



HOLLANDIA, NETHERLANDS NEW GUINEA. *Wooden-floored tents occupied by the women.*

Other evidence tended to support even more optimistic conclusions. For one period, during which the average length of nonbattle hospitalization was computed separately, the average stay for Wacs was only 10.5 days as compared to 18 days for men. There was a slight suspicion among the Wacs themselves that they could withstand the hot weather better than the men. On the other hand, while many Wacs had gained weight in Australia, they, like many men, now began to lose; some suffered a "gradual and continuous" loss from the time of their arrival. Authorities blamed this on "loss of appetite after long periods of diet composed principally of canned and dehydrated foods."⁶²

The Philippines

Wacs arrived in the Philippines on 26 November 1944, some thirty-six days behind the first wave of combat troops. The Wacs' presence was again required by USASOS' personnel plan, a repetition of its previous maneuver. To man the immediate northward push from Leyte, it was again necessary to pull men out of the organizations that had landed on Leyte and to send them forward in the island-hopping toward Manila. The mechanics of this exchange was handled by a WAC enlisted woman, later a warrant officer, Margaret Sterling, who received high commendation from USASOS authorities

⁶² AFPAC Reply, both versions.