

women showed almost twice as great a tendency as men to leave it. Only 22 percent of women went back to their former employment, although twice as great a percentage of men did so. Many of those women who did go back expressed dissatisfaction. To some extent the women's reluctance to go back to their old work seemed due to their desire to find work that offered the degree of responsibility learned in the service.

To a much greater extent than the male veterans, women had related their future plans to the skill they had acquired in the service, but only two in five employed women were able to use their service-gained experience on their new jobs. Others were prevented from doing so by the low salaries offered them, by unwillingness of employers to give credit for military experience, and by the refusal of civilian employers to hire women in unusual jobs if men were available. Those least likely to be able to use their skill were those trained in technical work usually thought of as men's jobs: radio operator, mechanic, aircraft specialist, and others. About the same percentage of women as of men had applied for readjustment allowances, and about the same percent had entered school. Fewer women than men were interested in loans to buy a home or to go into business.⁵¹

Army psychiatrists expressed fear that women's readjustment would be more difficult than that of men, since

Even more than men, these women have become unsuited to their former civilian environment because the change in their pattern of life was more radical. . . . Most of them have matured, have broader interests, and a new and finer sense of values.⁵²

However, few Wacs reported worse effects than "nervousness and a feeling of strange-

ness, tiredness"; "lack of real concern for seemingly unimportant things"; "a failure of family and friends to accept me as a responsible individual." Some found themselves "lacking in initiative"; others, "too bossy." Possibly the worst generally reported result was "a lost feeling . . . lack of interest in former friends or environment . . . an inability to find work which seemed really vital."⁵³

The returning female veteran also found that the jokes and stories on WAC morals had preceded her into civilian life. As one Wac put it, "I discovered that it is best not to mention my army career due to the unfortunate stigma attached to the WAC."⁵⁴ The head of the New York Veterans Service Committee, Mrs. Anna Rosenberg, reported: "Many [women veterans] have been disillusioned and discouraged by a cold reception from various women's groups."⁵⁵

To combat such hindrances to readjustment, various plans were invoked. The National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs launched its Servicewomen's Project, by which local club members assisted returning servicewomen in job counseling and placement. The Retraining and Reemployment Administration employed the former head of the SPARS, Capt. Dorothy C. Stratton, to insure that women were not overlooked in its mission of guiding civilian communities in reintegrating veterans and war workers. Still another government agency,

⁵¹ *The Woman Veteran*, Research Studies MPR-2, 31 Apr 46, Rpts Contl Symbol PAB-7-S, by Research Serv, VA. Also correspondence, VA and Dir WAC, leading up to survey, in WDWAC 292, Mar-Sep 46.

⁵² Margaret D. Craighill, M.D., "Psychiatric Aspects of Women Serving in the Army," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 104, No. 4, October, 1947.

⁵³ Helen G. Brown, thesis cited n. 46.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁵⁵ *Washington Post*, editorial, January 24, 1946.