

Women's Army Corps



COL. OVETA CULP HOBBY, *Dir., Women's Army Corps, 1942-45.*



COL. WESTRAY BATTLE BOYCE, *Dir., Women's Army Corps, 1945-*

WOMEN soldiers, nearly 100,000 strong, established a proud record during the long years of war, serving everywhere throughout the regular Army except in actual combat and performing their duties in every theater of conflict from North Africa to the Pacific.

The Women's Army Corps, first organized as an auxiliary May 14, 1942, became "regular Army" a little more than a year later. Since then WACs have been just as much a part of the Army as any G.I. Joe.

In April, 1945, more than 15,500 WACs were serving overseas. They were secretaries and stenographers for generals. They operated switchboards which kept communications alive throughout the European theater of operations. They were clerks and typists, they worked in the signal section of General Headquarters, they worked in postal censorship, did administrative work with the U. S. Army Services of Supply, and proved that women can keep a secret by confidential work in signal intelligence.

Some were translators, some photographers, some mimeograph operators. Others served with the Transportation Corps and still others were medical assistants.



WAAC class-B Uniform shoes



Left: WACs skilled in operating business machines help do Army paper work . . . Here ammunition statistics are compiled.

The jobs which members of the WAC filled overseas were, of course, akin to tasks which they also did within the continental United States. And there was little from which they were excluded by virtue of their femininity.

WAC soldiers have been assigned to more than 400 Army installations scattered from coast to coast and from the Canadian to the Mexican borders. Nearly 18 per cent have gone overseas to 15 foreign countries scattered in every theater of operations. Some WACs have served abroad for more than two years.

In Europe and the Pacific, as well as at home, WACs did much more than replace men for combat

in safe, pleasant "womanly" jobs. Their keen eyes and quick fingers made them expert as parachute riggers. They became weather experts. The deepest penetration into German-occupied Europe made by long-range fighter planes of the Eighth Air forces was plotted on a map table on which WACs charted the course to and from the target area.

Col. Oveta Culp Hobby, commanding officer of the Women's Army Corps during most of its history, was given the Distinguished Service Medal, third highest Army decoration, for her service. In 1945 she was succeeded by Col. Westray Battle Boyce.

Insigne of the Corps is the head of Pallas Athene, goddess of wisdom and victory.



Above: A WAC control tower operator checks in an Army Air Corps pilot.

THINK

THINK MAGAZINE'S DIARY OF U. S. PARTICIPATION IN WORLD WAR II (1946)

OldMagazineArticles.com