

The British had noted a similar need for two rooms:

The gregarious are well cared for by wireless, games, concerts, and dances, but more quiet rooms are needed by women who wish to relax.²⁰

Therefore, as the best possible solution under existing circumstances, most WAC units attempted to partition their dayroom space into two parts, or converted the non-commissioned officers' quarters in each barracks to tiny sitting rooms with facilities for writing or sewing. Furnishings were bought with private funds, sent from home, or begged, borrowed, or scrounged from local women's clubs, sorority sisters, churches, or charitable organizations. It was seldom that a WAC unit in the field any length of time did not somehow contrive a cheerful dayroom and a date room.

However, this practice was ended when the Army, early in 1945, forbade solicitation of basic dayroom furnishings from civilian organizations. Another circular prevented the use of company funds for the purchase of lamps and floor coverings.²¹ For WAC units sent out after this date, any solution appeared difficult.

Hairdressing Facilities

During the first year of the Corps' existence, the provision for women of the equivalent of the men's barbershop was left to local initiative. Some stations already possessed a civilian-operated hairdressing shop for nurses and civilian employees; others did not and expressed some uncertainty as to what if any funds could be used to provide it. Such facilities often appeared even more needed by Wacs than by civilian women, because of the regulation that hair must not touch the coat collar. To meet this requirement,

many women needed permanent waves every two or three months. While the women could usually wash, set, and cut their own hair, the home permanent was not yet generally on the market.

Since the six-day work week left Wacs little time to patronize city facilities, Director Hobby recommended and the Chief of Engineers approved a directive which, at the end of the first year, authorized partitioning off part of the Wac dayrooms and the installation of water connections, if the unit could equip and operate the shop. There still remained considerable field confusion as to the financial authorization involved, and a year later a War Department directive defined the application by Army Regulations. Unit beauty shops and barbershops operated by enlisted personnel for their own use were permitted to be defined as "minor profit-making activities of a unit fund." Civilian-operated post barbershops and beauty shops were specified as functions of the Army exchange, with provision for purchasing from a unit any equipment that it had already bought.²²

In another addition to regulations, permanent wave operators were required to have a state license, and authority was published for expenditure of unit funds for the required insurance. Director Hobby also requested and secured permission to include in overseas shipments some women who possessed licenses as hairdressers in addition to the military skill for which they were selected.²³

²⁰ *Conditions in the Three Women's Services.*

²¹ WD Cir 126, 26 Apr 45, and WD Cir 168, 1943.

²² (1) Memo cited n. 1; also Memo, Dir WAAC for CofEngrs, 22 May 43. WA 600.1 sec 2 (1942). (2) WD Cir 321, 3 Aug 44, sec I, defining AR 210-50, 1 Jun 44.

²³ (1) Cirs 258 and 462, 1944. (2) Memo, Dir WAC for G-1, 18 Feb 44. WDGAP 320.2 sec 8a.