

Wacs were often allotted the best of the enlisted accommodations already available to a headquarters.¹⁰⁴

The choice of camp site went according to the priority rating of each organization. Thus, USASOS usually rated housing, on a priority basis, after GHQ, USAFFE, FEAF, and the Sixth and Eighth Armies. The housing of USASOS Wacs was therefore ordinarily less desirable than that of the men of those groups, although possibly superior to that of USASOS men. The History of USAFFE noted briefly, "The WAC were not accorded special quarters and special transportation or special supplies. In New Guinea, their quarters, mess, and recreation were comparable to those of male troops."¹⁰⁵

The general impression that Wacs had more expensive quarters seemed due largely to the fact that visitors and historians arriving several months after the advanced echelons found some comforts present. Reliable sources ascribed these only to the persistent scavenging of the women themselves, abetted by the ever-willing labor of the endless supply of GI suitors. In a typical camp on Leyte, Wacs were assigned the usual dirt-floored tents, but the women's dates brought them floors for the tents, a piece at a time. Wacs also traded with the natives for heavy labor and useful or decorative items.

A far more useful source than either Army men or natives was the Navy, particularly the Seabees, who were no less willing to assist and far better supplied with the wherewithal. A settled WAC unit with reasonable access to land, sea, and air forces was therefore likely to have a landscaped camp site, graveled paths, floors in the tents, dressing tables, and, overhead, forming a heat-resisting space below the iron or canvas roof, the billowing nylon of a discarded parachute. Rec-

reation halls were likewise decorated with native thatch, palms, trophies, and bright-colored supply parachutes.¹⁰⁶

WAC messes, equipment, and rations were identical with those of male units. The Southwest Pacific Area was the only overseas theater that could not ordinarily relieve skilled office workers of kitchen police duty, since civilian labor in New Guinea was limited, although some was available in Manila. Wacs staffed their own messes or, if eating at the consolidated mess, generally furnished their proportionate share of kitchen police, as they did in the United States. Two men were usually assigned to large WAC messes to service the field ranges and do heavy lifting.¹⁰⁷ Again, it appeared that any appearance of superiority was due only to improvised decorations or well-prepared food, which often ranked a WAC mess with higher headquarters messes. The Biak historical report stated, "The WAC Mess Hall soon became the envy of the post . . . the rumor flew that Wacs had better rations, but the Wacs refuted this."¹⁰⁸

As for the matter of clothing, there would have been no question of unusual expense even had the Wacs received any. WAC staff members estimated that, even if the Army's usual policy of issuing all needed items had been followed, the cost of a Wac's clothing in malarious areas would have been only \$124, in nonmalarious areas \$143, as against \$233 for comparable items for Wacs in the United States.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ D/F cited n. 61.

¹⁰⁵ USAFFE Hist.

¹⁰⁶ (1) Boyce Rpt. (2) Griffith Account.

¹⁰⁷ AFPAC Reply, both versions.

¹⁰⁸ Folder, 5225th WAC Det, Drawer X-28368.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* Also (1) Memo, Capt Stryker for Gen Baird, 12 Mar 45. (2) Check Sheet, Capt Stryker to CofS, USAFFE, 2 Apr 44. Tab 12, WAC Draft AFPAC Reply. (3) Personal ltr, Maj Gen R. J. Mar-