

of five WAC lieutenant colonels listed in the order of her preference.⁴⁸ It was natural that members of the Corps staff should expect the new head to be the former deputy who for twenty months had been Colonel Hobby's chief assistant and at times Acting Director, Lt. Col. Jessie P. Rice. However, it may have appeared unwise to ask Colonel Rice, in view of her poor health, to leave her job as head of the School for WAC Personnel Administration and assume a new and more formidable post. Another consideration may have been the fact that Colonel Rice had not found herself in harmony with the views of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, Maj. Gen. Stephen G. Henry, the Director's immediate superior. A particular disagreement, occurring some months before, had centered around language which Colonel Rice reported that General Henry applied to Negro Wacs in her presence. In protest, Colonel Rice had submitted her resignation and Colonel Hobby had supported her deputy by proffering her own resignation. Later, both resignations were withdrawn at the request of General Henry, who apologized for his language.⁴⁹

In any event, Colonel Hobby's first listed choice for her successor was Deputy Director Lt. Col. Westray Battle Boyce. Earlier she had served as a staff officer in General Henry's Personnel Policy Branch, where she had handled numerous projects, including the allotment of grades for WAC general hospital companies. She had been the first staff director of the North African theater, and, before that, staff director of the Fourth Service Command. General Henry, in approving Colonel Hobby's nomination of Colonel Boyce as Director, stated that "she will make a better director in the eyes of the public, a better 'front' for the Corps," that she had shown her capac-

ity to win the support of influential organizations of women, and also that she was "more the feminine type than any other candidate." General Marshall, about to leave for Potsdam, approved the choice, after obtaining the concurrence of Secretary Stimson, who was already on ship-board.⁵⁰

Colonel Hobby elected immediate resignation instead of a medical discharge, since this enabled her successor to be promoted on the same day to the rank of colonel and the full status of Director, without waiting upon lengthy board proceedings. On 12 July 1945, the closely guarded secret was revealed, and in the presence of the Acting Secretary of War, Colonel Boyce took office as the second Director WAC. Acting Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson praised the first Director's work and informed a press conference, "She had to fight many obstacles in promoting a program that was unique in the history of the Army, but she did it with great distinction." Mrs. Hobby thanked the War Department for "The great assistance always at hand," and the press for their "constructive interpretation." She added:

I have been a member of the greatest democratic fraternity in the world. I shall always be grateful for my service in the Army

⁴⁸ Memo, Dir WAC for CofS, 26 Jun 45, sub: Recommendations. WD G-1 WAC 210.31-482.

⁴⁹ The account of this incident is based on the author's recollections. The clash with General Henry was reported to a few WAC staff officers, including the author, as well as to Colonel Hobby. According to Colonel Rice, she had walked out in silence after General Henry's remarks, but had immediately returned to offer her uncensored opinion and resignation saying, "Sir, your staff officer just went out and a citizen of the United States walked in."

⁵⁰ (1) Memo, ACofS G-1 for CofS, 8 Jul 45, sub: New Director, WAC, with handwritten notes by CofS and SGS. WDGAP 210.31 WAC (6-21-45). (2) CM-IN-10024, Stimson to AGWAR (for Marshall), 11 Jul 45.