

# GEN. CURRY COMMENDS AIR-WACS' VALUED SERVICE IN HIS COMMAND

(Written for THE POST by Public Relations Staff Writer, Army Air Force Western Technical Training Command.)

THE number of women serving with the army air forces as air-Wacs in the Denver area is restricted military information; the work those women are doing, their vital roles in modern war and their conduct—both military and social—are not secrets. Maj. Gen. John F. Curry, commanding general of the army air forces western technical training command, issued a public statement from his Denver headquarters in the Central Savings Bank building this week lauding the work and conduct of air-Wacs in his command.

The statement was made to impress upon civilians the urgent need for more air-Wacs. "At first," General Curry wrote, "we received the women with a degree of normal masculine skepticism; we were not sure they would fit into the winged speed of army air force operations."

## Wacs Integral Part of Command.

"We were aware of the pioneer women of America who fought and worked with their menfolk in the winning of the west, but we were afraid that many years of life in the

drawingrooms, the modern kitchens and around bridge tables had softened our women.

"All of us who had that attitude were wrong. It took little time for the first Wac contingent to prove to us their earnestness and their ability to fit into the picture.

"Air-Wacs are now an integral part of this command. They are doing so many jobs, and doing them so well that we often wonder how we ever got along without them. I am pleased to commend publicly the air-Wacs of the western technical training command for their conscientiousness in the school rooms, where they are learning technical arts; in the offices, the squadrons and the hangars, where

they are applying that knowledge; in the barracks, where they maintain the gentility synonymous with women and in public where they have proved themselves soldiers and ladies by their conduct."

## Win Respect of Air Force Soldiers.

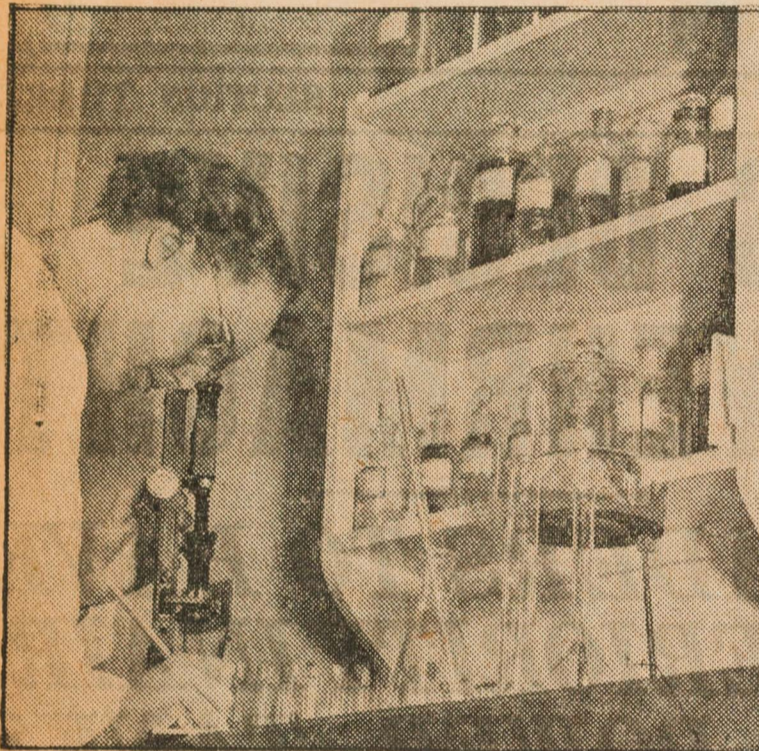
In a recent edition dedicated to air-Wacs and their activities at Lowry field, the Rev-Meter, post newspaper, admitted that the first contingent of skirted soldiers to arrive at the post were greeted with "sneers and jeers." The ladies in uniform ignored the greeting; they ignored the laughter and the derision of the civilians who looked on them as freaks when they went downtown, and went about their business of being soldiers with a determination seldom seen. That was in January, 1943.

Less than a year later, the air-Wacs have become accepted as important additions to the military scene. Denverites realize their importance, have learned that they are doing much to hasten victory; the air-Wacs have

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# CURRY COMMENDS WACS SERVING AIR FORCE

G. I. OF '43 NEITHER SNEERS NOR JEERS AT HIS AIR-WAC COMPATRIOTS; HE'S FOUND THEY CAN TAKE IT TOO



SERVICE ON ALL FRONTS is the keynote of Wacs of the army air force western technical training command stationed at Lowry field. Pictures illustrate three types of duty for women members of the air force.

Left—Corp. Iris Oatley of Kewadin, Mich., a laboratory technician at the post hospital, is shown examining a slide specimen thru a microscope.

Center—Pvt. Lillian Solomon, a photo student at the Lowry school of photography, is inspecting

a roll of aerial film dropped by a plane a short time before, which she had processed.

Right—A group of Wacs aiding the blood bank campaign. Left to right—Corp. Pauline C. Dove of Killeen, Tex., prewar clerk; Corp. Mary Lou Ferguson of Pittsburgh, Pa., former salesgirl; Corp. Mildred Hess of Springfield, Ohio, former secretary; Corp. Violet Cosmen of Chicago, Ill., former defense worker, and Corp. Ruth C. Haun of Warwick, N. Y., also a former defense worker.—Photos by AAF Training Command.

## THEIR EFFICIENCY AND HARD WORK WINS FEMININE SOLDIERS RESPECT OF G. I.'S

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come into their own. How they have done it is a story worth relating.

First of all, they accepted the kidding and the razzing of the soldiers and the civilians with a calm indifference. Instead of answering, they set their jaws and settled down to prove their value, lost little time in conversation.

As students in the photography school at Lowry field, they worked hard, made unusually high grades and displayed an interest in their work and an attention to details that male soldiers lacked. Typically feminine, they gave everything they had to their jobs, were quicker to learn and more interested in the life and work assigned them.

### The Kidding Grew Into a Musical Feud at Denver Field.

The women drilled with a fervor that startled male soldiers. They actually looked forward to it. They enjoyed every hour of order drill, and men gaped to see the delight with which they obeyed "By the flank, march! By the left flank, march! To the rear, march!"

An air-Wac drill sergeant ex-

plained: "We like to drill because drilling is precision work, like ballet dancing."

The boys watched, listened, shook their heads and walked away with an admiration they wouldn't admit.

Lines of air-Wacs swinging to their classrooms, singing popular tunes, marching songs and such good-natured parodies as: "The army thought they won the war, parlez vous!"

The army thought they won the war, parlez vous!  
Oh, the army thought they won the war,  
But the Wacs were there the day before,  
Hinkey, dinkey parlez vous!"

The kidding soon grew into a musical feud, with male photo students chanting:

"The Wacs and Waves will win the war,  
So what the heck are we fighting for?"

And before long, the air-Wacs at Lowry field were a part and parcel of the post, accepted as "regular guys."

Later, when permanent party air-Wacs began to arrive, old soldiers had to sit back and take a few lessons.

Trained administrative clerks in skirts flew into their jobs with the knowledge that they were the first air-Wacs to exhibit their value. The "feminine touch" was a definite asset to army life. Officers suddenly began to take on new life; soldiers gave themselves an extra spruc-

ing up before they reported for work in the morning; time was saved by nimble hands and nimble minds of women who refused to be bogged down by army channels and neatness became the keynote wherever an air-Wac was assigned for duty.

### Wacs' Duty Covers Nearly Every Phase of Command Work.

From the forty-eight states of America came many women to work with men of the army air forces at Lowry and Buckley fields.

Corp. Helen Perkins, from To-

ledo, O., took over the duties of a filing clerk in a squadron orderly room. She keeps carefully indexed records where they can be obtained at a moment's notice.

Corp. Iris Oatley of Kewadin, Mich., is a laboratory technician in the station hospital at Lowry field; Pfc. Dorothy Gardner of Erie, Pa., a former housewife, is now a mimeograph operator at Lowry and Sergt. Beatrice Brooks of Birmingham, Ala., is a mess sergeant at Buckley field.

From New York city Corp. Naomi MacDonald came to Lowry field and took over as a hygienist in the dental clinic and Elizabeth Moravec as a telephone operator.

Other air-Wacs have gone thru army technical schools and are now acting as weather observers and meteorologists. The information they obtain is vital to the men who fly the bombers in and out of the Denver bases.

In the operations office, air-Wacs are acting as dispatchers,

helping pilots clear their flight plans, carry their vital cargoes to and fro across the world. There are air-Wacs in the control towers—air traffic policemen, bringing ships in on the proper runways at the proper moment, giving the go-ahead signal to others about to take off, handling radio devices to give information to pilots in the air, many miles away.

### In Denver Wacs Welcomed as Interesting Guests.

Others are radio mechanics, charged with maintaining the nerve centers of military aircraft. They have been army-trained and have an occupation that will stay with them in civilian life.

In the finance office, air-Wacs are performing the duties of cashiers, financial clerks, bookkeepers, machine operators. Supply rooms and supply head-

quarters have trained stock clerks—air-Wacs who store, receive and issue auto and airplane accessories, spare parts and tools.

There are personnel clerks, employment interviewers, auto mechanics, drivers, utility repairwomen, motion picture electricians, supervising the light control and proper lighting of motion picture sets, radio operators, telegraph operators, teletypewriter mechanics, artists, draftsmen, barbers, chemical lab assistants and medical technicians among the air-Wacs.

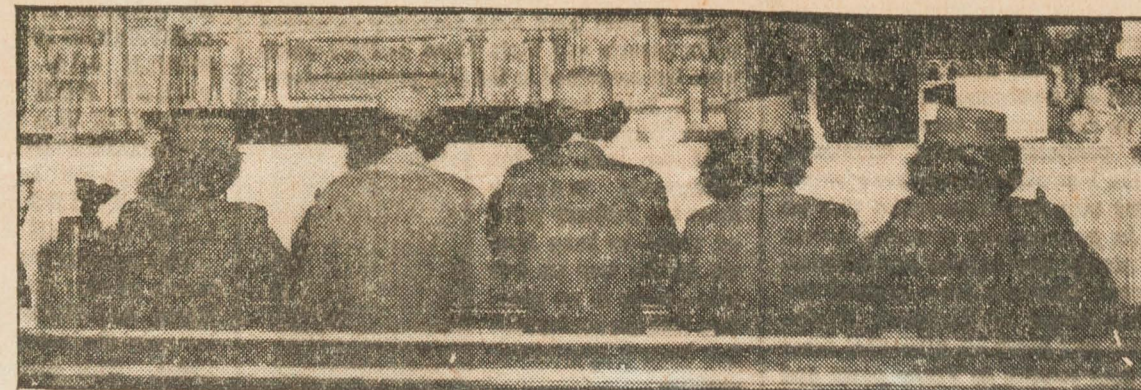
Pvt. Martha Wills, a former Hollywood film cutter, is a graduate of the Lowry field photo school and is now assigned to the motion picture unit there where she is cutting film and assisting in the production of army movies.

Because they know their jobs and are eager to perform them, the air-Wacs are respected by their fellow soldiers, as well as by the civilians who have learned to realize their importance.

Off duty, the air-Wacs reflect their military training in their social behavior. Well kept, they offer a striking picture in khaki wherever they seek off-duty relaxation.

They have been welcomed into many Denver homes and have been found to be interesting, vital guests. They have been seen at the concerts, on the bridal paths, at theaters and dances and parties, in restaurants and the city's parks, exploring the mountains and enjoying the hospitality of a Colorado that has welcomed them as the women of America who are contributing the most to Allied victory.

Yes, the air-Wacs have arrived, and no one is happier than they, who knew all along that they would.



FIVE HEADS BOWED IN PRAYER—One of the Lowry field Wacs' first stops on open post is the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Many of the women's army, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, admire the architecture and beauty of the altars and stained glass windows of the famous edifice.