat service" and that the necessary high caliber of military police be secured from older age groups, limited service men, and Waacs—the Waacs to be employed "to the fullest extent where appropriate."⁸⁸ Such assignment was never considered by WAAC Headquarters to be especially appropriate except in clerical positions in Provost Marshal offices or to assume custody of women.

Even this latter use was not realized to the extent deemed permissible by WAAC Headquarters. A request was made by Director Hobby in the summer of 1943 for WAC MP detachments at large centers of population where female absentees were often apprehended, but this was refused by the Army Service Forces because male MP's would not have been replaced.⁸⁹

Throughout the war there were frequent rumors and reports that Wacs in scattered stations and overseas were being employed as military police; at times publicity photographs showed women wearing the armbands of MP's or parking guides. Upon investigation these were usually found to be office workers in a posed photograph. No employment involving the carrying of weapons was officially authorized for Wacs.

⁸⁸ Memo, G-3 for CG SOS, 26 Sep 42. WDGCT 322.999 MP (9-16-42), in SPAP 320.2 General.

⁸⁹ Memo, MPD ASF for Dir Pers ASF, 10 Aug 43. SPAP 320.2 WAAC (5-17-43).