

of the board walks. Nevertheless, there was soon set up what was described as "an orderly efficiently operating headquarters in the midst of chaos, confusion, and destruction." In buildings full of bullet and shell holes, GHQ Wacs for the first weeks propped up broken desks and chairs, used crates for file cases, chunks of twisted metal for paperweights, and fragments of exploded shells for ash trays.

The USASOS Wacs delayed their arrival until, in the opinion of their battalion commander and later staff director, Major Gardiner, the worst of the dirt with the resulting dysentery was eliminated. They were housed in the Far Eastern University and in overflow tents on adjacent areas. Buildings were in relatively good condition, and the headquarters was quickly established.

As various New Guinea stations were closed, Wacs were moved into the Manila area until eventually most of the entire five thousand were concentrated there. Army Forces, Western Pacific (AFWESPAC), the successor to USASOS, used over a thousand women who were housed in frame-and-burlap barracks on Ascarraga Street. A small general depot group at Quezon City lived in floored tents in an area which the Wacs soon neatly landscaped. At the demolished Fort McKinley, FEAF Wacs lived in an attractive breezy camp with partitioned buildings, neat dayrooms, and their own club for dancing. At Nichols Field, FEASC Wacs had hot and dusty tin barracks. The Philippine Base Section WAC detachment drew comfortable but crowded nurses' quarters, where they lived six and eight to a two-woman compartment, and enjoyed that novelty, clothes closets. Wacs at Santa Ana Racetrack, working for the Allied Translator and Intelligence Service, lived

for a time in muddy unfloored tents, later moving to thatch-roofed huts of 20-Wac capacity. Wacs with the signal intelligence section were housed at San Miguel Plantation in frame and tin barracks, and lived a very quiet country life.⁷⁴

For some time restrictions in Manila were even tighter than elsewhere, since the city's remaining recreation facilities were generally off-limits, and a seven o'clock curfew was imposed for security. Also, the move to Manila did little to improve the supply situation. One company commander was obliged to ask that Wacs not be arrested by military police for not being dressed in the khaki uniform now required of all men and nurses, since "WAC personnel are not out of uniform when wearing coverall trousers with cotton shirts, because of the necessity for such wear as Class A uniform due to lack of supplies. Some members have only one pair of [men's] khaki slacks."⁷⁵ Just after the first Wacs' move to Manila, the WAC Section sent a memorandum to G-1 of USAFFE pointing out that while the supply difficulties for male troops in the area were great, those for Wacs had been even greater: "No supply has been available for Wacs where I have been stationed since our departure from Australia."⁷⁶

Job Assignments

In Manila, and in the outlying bases, final records of WAC job assignment were scanty. The theater estimated that, as of the spring of 1945, 70 percent of the Wacs were engaged in administrative and office

⁷⁴ For WAC detachments at end of war see Griffith Account.

⁷⁵ Correspondence Folder, 5200th WAC Det, Drawer X-29443.

⁷⁶ Memo, Capt Juanita Stryker, WAC Sec USAFFE, for Gen Baird, 12 Mar 45. Tab 12, WAC Draft AFPAC Reply.