

staffed by Army doctors, nurses, and enlisted technicians from nearby hospitals. Both students and training authorities had only praise for the excellent and practical course and for the instructors.⁵⁵

The recruits themselves were a promising group, extremely enthusiastic. Many were motivated by the fact that relatives had been casualties; they wished to give to some wounded soldier the care they had not been able to give personally to their own wounded. The majority were young single women of good character and intelligence; they successfully completed the three-month course in six weeks, with few failures even in cases where women with lower-than-qualifying AGCT scores had been erroneously recruited. About 5,000 were graduated as medical and surgical technicians, and 1,300 as medical clerks.⁵⁶

However, the difficulties inherent in the whole General Hospital Campaign became obvious even before the women reported for duty. The Surgeon General's representative stated:

Utter confusion and conflicting policies and directives re ideas as to the utilization of this personnel have been flagrant since the original idea of WAC Table of Organization companies was conceived.⁵⁷

Because of the confusion, repeated conferences were held with Director Hobby and with medical officers from every service command, without much success. Although the hospital T/O had been drawn up by The Surgeon General's Office itself, that office believed that changed conditions merited abrogation of recruiting commitments.

Even before the new recruits reached the hospitals, the Battle of the Bulge was won and January's fright concerning medical care was in the past. Just as V-E Day was in prospect, all of the drastic attempts

to get medical personnel were embarrassingly successful and bore fruit simultaneously. The nursing profession, under threat of the draft, had responded with a rush; in the three weeks between 8 and 29 January 1945, over 10,000 applications for commissions were filed. Draft rumors also stimulated 60 percent of senior cadets to choose the Army instead of civilian employment. Hospitals proved resourceful in hiring civilian nurses. In May, the director of the Army Nurse Corps, Col. Florence A. Blanchfield, returned from Europe to find that there were actually too many nurses. She recommended that 2,000 civilian nurses be released, and secured a recall of the proposed draft legislation. As a result, hospital commanders everywhere objected to the WAC T/O units, and pointed out that they no longer needed Wacs to care for the sick, but were in urgent need of more orderlies, kitchen police, and charwomen.⁵⁸

The matter of grades was also a disappointment. It had been guaranteed by G-1 that these would be an extra allotment, but when the ASF appealed to Lt. Col. Westray Battle Boyce, the G-1 WAC officer handling the grades, it was in-

⁵⁵ (1) Memo, SGO Tng Div for SGO Resources Analysis Div, 26 Jan 46; (2) Memo, ASF Plans and Opns Div for SG, 5 Feb 45, SPMOC 532; (3) Memo, Capt Turnbull for Dir Tng Div SGO, 23 Feb 45; (4) Min cited n. 27. WAC file, SGO Tng Div.

⁵⁶ (1) Rpt cited n. 7(2). (2) Remarks by Lt Col Elizabeth H. Strayhorn, Comdt, 3d WAC Tng Cen. Min cited n. 27.

⁵⁷ Memo, Col Hall, Actg Chief, Pers Serv SGO, for Surg Gen, 14 Mar 45. WAC file, SGO Tng Div.

⁵⁸ (1) M/R, Extract from SGO Diary, 28 Feb 45, initialed ERW, (2) Min, Mtg in O Dir WAC, 9 Mar 45; (3) Memo, Col Whitehurst to Col Hall. WAC file, SGO Tng Div. (4) Min cited n. 27. (5) Memo, SGO Pers Servs for CG ASF, 9 Jan 45. SGO Hist Div 322.5-1 WAC. (6) Memo, G-3 for CG ASF, 10 Feb 45. WDGCT 320.3 (1-5-45), in WDWAC 341. (7) D/F, G-3 to CofS, 30 Jan 45. CofS 324.5 WAC. (8) ANC Hist, pp. 553, and 584-5.