

a number of other changes in Army Regulations were requested by the Director.

Minority Discharge

A male minor who misrepresented his age in order to enter the Army was, according to Army Regulations, not discharged if discovered, provided that his parents did not request his discharge. Many stations thereupon decided that a woman discovered to be under age could also remain in the Army if her parents concurred. However, the WAC age limit of 20 had been set by act of Congress and not by the War Department; it was therefore necessary to publish a change making mandatory the discharge of a woman found to be under age.⁴

Fraudulent Enlistment

Army Regulations provided that men concealing any fact, except minority, that would have made them ineligible for enlistment would be given a discharge other than honorable (blue). Minority was excepted, since it was felt that the excess of patriotism that prompted this concealment should not be stigmatized as was concealment of previous conviction or other major offenses. Women, unlike men, were ineligible for enlistment if they had children in certain age groups. The Director argued, for a time unsuccessfully, that concealment of children was in the same category with concealment of minority, and did not merit the blue discharge given those who concealed criminal records. It was near the end of the war when she finally secured partial acceptance of this theory; authority was then written into Army Regulations for the discharging authority to give either a white or a blue

discharge for this offense, at his discretion. The Secretary of War's Discharge Review Board was then asked to review all previously issued blue discharges in this category.⁵

Discharge for National Health, Safety, and Interest

Discharges to accept essential employment were given to men who could bring proof of an offer of such employment plus certification from a Selective Service board that the holder of the job was exempt from draft. There was at first some difficulty in deciding how to get, for a woman, certification equivalent to that of a man's Selective Service board. Moreover, it was impossible to ensure that a woman would take or keep an essential job after discharge. A man who failed to do so was at once drafted again, but there was no way to get the woman back in the Army; women could accept such a discharge and then enjoy perfect idleness or a more lucrative nonessential job.

The War Department's first solution was to forbid any women at all to be discharged for this reason. This, however, was manifestly unfair to a few scientific technicians and farm managers who had enlisted from patriotic motives and now found themselves less useful to the nation in the Army. Finally, a new procedure was worked out, for both men and women, which eliminated reference to Selective

⁴ (1) Memo, Actg Dir Rice for G-1, 25 Jan 44. SPWA 220.8 (9-20-43), in AG 320.2 WAC. (2) WD Cir 65, 12 Feb 44, sec VI; also Cir 96, 1944, and AR 615-362.

⁵ (1) Memo, Dir WAC for G-1, 15 Dec 43. SPWA 220.8 (E), in SPWA 220.8 (9-30-43). (2) C-2, AR 615-366, 22 Aug 45. (3) Memo, G-1 for SW Discharge Review Bd, 23 Aug 45; (4) D/F, G-1 to TAG, 23 Aug 45. WDGAP 220.8, in WDWAC 220.8.