

bench; it was therefore directed that the benches in WAAC mess halls not be attached to the table, or that stools be substituted.

Also, since most women carried their personal belongings in ordinary luggage rather than in barracks bags when on leave or individual travel, two square feet of luggage storage space per enlisted woman was authorized, provided that no great cost was involved. Such space was usually available, since women's units required only 330 square feet for company supply as against 1,037 for men's supply and combat equipment.⁵

Decline in Housing Standards

With the exception of these improvements, all later modifications in housing made during the first years were in the nature of successive compromises with expediency, involving gradual reduction of standards. Except at Fort Des Moines, no training center housing conformed to standard. Most schools were occupied hastily and for a short time only, and had outside latrines, uncurtained showers and toilets, and sometimes men's plumbing fixtures. Port and transit facilities were of course never modified for women. The earliest WAAC barracks on Army posts in general were constructed according to specification, but when Waacs began to count against the Troop Basis, new construction became the exception rather than the rule, being authorized only where it was impossible to convert the barracks of the men who had been replaced.⁶

At the same time, standards for Army construction were falling rapidly as the supply of materials became more critical.

Construction at Army camps had long since ceased to be of a permanent type. The "mobilization-type" construction, which was at first substituted, permitted a fairly substantial frame building, usually with central heating. WAAC Headquarters immediately agreed to the Chief of Engineers' plan for mobilization-type instead of permanent housing for Waacs, except for his proposal to eliminate the two bathtubs formerly installed in new construction. Supporting WAAC Headquarters' view, The Surgeon General again stated that tubs were necessary for feminine personal hygiene, but Requirements Division, Army Service Forces, refused to permit further installation of bathtubs, and later barracks had none.

WAAC Headquarters also agreed, in the interests of economy, to abandon the earlier plan for housing a company in three one-story barracks for fifty women each, in favor of a new plan for two two-story barracks of seventy-five each. This plan, while saving one building, required the women's beds to be double-decked and crowded closely together, with less space for wall and foot lockers. This type of construction was used for many of the Air Forces WAC barracks and for some in other commands.⁷

As the war continued, the mobiliza-

⁵ (1) Memo, Reqmts Div ASF for CofEngrs, 14 Apr 43. SPPMC 600.12, in WA 600.1 (1942). (2) Memo, WAAC Hq for CofEngrs, 22 Jun 43. SPWA 438. (3) Memo cited n. 1. (4) Memo, Exec WAC for Dir Plans and Opns ASF, 4 Jan 44, with 1st Ind, ASF to CofEngrs, 15 Jan 44. SPWA 400.242.

⁶ (1) Memo, WAAC Hq for CofAdm Serv, 28 Sep 42. SPWA 314.7 sec 3 Housing Sec. (2) Memo, Housing Br WAAC Hq for Opns Div WAAC Hq, 1 Jan 43. SPWA 020 Orgn of Opns Div. (3) Memo cited n. 1.

⁷ (1) Memo, WAAC Hq for CofAdm Serv, 21 Nov 42, Inds from SGO and Reqmts Div. WA 600.1. (2) Memo cited n. 6(1). (3) New 75-woman type: Memo, WAC Hq for Reqmts Div SOS, 23 Oct 43. WA 600.1 (1942).