

In the Cairo unit, women suffered the usual respiratory and gastrointestinal conditions, but in less degree than the men, and there had been no cases of venereal disease, pregnancy, malaria, or the hepatitis that was prevalent in the area. Emotional maladjustments had been minor, only one case requiring return to the United States.

Camp Huckstep Wacs had likewise had no unusual medical conditions except an incidence of appendectomies to a total of almost 10 percent of the group. There had been no cases of venereal disease, and only one pregnancy, which had existed before arrival in the theater. However, Camp Huckstep Wacs had experienced a number of minor maladjustment problems and two serious psychiatric cases, one of which had to be sent back to the United States. These cases were not more numerous than similar cases among men and, according to Major Craighill, "were reflections of the enlisted men's attitude of frustration in an area removed from the combat zone." Improvement in this respect was noted when surplus personnel was shipped out. Gynecological conditions were minor and caused no loss of time from work or any evacuation of personnel from the area.⁵⁹

The only policy problem noted by historians was a minor version of the Pacific and European theaters' major problem: the question of direct commissions for enlisted women who were secretaries to ranking general officers. As soon as the news of such commissions elsewhere reached the theater, General Royce repeatedly applied to the War Department for permission to commission his secretary. The request, with others like it, was refused upon the insistence of Director Hobby, who had secured a ruling against any further such

action as a result of the bad publicity accompanying earlier cases. The Director suggested instead that the woman, if qualified, be selected by regular board procedure and returned to officer candidate school with promise of return to the area upon graduation. General Royce instead preferred to appoint the secretary a warrant officer, which he did. No further comment resulted except sharp newspaper criticism of the commanding general's wisdom in using public funds to make his personal plane available to the secretary and her husband for an extended honeymoon tour of the Mediterranean.⁶⁰

As the end of the war neared, restlessness increased, and both men and women were heard commenting that they wished they were in Italy, France, America, or almost any other place. Luckily the waiting period was not long, and soon after V-J Day shipment began, with the last Wacs returning home in October 1945. Colonel Boyce, who stopped in Cairo shortly afterward on her way home from India, interviewed the chief of staff and stated that "The Wacs were highly commended for their work and they were released only when there was no longer a job to be done."⁶¹

Although recommending a two-year limit on the tour of duty, Major Craighill stated that the theater's experience with the employment of Wacs and nurses had

⁵⁹ Passage on health, including quotations and statistics: (1) Memo Maj Margaret Craighill for The SG USA through Chief Surg USAFIME, 8 Jan 45, sub: Health Conditions of Nurses and Wacs in USAFIME. SGO Hist Div 319.1 Spec Rpt—Middle East. (2) Incl 3 to Craighill IBT Rpt.

⁶⁰ Memo, Dir WAC for CofS USA, 14 Apr 44. WDWAC 314.7. Approved by CofS, 18 Apr 44; forwarded to TAG, 21 Apr 44. WDWAC 210.1.

⁶¹ Boyce Rpt of visit to WAC Pers in Overseas Theaters, 21 Sep–26 Nov 45, Tab F: AMET. Hobby files, also OCMH.