

## NOTE

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**REPORT NO. 15**

**HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)**

**ARMY HEADQUARTERS**

**The Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1941-1946**

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#### The Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1941-1946

#### INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Women's Army Corps, the first official military organization of Canadian women, was authorized on 13 Aug 41 by Order in Council P.C. 6289. Although in fact an entirely new organization, the idea that women should serve in time of war was by no means new. Down through the centuries women, historical or mythical, had participated in wars. During the war of 1914-18 women's services had been formed in Great Britain, and women of various organizations had been employed by the Canadian Government. Prior to and during the first years of the War of 1939-45, because of the lack of any declared years of the War of 1939-45, because of the lack of any declared policy on the part of the Canadian Government regarding the military employment of Canadian women, many self-designated unofficial corps sprang up, constituting a problem of serious proportions. Partly because it was necessary to deal in some way with the many offers of service from these corps and from individuals and partly because of an impending shortage of manpower, planning was commenced for the formation, on a military basis and under military control, of a Corps of women who might be employed and moved as the circumstances of war dictated. The result was the Canadian Women's Army Corps.

#### EMPLOYEMENT OF WOMEN WITH THE CANADIAN FORCES 1914-1918

2. During the War of 1914-18, women were employed in various capacities with the Canadian Army. Briefly, the women employed and paid by the Canadian Government consisted of:

##### **In Great Britain:**

- (a) Women Drivers with M.T. Companies, C.A.S.C, engaged directly by the Canadian authorities.
- (b) Personnel of the Women's Legion; Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, also called Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps, was authorized by A.C.I. No 1069 of 7 Jul 17. The British Women's Services were demobilized at the conclusion of the war, and no women were retained on the strength of the Regular Army. The Auxiliary Territorial Service, Authorized in September 1938, was the first of the women's services called out to fill an active role during the War of 1939-45.

- (c) Female clerks and stenographers **B** carried on strength and establishment of administrative offices.
- (d) Canadian Field Comforts Commission; Canadian War Contingents Association; St. John Ambulances Brigade, and Voluntary Aid Detachments.
- (e) Girl Guides **B** employed in administrative offices.

**In France:**

- (a) Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, and the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry.
- (b) Civilians - Engaged as Batwomen to Canadian Nursing Sisters, and Laundresses employed at Divisional Baths.

**In Canada:**

- (a) The Women's Aid Department - in connection with the C.A.M.C. in Military Hospitals.

((C.E.F.) G.A.Q 11-79: E. Pye, **A**Employment of Women with the Canadian Forces in the Great War 1914-1918**@**)

Associated with Canadian forces and taking an active part in the war were many unofficial women's organizations, such as the Winnipeg Women's Volunteer Reserve (1915-1918) and the Canadian Women's Emergency Corps No 1 (Montreal) (1915-1918). The women employed with the Royal Air Force Training establishments in Canada were engaged in Canada by the British authorities (Ibid).

3. In addition, further efforts were made to substitute women for men in certain types of work in France, England and Canada. While these attempts do not appear to have been successful, it is interesting to note that the first proposals to form a Corps of Canadian women were made over two decades before such a Corps actually existed. (On 30 May 18 the Militia Council discussed the formation in Canada of an organization similar to the 'Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, Imperial Army. The question was referred to a Sub-Committee consisting of the Quartermaster-General, the Paymaster-General, the Judge Advocate General and a representative of the Adjutant-Generals Branch. The report of the Sub-Committee, presented at a Militia Council meeting on 11 Sep 18, read in part as follows:

...This Sub-Committee **Y**recommends as follows:-

- (a) That a Corps be organized to be known as "The Canadian Women's Corps" to embrace the following:-

"A" Ordinary clerical work, typists, accountants, and librarians.

Shorthand typists.  
Forewomen (clerks).

"B" Cooks, waitresses, housemaids, maids and laundresses.

"C" Qualified driver mechanics.

"D@" Storehouse women, packers, issuers, messengers, sewers, general unskilled labour.

"E@" Telephone and Postal Services.

- (b) That before action be taken in regard to the organization of all the above sections, the same be confined for the present to section "A".

(Ibid).

4. The Sub-Committee stated that the "Heads of Branches and Military Districts" had been circularized to ascertain the number of women clerks then employed and the nature of their duties; the number of men performing similar duties; and the number of men who might be replaced by women and the types of employment. The results of this investigation showed 1,325 women and 1,401 men, of whom 107 could be replaced by women, employed as clerks. The report concluded:

The Committee recommends that the women now employed whose services are satisfactory (other than members of the Permanent Civil Service) be given an opportunity to enlist in the Corps and if they do not desire to do so, they be replaced by the Corps as opportunity arises, and that new appointees be drawn from the Corps.

(Ibid).

At a meeting of the Militia Council held seven days later, the following decision was recorded:

The principle of the formation of a Canadian Women's Army Auxiliary Corps was approved, and the Honourable the Minister stated that he would take this question up with the Right Hon. the Prime Minister, and would also discuss it with the Honourable Dr. Roche, the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission.

(Ibid).

This decision was confirmed on 25 Sep 18, but "there is no further record of any action being taken" (Ibid).

## **CANADIAN WOMEN-S ORGANIZATIONS PRECEDING C.W.A.C**

5. In Canada a number of unofficial, voluntary self-designated corps formed prior to and during the first years of the war of 1939-45. The first of these made its appearance in Victoria, B.C., on 5 Oct 38, shortly after the Munich conference. Its organization was based on that of the A.T.S. Night classes in military clerical duties, motor mechanics and first aid were held, and personnel served when necessary as volunteer clerks and drivers for M.D. 11 Headquarters (*Ibid*). Later 13 other corps organized in British Columbia, and all united under Mrs Norman Kennedy (later Lt-Col Joan B. Kennedy) to form the British Columbia Women's Service Corps. Among other corps formed to enrol women for Voluntary duties were the Canadian Red Cross Corps, the Women's Transport Service Corps, the Alberta Women's Service Corps, the Canadian Auxiliary Territorial Service of Ontario, the Women's Voluntary Reserve Corps of Montreal and Quebec, the Saskatchewan Auxiliary Territorials, the Nova Scotia Women's Service Corps, the British Columbia Women's Ambulance Corps, and A.R.P. organizations.

6. Many of these corps sought official recognition and status similar to that obtained by organizations in Great Britain. No recognition was forthcoming, however, because "Owing to the jealous claims which will be undoubtedly put forward by these organizations if given recognition" it was impossible "to utilize these Corps as such, either in whole or in part" (HQ 54-27-32-7, Vol 1: A.G. to C.G.S., Q.M.G., M.G.O., 26 Aug 40). In addition, recognition of any corps "would at once commit the Department not only to wholesale recognition of existing organizations, but many others which would spring into being". In some cases there was no military necessity for employing women in the duties for which the various corps trained. Finally, when it was decided that the enrolment of women as part of the Militia was desirable, the whole matter would have to be carefully reviewed so that the organization is sound, balanced for present needs and elastic enough for expansion" (*Ibid*: A.G. to Minister, 12 Aug 40). It was considered that the establishment of an entirely new Corps with open recruiting would be the only satisfactory solution.

7. On 12 Jul 40, the British Columbia Women's Service Corps had inquired of the War Office whether Canadian women would be accepted as recruits for the A.T.S. A reply was received stating that recruits were needed, and personnel having the necessary qualifications would be accepted but would have to provide their own transportation (*Ibid*: R.W. Mayhew, M.P., to Ralston, 13 Aug 40). It was pointed out, however, that such action was impossible, since by Order in Council P.C. 2371 of 4 Jun 40, women, unless in the Armed Forces or Public Services of Canada, were forbidden to leave Canada with the intention of "entering the War Zone surrounding the British Isles or in European waters".

### **PROPOSALS FOR CANADIAN WOMEN'S ARMY SERVICE**

8. Meanwhile, at N.D.H.Q., an official women's Corps had been under discussion "for some time" (HQ 54-27-32-7, Vol 1: A.G. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 2 Jul 40). On 29 Jul 40 a draft memorandum prepared by D. Org suggested that a "Women's Section, C.M.S.C. might be formed. It was pointed out that suitable male clerks would become increasingly difficult to obtain as the war progressed, and that women might be employed to carry out routine clerical work under normal conditions. The advantages of employing women with military status instead of civil servants were that they would be selected and controlled by the Department of National Defence instead of by the Civil Service; that they

might be moved from one station to another; that they would be available for duty at any time; that they would "take on a Military viewpoint" which was expected to improve the standard of their work; and that, as part of the Armed Forces, it would enable women "to exhibit and realize their part in the war effort" (H.Q. 54-27-32-7, Vol 1: Lt-Col H.T. Cock, draft memorandum 29 Jul 40). It was considered that the disadvantages would be the cost of clothing, medical and dental services, and necessity of providing special accommodation for the new corps (Ibid). In the event of women being employed as orderlies, cooks, canteen and Auxiliary Service helpers, it was suggested that the proposed new section of C.M.S.C. might "form part of and come under control of, say, the 'Auxiliary Militia Services Corps-@(Ibid).

9. Regulations and instructions governing British Women's Services, and in particular the A.T.S., were obtained from the War Office and studied to form a basis for a Canadian women's corps. On 26 Aug 40 a memorandum from the A.G. to the C.G.S., Q.M.G. and M.G.O. summarized the case for the enlistment of women in the Canadian Army, and outlined proposed conditions of service. He suggested that the new corps might be known as the "Canadian Auxiliary Militia Service" (Ibid): A.G. to C.G.S., Q.M.G., M.G.O., 26 Aug 40). It was planned to replace temporary civil servants, who would be given first chance to enroll, by members of the women's corps, and to provide rates of pay which would approximate those of the Civil Service. The A.G. proposed that a commandant selected to administer the Corps should be a member of the Nursing Service, R.C.A.M.C., because of her military knowledge (Ibid). At a meeting of the Military Members of the Defence Council, held on 3 Sep 40, the military employment of women in the C.A.S.F. was discussed and concurred in in principle (Ibid: Minutes of a Meeting Of Military Members of Defence Council, 3 Sep 40).

10. Maj-Gen D.W. Browne, then the A.G., suggested to the Minister in a memorandum of 4 Sep 40 that the new corps be raised by open recruiting, and not by "unit" representation from the numerous unofficial organizations (Ibid: A.G. to Minister, 4 Sep 40). On 6 Sep 40 a D. Org memorandum noted that "clerks and cooks are definitely needed now and Civil Servants will not be suitable". The M.G.O. had stated previously that uniforms could not be made available for some months, and in view of this an immediate decision concerning the formation of a women's corps was considered necessary, in order that all preparations might be made well in advance of the actual formation. The best course of action seemed to be "to do nothing until arrangements are complete to launch the whole Corps, and until that time, the matter to be kept >Secret=". It was recommended that some public statement should be made concerning the status of unofficial corps, with particular emphasis on the fact that none of these had received any kind of official recognition. "As a possible outlet for the various women's organizations", it was thought that, until a Canadian women's corps was formed, "facilities might be given for them to serve in the A.T.S.@and that arrangements might be made with the War Office to this end (Ibid: Lt-Col H.T. Cock to A.G., 6 Sep 40). It appears that some such decision was taken and the Women's Mechanized Transport Corps, and later the Women's Transport Service, were allowed to recruit personnel in Canada for service in the U.K. on condition that recruits were medically examined and investigated in Canada to avoid rejection on arrival overseas. No official participation by the Canadian Government was involved (HQ 54-27-111-2 vol 1: Private Secty of Minister of National Defence to A.G. 28 Jun 41).



11. All D.Os.C. and all Branches and Directorates at N.D.H.Q. were circularized on 1 Oct 40 to ascertain general views on the employment of women to release soldiers for active duty, and the number of women needed. The replies were for the most part in favour of the project. Generally, the chief difficulties appeared to be the question of quarters and discipline, but, while it was appreciated that "there may be a good deal of trouble and inconvenience at the commencement it is not felt that these difficulties are insurmountable" (Ibid: D.O.C. M.D. 10 to Secretary, Department of National Defence, 21 Oct 40). The opinion of the D.O.C. M.D. 6 was that "the success or failure" of the proposed women's corps "would...entirely depend upon very careful organization" (Ibid: D.O.C. M.D. 6 to Secretary, Department of National Defence, 4 Oct 40).

12. On 5 Nov 40 D. Org again summarized the situation in the light of remarks and suggestions made by the various offices concerned. It was reiterated that the two main problems were the employment of women as military personnel, and the question of official recognition of the voluntary unauthorized corps. It was considered that if the unofficial corps were given encouragement a regular women's corps would have to be provided to which they could contribute recruits. The disadvantages of employing civil servants in Army Offices during war were listed as follows:

- (a) The salaries paid by the Civil Service in the junior grades are not sufficient inducement to obtain the type of clerk required.
- (b) The average girl takes up temporary Civil Service employment as a "job", and has no particular interest in the Army, further she has little choice of the department of the Government in which she shall work.
- (c) If a Civil Servant is inefficient or unsuitable, it is not easy to dispense with her services or have her transferred elsewhere.
- (d) There is no machinery whereby a Civil Servant in the interests of the Service can be moved from one station to another.

(H.Q. 54-27-32-7. vol 1: A.A.G. Org 1 "Women's Corps for the Canadian Active Service Force", 5 Nov 40)

13. On the other hand, if women were enrolled as part of the C.A.S.F., it was considered that:

- (a) They can replace soldiers in the higher clerical type of work as well as in the purely routine work.
- (b) Having elected to serve in the Forces and being in uniform, they will definitely be interested in Military work.
- (a) Promotion, transfer and discharge being under Military control will lead to added efficiency.

- (d) A women usually makes a better clerk than a man, she is quicker and if efficient far more adaptable.
- (e) Putting women into uniform will, it is thought, be popular not only amongst women but also with the general public.
- (f) As women replace men costs will be lowered as their pay and allowances will be less than men.
- (g) There will be better control as regards office hours, leave, discipline, etc...

14. It was recommended that the women's corps should develop gradually, in the following three general stages:

- (a) ... the conversion of Civil Servants at present employed into military personnel.
- (b) ... the filling of vacancies in the C.M.S.C. and other departmental corps and establishments by women up to a definite establishment.
- (c) ... the replacement of soldiers by women for employment as cooks, officers' mess waitresses, dry canteen helpers, light M.T. vehicle drivers, etc...

It was not intended to enroll married women. While recruiting would be open to everyone, it was thought that recognized women's volunteer corps should be given an opportunity to recommend recruits, and in this way it would be possible to obtain women who had received some military training and could be "definitely recommended as desirable" (Ibid). It was pointed out also that the cost of uniform and personal equipment would be considerably less than that of a soldier, since no arms or fighting equipment were required. The employment of women as military personnel overseas was also considered possible (Ibid).

15. Suggested "Regulations and Instructions for the Canadian Women's Service" began to be drafted in the latter part of 1940. According to a draft prepared in February 1941, the Canadian Women's Service, which was to be considered as supplementary to, but not part of, the Canadian Army, was to comprise two divisions, i.e. a Canadian Women's (Army) Service for permanent duty with the Army, and a Canadian Women's (Reserve) Service for duty in an emergency and a source of reinforcements for the C.W.(A)S. (H.Q. 54-27-111-2, vol 1: Regulations and Instructions for the Canadian Women's Services, 13 Feb 41). Conditions of service for the C.W.(R)S. were to be, as far as possible, the same as those for the C.W.(A)S. In addition to providing recruits for the C.W.(A)S., members of the C.W.(R)S. might be employed by D.Os.C. on authority from N.D.H.Q. for temporary duty. It was recommended that any training which took place should aim at preparing personnel for employment as typists, stenographers, clerks, cooks, waitresses, telephone and radio operators, drivers and mechanics, store-keepers, book-keepers, accountants, messengers, social workers, dental assistants, and A.R.P. personnel. It was suggested that an annual grant of one dollar per annum be paid

to the C.W.(R)S. units not permanently employed for each member who had three months= efficient service (Ibid).

16. A memorandum from the A.G. to the Minister of National Defence on 14 Feb 41, discussing the employment of women as auxiliaries to the Canadian forces, stated:

1. While with the exception of tradesmen there is at the moment no shortage of manpower in the Army, the time will soon arrive when it will be necessary to utilize the services of women in certain employment in order to replace soldiers to a much greater extent than at present.
2. A large number of women have been obtained from the Civil Service for employment as additional clerical assistance in a junior-capacity at N.D.H.Q. and at District Headquarters. It is, however, not feasible to extend the employment of women for other tasks nor even in the case of clerks to use them at Training Centres and other establishments either in Canada or Overseas without such women coming under Military Control.
3. In order, therefore, to regularize the whole position, it is proposed to organize the CANADIAN WOMEN'S (ARMY) SERVICE...
4. The activities of the C.W.(A)S. will be confined to N.D.H.Q., District and Command Headquarters, Training Centres, Hospitals and similar static Establishments in Canada and possibly at a later date if the situation so demands, the units of the C.W.(A)S. will be employed Overseas.
5. There exist throughout the Dominion a number of Women's Organizations which have, during the past year, been raised entirely without official recognition. The object of these organizations is to volunteer services in any capacity for H.M. Forces. The circumstances under which these organizations have sprung up, however, makes it impossible to accept their services direct for Army employment. It is therefore proposed that these organizations under the name of the CANADIAN WOMEN'S (RESERVE) SERVICE be given official recognition in order that they may, with authority, be employed in Canada in time of emergency and to be the means whereby recruits for the Canadian Women's (Army) Service will be obtained. In the event of it being found desirable to create a Canadian Women's (Navel) Service or a Canadian Women's (Air Force) Service, no doubt it would be convenient to use the C.W.R.S. as a means of recruiting.
7. On organization, Civil Servants at present employed under the Department may be enrolled in the C.W.A.S. if they so desire, but thereafter all recruits will be obtained from the C.W.R.S.
8. It is estimated that during the next 12 months 1500 women will be required. The development of the Service will be gradual, but it is essential that for reasons of organization and equipment, a start be made immediately.

9. Recognition of the various Women's Organizations in Canada as part of the CANADIAN WOMEN'S (RESERVE) SERVICE will be on the recommendation of the District Officer Commanding concerned. Before making his recommendation, the D.O.C. will satisfy himself that the organization is financially stable and otherwise acceptable. Any organizations which already have adopted a uniform acceptable to the Department will be permitted to continue to wear it, but new organizations or existing ones not having a uniform and desiring to wear uniform will, if they wish to be supplementary to the Army, conform to that laid down for the C.W.(A)S... Besides finding reinforcements for the C.W.(A)S. or other services, they will undertake the obligation for duty in Canada in an emergency. They will also be called upon to find personnel, if required, for temporary duty. The bearing of or training in the use of arms will not be allowed.

The J.A.G. pointed out, however, that if the Women's Organizations were recognized and given the status of reserve units the result would be a great deal of organizational work and a large administrative and supervisory staff (Ibid: J.A.G. to D.A.G., 24 Feb 41).

17. On 22 Mar 41 the A.G. suggested to the Minister that National War Services take over the organization of the proposed women's corps, and added that "the Army is prepared to abandon its proposal to organize the existing Organizations as Active and Reserve Units and will make demands on National War Services for women, required for Army work". In addition to personnel in the trades required by the Army, it was suggested that personnel for work in war plants, in a Land Army, and in First Aid and Home Nursing might be enrolled (Ibid: A.G. to Minister, 22 Mar 41).

18. The Department of National War Services had already had some discussion concerning women's organizations. On 31 Oct 40 Her Royal Highness the Princess Alice had called in a number of representatives of the unofficial corps to discuss possible coordination of activities of women and women's organizations in Canada. As a result a committee consisting of Senator Wilson, Senator Fallis and the President of the National Council of Women was set up. After the situation had been canvassed, Princess Alice called a second meeting, at which it was proposed to form "The Women's Voluntary Services of Canada" enlisting and instructing women in trades which would be useful to the war effort. From these, personnel could be supplied for various wartime jobs (Ibid: T.C. Davis to Minister of National War Services, 14 Mar 41). This appeared to be an organization similar to that which the Department of National Defence visualized (para 17 above). The women were to be paid by the Department employing them, and the Department of National Defence was to supply uniforms where necessary (Ibid: A.G. to Minister, 27 Mar 41).

19. On 2 Apr the question of the employment of women in the Defence Forces was discussed by representatives of the Army, Air Force and Navy. The Navy and Air Force did not consider action along this line necessary or even justifiable at that time. While it was pointed out that 1,500 women could "usefully be employed with the Army@the capabilities of the low category men, of whom there was a surplus, were first to be investigated. It was agreed, however, that should it become necessary to employ women, the Navy, Army and Air Force respectively should control entirely any women's Services which might be formed (Ibid: A.G. to Minister, 4 Apr 41). The three Services were willing to

accept personnel from a women's organization under National War Services, but wished also to be able to enlist any women they considered particularly suitable (Ibid: D.A.G. to A.G., 30 Apr 41).

20. At a meeting of the War Committee of the Cabinet on 3 Apr 41 it was decided that the whole question of the employment of women should be reviewed at an early opportunity and in the meantime the Assistant Deputy Minister of National War Services, Mr. Justice Davis, was requested to confer with representative of the other departments concerned to ascertain the ways in which women were then employed and any recommendations as to future employment. It was assumed that women required to be employed by the Department of National Defence as auxiliaries to the Armed Forces would be selected and enlisted in the same way in which men were enlisted in the Services (Ibid: T.C. Davis to Minister of National Defence, 28 Apr 41). It was generally considered that, in view of the problems arising out of the existence of the many women's organizations, the time has now been reached when prompt action must be taken (Ibid: J.G. Gardiner to Ralston, 1 May 41). Brig M. Pope, A.C.G.S., pointed out that "the existing situation constitutes a nettle of some size, and the nettle should be firmly grasped". Brig Pope suggested that if it was necessary to employ women they should be brought into the Army as uniformed (female) soldiers", "with an Officer Administering under the A.G.", and that all suitable women should be brought into the new Corps without recognizing the "vested rights" of existing organizations which might lead to various difficulties later (Ibid: A.C.G.S. to C.G.S., 28 Apr 41). At a meeting of the Defence Council on 2 May 41, it was stated that "the cabinet...had acquiesced generally in the use of women in such posts as might be considered suitable" (Ibid: Extract from Minutes of Defence Council, 2 May 41).

21. On 23 Jun 41 the A.G. called a meeting at which were present the D.A.G., D.G.M.S., D.E.S., D.Q.M.G., representatives from D. Org, D. Pers and D.A.G.(M), and the Chief Inspector of Catering and Messing. The A.G. stated that it had been decided by the Minister to proceed with the formation of a Women's Corps, and to this end organizational and administrative details were to be worked out. A brief outline of the conditions which were to apply to the employment of women read as follows:

Women will replace men in certain H.W.E., e.g., Training Centres and establishments, and also on the staff of the H.W.E. of the R.C.A.S.C. and R.C.O.C.Y.

They will also replace men at N.D.H.Q., Command, District, Area and Concentration Camp Headquarters.

In the case of N.D.H.Q. and District Headquarters, C.W.(A)S. personnel will, for the present, NOT be employed to replace clerks, typists and stenographers normally found by the Civil Service.

There will be no increase in the H.W.E. of the Establishments in which women replace men. C.W.(A)S. personnel will, however, for the purposes of administration be organized into Detachments, Platoons and Companies.

When women are required, District Officers Commanding will notify N.D.H.Q. how many women are required, the nature of their employment and the place where they are to be employed.

D.A.G.(M) will apply to National War Services for these women who will, in turn, arrange with their local Representatives for the personnel required to report.

The women, after a probationary period, will be enrolled into the C.W.(A)S. H.Q. 54-27-111-2, vol 1, Canadian Women's Army Service, memorandum, 23 Jun 41)

22. It was estimated that a total of 5,398 women could be employed in Districts, camps and areas. Arrangements for accommodation, provision of uniforms and equipment, Schools of Instruction for the training of administrative personnel, hospitalization and the drawing up of establishments were among the chief problems to be solved (HQ 54-27-111-2, vol. 1: Minutes of a Meeting held in the Office of the Adjutant-General, 23 Jun 41).

#### **FORMATION B C.W.A.C.**

23. Public announcement of the Government's decision to enlist women volunteers for the armed forces and to form a Canadian Women's Army Corps was made on 27 Jun 41.<sup>2</sup> On 30 Jun 41 Capt Benoit, Department of National War Services, met with representatives of the A.Gs. Branch to clarify certain points arising out of the press release. It was pointed out that after recruits found by National War Services had been accepted for service in the C.W.A.C., N.D.H.Q. was entirely responsible for them. It was agreed that some endeavour should be made to prevent women skilled in munitions or other important industrial work from enrolling in the C.W.A.C. If an individual with special qualifications was required for employment, she was to be instructed to register first with National War Services, after which N.D.H.Q. could make application for her. Although a number of women could be employed immediately it was decided that until the machinery of National War Services was set up to register women for service, and to recognize and organize the supply of women through the existing Corps, no steps were to be taken. It was estimated that from one to two months would be necessary to set up a satisfactory method of registration (Ibid: Minutes of Meeting held in D.A.G.(M) Office, 30 Jun 41).

24. An A.G. circular letter of 4 Jul 41 asked all D.Os. C. to submit their requirements for C.W.A.C. personnel and added:

The object of the Corps is to supply woman personnel to replace Category A men now employed on administrative and maintenance duties on existing, establishments, thus relieving men for other duties.

(a) For administrative purposes it is proposed to organize the C.W.A.C. into detachments consisting of one or two subsections, platoons of two or more sections, and in time companies of two or more platoons.

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<sup>2</sup> Globe and Mail, 28 Jun 41 (joint press conference of Raston and Thomson).

(b) The subsection will be the basic unit consisting of twelve women, and will as far as possible consist of women employed in the same type of work, such as "clerical" "administrative", "transport". The "clerical" subsections would include, for example, stenographers, typists, clerks, telephone and radio operators, messengers, etc. The "administrative" section would include such personnel as cooks, canteen helpers, storewomen, dental assistants, etc.

(c) For the present C.W.A.C. personnel will not be employed as clerks, stenographers or typists at N.D.H.Q. or at District Headquarters, in view of the existing arrangements with the Civil Service Commission; nor will C.W.A.C. personnel be employed in units of field formations, coast defence or internal security troops.

3. Until suitable arrangements can be made for accommodation and administration within camps, C.W.A.C. personnel will be limited to places where they can "live out" and will receive subsistence in lieu of quarters.

4. It is obvious that immediate replacement of men by women on large scales cannot be effected due to the necessity of training and organization. It must also be borne in mind that a certain number of men have to be employed in order to be trained for field formations and other troops.

.....

6. It is intended that the Department of National War services will register all women who offer their services for the C.W.A.C. As and when this Department requires women for the various branches of the service it will requisition same from the Department of National War Services in the same manner as is now used for Recruits. When the requisition has been complied with, the personnel in question will come under the Department of National Defence and will cease to have any connection with the Department of National War Services.

(Ibid: A.G. circular letter, 4 Jul 41)

25. Since the C.W.A.C. was not to form part of the Army, and since different regulations for a corps of women would be necessary, suggested regulations and instructions had been drafted during 1940-41 for comment by the various Branches at N.D.H.Q. A new draft was prepared on 13 Aug 41 for submission to the Privy Council, in which it was pointed out that the C.W.A.C. was to be organized on a military basis and come under military control. Provision was made for an Officer Administering at N.D.H.Q. and a C.W.A.C. Staff Officer at each District Headquarters. Each D.O.C was to be responsible for training, administration and discipline of C.W.A.C. personnel within the District. Training included squad drill without arms, saluting drill, first aid, gas defence, and fire drill. Personnel were to possess on enlistment qualifications for the various trades (HQ 54-27-111-2, vol 1: Minister of National Defence to Governor-in-Council, 13 Aug 41, Appx "A", "Regulations for the Canadian Women's Army Corps").

26. With regard to qualifications for enrolment, the minimum and maximum ages for officers were 21 and 55 years. In addition, officers had to be British subjects, of a medical category, not lower than "B", hold a matriculation certificate or an acceptable equivalent, and have obtained such military qualifications as might be authorized from time to time. Other ranks had to be between the ages of 21 and 40 years, British subjects, medically fit (i.e. not lower than category "B"), have completed Grade VIII or have equivalent education, and have no dependent children. Recruits were to be attached to the C.W.A.C. for a probation period not exceeding three months= satisfactory service.

27. Officer ranks and badges of rank, were as follows:

<u>C.W.A.C.</u> Ranks	<u>C.W.A.C.</u> Badges of Rank	<u>Army</u> Equivalent Rank
Honorary Controller	Two maple leaves over a beaver	Colonel
Chief Commander	Maple leaf over a beaver	Lieutenant-Colonel
Senior Commander	Beaver	Major
Junior Commander	Three maple leaves	Captain
Subaltern	Two maple leaves	Lieutenant
2 <sup>nd</sup> Subaltern	Maple leaf	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant

(C.A.R.O. 1422, 8 Nov 41)

Other ranks and badges of rank were similar to those of the Infantry, with the exception that instead of "Private" the term used was "Volunteer", and a recruit was to wear a red arm band inscribed "C.W.A.C. " in gold letters. All promotions of other rank personnel had to be approved by the C.A. with the exception of promotion to W.O. I for which A.G. approval was necessary. A D.O.C. might authorize unpaid acting rank not above that of Sgt within his District.

28. The following daily rates of pay were authorized:<sup>3</sup>

Chief Commander	\$6.70
Senior Commander	5.20
Junior Commander	4.35
Subaltern	3.35
2 <sup>nd</sup> Subaltern	2.85

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<sup>3</sup> These rates, which approximated Civil Service rates of pay, were increased by G.O. 318 of 1943 to 80% Army rates with equal Trades, Staff and Command pay.



Sergeant-Major (WO I)	2.80
Company Sergeant-Major (WO II)	2.10
Staff Sergeant	1.70
Sergeant	1.50
Corporal	1.15
Lance-Corporal	1.00
Volunteer (classified)	0.95
Volunteer on enlistment	0.90

(Canadian Women's Army Corps Regulations, Sec XII)

No dependent's allowance or trades= pay were to be granted to C.W.A.C. personnel. At first it was estimated that 1,992 women would be enrolled, for whom the annual cost would be approximately \$1,881,831. This figure included pay, uniform and equipment and medical and dental care. The annual saving made possible by replacing with 1,992 C.W.A.C. personnel an equal number of soldiers was estimated at \$18, 786.

29. It had been intended to administer and quarter V.A.D. personnel with the C.W.A.C., giving them the rank of 2<sup>nd</sup> Subaltern. It was pointed out, however, by the J.A.G. that it would be best no to deal with any non-departmental organizations, or to single out one non-departmental organization for special treatment (Ibid: J.A.G. to D.A.G.(M), 9 Aug 41).

30. D.Os.C. were to submit their demands for C.W.A.C. personnel to N.D.H.Q. for approval, after which they were to be passed to N.W.S., who would then supply the necessary personnel. Where the Department of National War Services was unable to fill the demand, the Department of National Defence might obtain the personnel from other sources. With regard to the recruiting for the C.W.A.C. through N.W.S., it was agreed on 5 Aug 41 that "eventually recruitment without N.W.S. intervention would be better" and that in any case there was no obligation to accept recruits sent forward by N.W.S. (Ibid: Minutes of Meeting held in the Adjutant-General's Office, 5 Aug 41).

31. On 17 Jul 41 the Minister of National Defence had approved the formation of the C.W.A.C., and on 31 Jul the War Committee of the Cabinet "approved in principle" the proposal (Ibid: A.G. to Minister, 30 Jul 41). Privy Council authority was granted on 13 Aug 41, by P.C. 6289. Although the organization of the C.W.A.C. was complete on paper, the task of carrying out the organization had not yet been begun. In the early part of July, Matron-in-Chief E. Smellie, C.B.E., R.R.C. R.C.A.M.C., (Nursing Service) was detailed for duty as Acting Officer Administering the C.W.A.C. On 14 Aug 41 Matron Smellie left for Victoria, B.C., at which point she began her visit of all Districts in order to:

- (a) Explain the proposed regulations, uniforms and pay.
- (b) Find out the local conditions and requirements where women will be employed.
- (c) Get the views of D.O.Cs. regarding local women Auxiliary Corps and best way of utilizing their services.

- (d) Meet the Cmdts. Of local women's corps to obtain names of suitable personnel for consideration as officers and N.C.Os. for administering the units of the C.W.A.C. at various stations.
- (e) Get in touch with leading women in the communities who are interested in women's work to obtain their advice and also names of persons considered as potential administrative officers and N.C.Os.

At this time, owing to the lack of suitable accommodation, personnel were to be employed only in places where it was possible to place them on subsistence. Soldiers were to be replaced gradually, and low category men who could not perform other duties were not to be replaced. It was pointed out that C.W.A.C. personnel would be used to complete establishments, but did not represent an increase to establishments. In no case were members of the new Corps to be sent where less than 12 such persons were to be employed (Ibid: "Notes for O/As Visit to Districts", undated).

32. Applications for enlistment in the C.W.A.C. were forwarded through the District Registrars to the Department of National War Services. After considering the applications, a nominal roll of acceptable applicants was sent to the District Registrars who notified those selected. The applicant was then given three days in which to supply a medical report, and, if satisfactory, was instructed to report for enrolment in the C.W.A.C. The first recruits were expected to report on or about 1 Sep 41 at one of the following places:

- No. 1 District Depot, London, Ont.
- No. 12 Basic Training Centre, Chatham.
- No. 10 Basic Training Centre, Kitchener.
- Headquarters, No. 2 District Depot, Toronto
- No. 23 Basic Training Centre, Newmarket.
- Canadian Army Trade School, Hamilton.
- Camp Headquarters, Niagara Camp, Niagara Falls.
- No. 22 Basic Training Centre, North Bay.
- Corps Headquarters, C.W.A.C., Bate Bldg., Ottawa.
- No. 3 A District Depot, Kingston.
- Headquarters, Barriefield Camp, Barriefield.
- No. 32 Basic Training Centre, Peterborough.
- Officers Training Centre, Brockville.
- School of Army Administration, St. Johns, Que.
- Headquarters Military District No. 5, Quebec
- No. 10 District Depot, Winnipeg
- R.C.A. Training Centre, Brandon
- H.Q. Pacific Command, Esquimalt, B.C.
- No. 11 District Depot, Victoria, B.C.
- No. 11 A District Depot, Vancouver
- No. 12 District Depot, Regina
- H.Q. Military District No. 13, Calgary
- No. 13 A District Depot, Edmonton
- No. A-20 R.C.A.S.C. Training Centre, Red Deer, Alta

(Ibid, vol 2: Notes on conversation with Capt Benoit, National War Services Department, 20 Aug 41. Also Ibid: A.G. circular letter, 23 Aug 41, Appx AB@).

33. On 12 Sep it was noted that the organization of the C.W.A.C. was proceeding satisfactorily. On the recommendations of matron Smellie, the first C.W.A.C. officers had been appointed as soon as recommendations for the remainder of the Districts had been concurred in. 157 recruits were to report at the various centres by 15 Sep, and it was considered that the first demands for C.W.A.C. personnel would be filled by the end of the month (Ibid: D.A.G. (M) to Capt Jack, 12 Sep 41). It was expected that in their second demand D.Os.C. would ask for a substantially larger number of C.W.A.C. recruits than in the first demand (Ibid: D.A.G. (M) to Matron Smellie, 14 Sep 41).

34. It may be of interest to note here that officials of the Civil Service Commission did not look upon the new Corps with any great degree of favour. On 18 Aug 41 National War Services had been informed that for the present no permanent Civil Servants would be enrolled in the C.W.A.C. (Ibid: D.A.G.(M) to Department of National War Services, 18 Aug 41). On 25 Sep 41, at a meeting of the A.G., C.H. Bland, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, and Col C.M.M. Kay, the A.G. asked Mr. Bland what stand the Civil Service Commission would adopt to the policy of employing C.W.A.C. personnel in offices now employing Dominion Civil Servants. Mr. Bland replied that he was not in agreement with such policy, and stated that he was definitely opposed to the employment of any C.W.A.C. personnel at N.D.H.Q. A report of the meeting reads in part as follows:

Mr. Bland stated that permanent Civil Servants would not be given leave of absence for the purpose of enrolling in the C.W.A.C., and that temporary employees will be discouraged from joining. He further stated that in his opinion the Department should decide whether they were going to staff their offices with Civil Servants or with C.W.A.C. personnel. He was opposed to the mixing of the two. He stated that considerable dissension now existed in the Civil Service where permission had been granted permanent employees (men) to enlist. Some of these men had been given commissions and were sent back to fill positions which brought them in contact with their old office employees. As commissioned officers they are receiving higher rates of pay and had privileges which were not granted to the Civil Servants. He stated unfortunately this situation could not be prevented in so far as the men were concerned, but they did not want to be faced with the same situation with regard to the women.

Mr. Bland stated that in N.D.H.Q. offices it might be feasible if all of the female personnel were enrolled in the C.W.A.C. and remained in their same positions, carrying out their same appointments, but that if some were not eligible for enrolment, he foresaw trouble.

In answer to a question as to what type of work he thought C.W.A.C. personnel might be used for, Mr. Bland suggested ambulance drivers, hospital dietitians, practically any work except typists, stenographers, secretaries and clerks. (H.Q. 54-27-111-2, vol 2: Minutes of a Meeting, 25 Sep 41)

It was agreed that no C.W.A.C. personnel would be enrolled at N.D.H.Q., and that none would be employed in any District office where same is adjacent to offices employing similar Civil Servants (Ibid).

35. Later, by the middle of 1942, C.W.A.C. were required to replace C.M.S.C. and other personnel who could be posted overseas, and the Civil Service Commission was informed that C.W.A.C personnel would be employed at N.D.H.Q. as soon as living accommodation was available. Authority to carry out this plan was given on 21 Oct 42. Five barracks were occupied by C.W.A.C. in Ottawa: Glebe, Varsity Oval, Argyle, Kildare and Landsdowne. C.W.A.C. personnel continued to be employed at N.D.H.Q. until the end of August 1946.

36. The following units and detachments were authorized by the first Corps Orders, published 29 Sep 41:

Corps Headquarters		Ottawa, Ontario
M.D.1	No 1 Pl A Coy No 2 Det A Coy No 3 Pl A Coy	London, Ontario Chatham, Ontario Kitchener, Ontario
M.D.2	H.Q. B Coy & No 1 to 4 Pls No 5 Det B Coy No 1 Pl C Coy No 2 Pl C Coy No 1 Det D Coy	Toronto, Ontario Newmarket, Ontario Hamilton, Ontario Niagara, Ontario North Bay, Ontario
M.D.3	No 1 Pl E Coy No 2 Pl E Coy No 3 Det E Coy No 1 Pl F Coy No 2 Pl F Coy	Kingston, Ontario Barriefield, Ontario Peterborough, Ontario Brockville, Ontario Ottawa, Ontario
M.D.4	No 1 Pl G Coy	St. Jean, P.Q.
M.D. 5	No 1 Pl H Coy	Quebec, P.Q.
M.D. 6	No 1 Pl I Coy No 1 Pl J Coy	Halifax, N.S. Sydney, N.S.
M.D.10	H.Q. and No 1 and No. 2 Pls K Coy No 1 Det L Coy	Winnipeg, Man Brandon, Man
M.D. 11	No 1 Pl M Coy No 2 Det M Coy No 1 Pl N Coy	Esquimalt, B.C. Victoria, B.C. Vancouver, B.C
M.D. 12	No 1 Pl O Coy	Regina, Sask

M.D. 13	H.Q. and No 1 and No 2 Pls P Coy	Calgary, Alta
	No 1 Det Q Coy	Edmonton, Alta
	No 1 Det R Coy	Red Deer, Alta

(Ibid: Draft, Canadian Women's Army Corps, Corps Orders 1-8, 25 Sep 41)

37. The following were appointed as District Staff Officers, with the rank of Junior Commander:

Mrs. J.B. Kennedy	M.D. 11	
Mrs. H.K. Rankin	M.D. 12	
Mrs. M.J. Dover	M.D. 13	
Mrs. A. Sorby		M.D. 10
Miss M.C. Eaton		M.D. 2
Miss M.R. Barker		M.D. 1
Mrs. A.M. McBride		M.D. 3
Miss J.R. Sewell (later Goodman)		M.D. 7
Miss M. St.Laurent (later O'Donnell)	M.D. 5	
Mrs. W. Power		M.D. 6
Mrs. M.J. Ramsay		M.D. 4

((H.S. 4) D.G., C.W.A.C., Narrative, C.W.A.C. History@)

In November the Minister of National Defence approved the appointment of Junior Commander J.B. Kennedy as Officer Administering the Canadian Women's Army Corps with the rank of Senior Commander (effective date 8 Nov 41) (H.Q. 54-27-111-22 vol 1, A.G. to G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Command, 13 Nov 41).

38. Almost with the beginning of the Corps, recommendations began to be made for its improvement. On 9 Sep 41 the Minister of National Defence Stated that he considered the names of the ranks *unwieldy and unattractive* (H.Q. 54-27-111-2, vol 1: Ralston to A.G., 9 Sep 41). On 3 Nov the A.G. reported that the following proposals regarding the C.W.A.C. were before the Privy Council:

Grant of Tradesmen's Rates of Pay under the same conditions as for men, but at two-thirds those issued to the men.

Grant of clothing allowance on discharge.

Exemption from Income Tax and National defence Tax as for men of the Defence Forces.  
 Extending the provisions of the Civil Re-employment Order to members of the Canadian Women's Army Corps.

Eligibility for Rehabilitation Grant.

General Browne also pointed out that C.W.A.C. personnel were entitled to quarters, rations, transportation and travelling allowances at the same rates and under the same conditions as the Army; that they were eligible for disability pensions and were granted railway concessions while on leave (Ibid: A.G. to General H.F. McDonald, 3 Nov 41). The system of recruiting was considered excellent in theory, but often poor in practice. It had proved to be a very slow method of obtaining recruits, and in addition, the lack of a direct and personal contact with applicants was satisfactory. It was suggested, therefore, that applicants might be interviewed at District Headquarters and given a medical examination, after which the N.W.S. application form might be completed and forwarded to the District Registrar (Ibid: Precis No 1, Canadian Women's Army Corps, 27 Nov 41).

### **AUTHORIZATION AS CORPS OF ACTIVE MILITIA**

39. As early as 29 Aug 41 it was suggested that the C.W.A.C. should form part of the Active Army for the purpose of exercising more effective control and supervision and to facilitate uniformity in administration (Ibid, vol 2: J.A.G. to Lt-Col H.T. Cock, 29 Aug 41, and attached submission), but it was decided that the status of the C.W.A.C. would remain as at present (Ibid: Minute by Lt-Col Cock). Almost immediately, however, this anomalous status gave rise to difficulties. The chief of these was encountered when consideration was given to the granting of post-discharge benefits to members of the C.W.A.C. Because the C.W.A.C. was not actually part of the Army, its members were not eligible for post-discharge benefits. The C.W.A.A.F., on the other hand, as a component part of the R.C.A.F (see para 43), was eligible for such benefits, and it was considered essential that the C.W.A.A.F. and the C.W.A.C. should receive absolutely similar treatment (Ibid: General H.F. McDonald to A.G., 7 Nov 41). In order to ensure this, two courses of action were suggested: the C.W.A.C. might be recognized as a part of the armed forces, or Orders-in-Council might be passed to cover each phase of post-discharge benefits (Ibid: vol 3: General H.F. McDonald to A.G., 7 Jan 42)

40. On 31 Jan 42 the A.G. forwarded to the Minister a submission to the Privy Council recommending that the C.W.A.C should become part of the Active Militia of Canada. He stated that, while he did not feel that the C.W.A.C. should be brought under the operation of the Army Act, in view of recent developments and more particularly the re-actions from the comparison between the Canadian Women's Army Corps and the Canadian Women's Auxiliary Air Force, such a step might be advisable (Ibid, vol 5: A.G. to Minister 31 Jan 42).

41. A memorandum from the Minister on 10 Feb pointed out that unless the C.W.A.C. became part of the Army, special regulations would have to be passed constantly to enable members of the C.W.A.C. to serve effectually with the Army. He stated also that he had been strongly in favour of the formation of the C.W.A.C. as part of the Army when organization was first begun, and that unless there is strong ground for the C.W.A.C. remaining as it is, I consider it should be changed (Ibid: Minister to A.G., 10 Feb 42). Accordingly, by P.C. 1965 of 13 Mar 42, the C.W.A.C. was named as a Corps of the Active Militia, with effect from 1 Mar 42 (Ibid: P.C. 1965). All personnel who had been enrolled up to this time had then to sign a declaration of their willingness to serve in the C.W.A.C. as part of the Army, and under the authority of this Order in Council C.W.A.C. officers assumed Army ranks and badges of rank (Ibid: O/A C.W.A.C. circular letter, 9 May 42)

42. During the pre-organization and organization periods of the C.W.A.C., close liaison was maintained with the Auxiliary Territorial Service in order that the C.W.A.C. might profit by the lessons learned during the organization of the A.T.S. This liaison continued throughout the existence of the C.W.A.C., and was exemplified by exchanges of officers and by the training of A.T.S. platoons recruited in Jamaica at No 3 C.W.A.C.(B) T.C. Maj-Gen Jean Knox, Director, A.T.S., on the invitation of N.D.H.Q., paid a visit to Canada during September and October 1942 to inspect C.W.A.C. formations in all Districts and discuss C.W.A.C. problems generally with the various officers concerned.

43. The C.W.A.A.F. was planned and organized side by side with the C.W.A.C., and officers of both Army and Air Force discussed together the various problems which arose. The Canadian Womens Auxiliary Air Force was authorized on 2 Jul 41, by P.C. 4798. Unlike the C.W.A.C., the C.W.A.A.F. was from the beginning, a component part of the R.C.A.F. Recruits were obtained from the Department of National War Services during the first months following the formation of the C.W.A.A.F. Approximately 15 administrative personnel were enlisted first, and were trained at a C.W.A.A.F. Training Depot in Toronto. General recruiting commenced at the end of November 1941, with up to 150 recruits being accepted weekly. Rates of pay were approximately two-thirds of the pay for the equivalent R.C.A.F. non-flying rank (HQ 54-27-32-7, vol 2: Organization Order No 146: Formation of Canadian Womens Auxiliary Air Force, 5 Jul 41). Early in 1942 the C.W.A.A.F. was re-named the Royal Canadian Air Force (Womens Division) (HQ 54-27-111-2, vol 3: D. of O. & A., circular letter, 7 Feb 42). The third of the womens Services, the Womens Royal Canadian Naval Service, was not organized until 29 Aug 42. Recruiting began in August, and the main training centre was set up at Galt, Ontario.

44. On 28 May 42 all D.Os.C. were informed of a proposal to change the designation of C.W.A.C. companies by numbering them consecutively in the order in which they were originally formed, or may in future be organized. Companies were to consist of four platoons each of not less than 25 and not more than 50 all ranks, and detachments were to be abolished. The result was the authorization of 49 companies, with effect from 1 Oct 42 (G.O. 357, 1942).

45. On 19 Oct 42 the appointment of Officer Administering, C.W.A.C. was succeeded by that of Director, C.W.A.C., with the rank of Lt-Col filled by Maj Kennedy, the former O/A C.W.A.C. The immediate cause of this change appears to have been the rapid growth of the new Corps, which, by the end of September 1942, little more than a year after recruiting had begun, had already a strength of approximately 6,000 ((H.S. 4) C.W.A.C. Miscellaneous Statistics, Book 1, Appx AA1). In view of the plans for future expansion it was also desirable for the control of the C.W.A.C. to be no longer centralized under the A.G., and for the appropriate Branches at N.D.H.Q. to take over the supervision of such functions as training, administration, etc. The change does not, however, appear to have been particularly successful. The new Director served merely in an advisory capacity, and had little, if any authority.<sup>4</sup> In April 1943 it was agreed that the C.W.A.C. should be administered in accordance with the general policy of administration for other Corps of the Army, and on 13 May 43 the Directorate of C.W.A.C. ceased to function. In its place, two senior officers appointments were created: Lt-Col

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4 No record has been found of the official authorization of the Directorate, C.W.A.C.



Kennedy, who had been Director, C.W.A.C., became G.S.O. 1 to advise in all matters of C.W.A.C. training; and Maj (later Col) M.C. Eaton was appointed A.A.G. to coordinate all C.W.A.C matters handled by the A.G. Branch.

46. On 9 Feb 43 depot companies and composite stores were authorized for each District (W.D., Directorate C.W.A.C., 9 Feb 43). This step had apparently been under consideration for some time. The depots were to take over medical examinations, AM testing, and documentation of all recruits, and to house personnel awaiting training, discharge or posting.

### **REORGANIZATION**

47. During the latter part of 1942 it became obvious that the system of C.W.A.C. companies was awkward and unwieldy, since personnel were carried on company establishments and covered off vacancies in their employing units. One of the main disadvantages of the Acompany system@ was that personnel were shown on the strength returns of both companies and employing units, thus giving a false overall strength. Matters of discipline and promotion were complicated because of the dual authority under which personnel functioned.

### **PROPOSALS FOR FORMATION OF RESERVE AND CADET CORPS**

48. The problem represented by the unofficial women's voluntary organizations had not yet been solved. In June 1941 the following terms of recognition were suggested:

Authority to wear uniform of an approved but not necessarily standard pattern.

Authority to train and drill as a military body.

Authority to adopt an approved name.

Prohibition of the formation of new Corps.

Prohibition to form additional units to an existing Corps without permission of N.W.S

Prohibition to use military ranks or badges of rank.

Prohibition to bear, or train in the use of, weapons.

It was also pointed out that to ignore the existence of these un-authorized Corps was highly undesirable and to refuse to recognize them suicidal (HQ 54-27-111-2, vol 1: Minutes of a Meeting held in D.A.G. (M) office, 30 Jun 41).

49. The press on 17 Nov 42 and again on 3 Dec 42 indicated that the formation of a Reserve C.W.A.C. was under consideration at N.D.H.Q. Letters began again to pour in from the various unofficial corps, seeking recognition. On 1 Feb 43 Maj-Gen B.W. Browne, D.G.R.A., asked the opinion of the C.G.S. on the formation of a Reserve C.W.A.C., and outlined the arguments in its favour as follows:

Such a Reserve Corps will be a valuable background to the Active Corps and will be a source of recruits. Many men who join a Reserve unit sooner or later volunteer for general service and there is no reason to think that women will not be similarly influenced. Also many women enlisting into a Reserve C.W.A.C. would eventually be able to volunteer for the Active Corps for limited service, that is, service in their own communities.

Women will relieve men of the Reserve Army from Administrative duties such as clerks, storemen, etc., so that they may carry on with their Military Training. C.W.A.C. personnel could also relieve men in case of mobilization.

By providing a military organization under D.N.D. control for women desiring to serve in a military capacity, the difficulties which have arisen and will arise, through the organization of semi-military bodies, with no form of control other than that exercised by the Charities Act, or the Defence of Canada Regulations, would be obviated. Many of these Corps have military titles such as ~~Women's~~ Service Corps, ~~Women's~~ Auxiliary Transport Corps, etc., which leads to confusion in the mind of the public.

General Browne also suggested the formation of a Girl Cadet Corps as a fruitful source for recruiting for the Active C.W.A.C. and pointed out that in Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia girls were taking some form of military training. The D.O.C. M.D. 12 had reported that 5,000 girls in Saskatchewan were undergoing training, including women at the University of Saskatchewan. General Browne added:

If the Department is to approve of the organization of a Girl Cadet Corps, it would seem that the time is now ripe for doing so.

(Ibid)

50. The comments of the officers concerned were invited on this subject, and while the formation of a Cadet Corps received favourable consideration, it was thought that the value of a Reserve C.W.A.C. would not be in proportion to the effort and money expended. Lt-Col Joan B. Kennedy, then Director, C.W.A.C., wrote as follows:

It is not quite clear how a Reserve Corps would be an aid to Recruiting for C.W.A.C.(A.F.) in as much as it is thought women would join the Reserve, taking advantage of the fact that they were not required to serve away from home or out of their own community, and in so doing consider they were doing their bit quite as effectively as those on active service. For this reason recruits enlisted in a Reserve Corps would be limited to those not eligible for active service.

Cadet Corps for girls, it is thought, would provide a good source of potential recruits, but should be inaugurated for the three Women's Services.

Ibid: Director C.W.A.C. to D.A.G.(A) ) 16 Feb 43)

The following memorandum outlines further observations with regard to a Reserve C.W.A.C.:

A. Points which may be considered to be opposed to such an Organization are enumerated below

- (1) The drain of a Reserve C.W.A.C. on present facilities available for the training of female members of the Army must be carefully calculated in contrast to potential benefits which might accrue.

Under present conditions the supply of clothing and equipment to Active C.W.A.C. personnel barely keeps pace with the demand.

In the event of Reserve C.W.A.C. personnel being issued with a uniform, either identical or similar to that of the Active Women's Army, it is inevitable that periodical shortages would develop whereby issue of vital clothing and equipment to Volunteers of the C.W.A.C. would be prejudiced.

- (2) Training accommodation in most district municipalities is limited.
- (3) Disciplinary Control

Recruiting Investigations have definitely indicated that the public behaviour and decorum of every individual member of the C.W.A.C. has a definite reaction on the Recruiting Pendulum. When a girl enlists in the C.W.A.C. she is exposed to the continual constructive guidance of her Officers, undergoes a month's extensive basic training, and knows that her life is inextricably bound to the Esprit de Corps she finds among her fellow volunteers. She knows that her failure to accept and abide by the regulations will result in punishment or discharge, which would mean personal discredit and discomfort. Yet, even under such conditions, occasional incidents have arisen which do not credit the Corps. Is it not reasonable to assume that if women are not

personally committed to any great degree, that a sense of freedom gained as a result of wearing the recognized official uniform of the Active Army, might manifest itself in a mode of behaviour to the prejudice of C.W.A.C. recruiting.

- (4) The whole purpose for which C.W.A.C. has been organized is to replace men in non-combatant occupations in order to effect their release for combatant duty. The whole purpose of the Reserve Army is to train men for combat in the event of the necessity for complete mobilization arising, how could Reserve C.W.A.C. personnel replace men in the Reserve Army. They could not replace men in training for combat duty@.
- (5) The complicated training required in the actual engagement of modern warfare definitely requires that men be trained along various highly technical basic lines. Therefore, a Reserve Army for men is definitely of a practical value in assuring that men who are exempt from Active Military Service by virtue of age, marital status, or a low physical category, receive such training. Unfortunately, the basic training of C.W.A.C. cannot be considered to require prolonged practice along these lines and, therefore, this feature cannot be considered as a contributing factor to warrant the existence of a R. C.W.A.C., unless it is the intention that R. C.W.A.C. is something not made available to all C.W.A.C. personnel on Active Duty.
- (6) Many girls desiring to wear a recognized uniform will Ago Reserve@ and forget their plans to Ago Active@.
- (7) Any work contributed by R. C.W.A.C. along clerical lines would be of a spasmodic nature and the process slow. Any office personnel available to R. C.W.A.C. would most likely be engaged in office duties all day and it is doubtful if a girl would be willing to perform the same duties again at night.
- (8) The results of a recent survey disclose that there are presently at least 90 voluntary Corps in existence in Canada, with a strength of 199 Officers and 6,917 other Ranks. All of these Auxiliary Corps would have to be disbanded or amalgamated into the R. C.W.A.C., possibly resulting in political repercussions.

B. Points which would indicate the Value of such an Organization are submitted hereunder.

- (1) A large body of women would be gathered together. These women could be instructed over a gradual period of time in the need for C.W.A.C. on Active Duty.
- (2) If R. C.W.A.C. personnel were given the privilege of attending camps during summer vacations, there is a great possibility that girls reluctant to sever home ties would become acclimated to Army life and lose their fear of taking the final step into the Active C.W.A.C.

- (3) Value of training ground for Officers and N.C.Os.

(Ibid: D.A.G.(C) to V.A.G., 25 Feb 43)

52. Concerning a Girls= Cadet Corps, it was learned that both Navy and Air Force had considered the matter, but no decision had been taken (Ibid: S.A.A.G. to A.G., 3 Mar 43). Reasons for and against the formation of a Cadet Corps were outlined as follows:

- (i) It exists in fact at many schools **B** unofficially. In all Districts there are cases in which girls appear on parade with boys and are inspected by the District Cadet Officer.
- (ii) It would help to develop in teen-age girls principles of patriotism.
- (iii) Would act as source of potential recruits for C.W.A.C.
- (iv) Would definitely direct interest of girls to activities of the C.W.A.C. and Army.
- (v) Would benefit individuals from the point of view of physical and mental development, particularly students in smaller towns.
- (vi) Organization in conjunction with existing Cadet Corps would not present many difficulties, i.e.
  - (a) Accommodation would be available.
  - (b) Instructors would be available from school staffs.
- (iii) No large expenditure of public funds would be necessary.
- (iv) In several Provinces Educational authorities desire Cadet training for girls as well as boys.

The main argument in favour of the formation of such a Corps **B** aside from the fact it does exist unofficially in many schools **B** is that it would provide a preliminary period of training for young girls who might be expected ultimately to enlist in Womens Division of one of the three Services. Obviously for those who would eventually so enlist, any system of training designed to inculcate a spirit of discipline, loyalty and Military bearing would be of value.

The following arguments were offered against the formation of a Cadet Corps:

- (a) There is a time lag of several years between the age of leaving school and the age when girls enlist in the C.W.A.C.

- (b) Cadet Corps would be limited to school girls and would not reach the working class or older girls who are also potential recruits.
- (c) C.W.A.C. requirements relate more to Trade Training and Specialists with civilian qualifications than to Military subjects and drill.
- (d) Would necessitate and increase in staff of Director of Cadets.

From a purely practical point of view, one must consider the fact that the function of women in the Army is to replace men in non-combatant duties. Upon enlistment into the C.W.A.C. women in any event must undergo a preliminary period of basic training and then proceed to Specialists training to qualify as Orderlies, Clerks, Stenographers, Drivers I.C., etc. Since, therefore, the eventual object is to train women in such Specialist duties, it must be conceded that preliminary training as cadets, which is repeated intensively later on at Basic Training, is open to question.

53. At a meeting of the Military Members of the Defence Council on 28 Apr 43, the formation of a Girls=Cadet Corps was considered, but was not concurred in (Ibid: Extract from Record of Discussions of Military Members, 28 Apr 43). No further action appears to have been taken regarding the formation of a Reserve C.W.A.C. Moreover, the company establishment provided for six officers and 64 other ranks to administer four platoons totalling 200 personnel who were employed by other units. It was felt that this was wasteful of woman power and that the number of administrative personnel could be reduced, particularly since the new depot companies were to carry out a great deal of the work formerly allotted to companies, such as enlistments, documentation and discharge.

54. It had been suggested, and approved by the A.G., that a new system similar to that of the A.T.S. should be adopted under which C.W.A.C. establishments would consist only of administrative personnel, and that personnel employed by other units should be carried on the strength of those units (HQS 20-4-Y, vol 1: Organization - C.W.A.C. Coys, Agenda, 2 Nov 42). On 5 Jun 43, this proposal was concurred in by the Military Members of the Defence Council (Ibid: Extract from Record of Discussions of Military Members, 5 Jun 43)

55. In addition it was proposed to establish Group Head-quarters in Ottawa and Toronto, areas where several C.W.A.C. units existed, in order to coordinate disciplinary and administrative command and reduce the channels of communication between units and Districts. This also was a further step toward similarity to the A.T.S. system (H.Q.S. 20-1-31-Y, vol 1: Extract from 185<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the War Establishments Committee, 5 Aug 43). Regarding this proposal, Brig R.D. Sutherland, D.A.G., wrote on 5 Aug 43 as follows:

The Adjutant-General is most anxious to improve the presently existing C.W.A.C. Company Command and through institution of carefully chosen competent senior officers vested with the function of command, bolster up the situation and improve present conditions. In the past the C.W.A.C. Staff Officer in the Districts has assumed more or less a dual role of Staff Officer and Senior C.W.A.C. Officer in the District with the assumption of certain functions of command. This procedure is considered fundamentally wrong and has not worked very satisfactorily. It is proposed to establish C.W.A.C. Group Commanders in those areas where sufficient concentration of C.W.A.C. personnel warrants such a set-up. In this way the Group Commander would devote her time and experience to the weeding out of incompetent Company and Platoon Commanders and replacement of those more qualified to command. This would in no way interfere with the staff functions of the District Staff Officer.



It is considered that C.W.A.C. Group Commanders should have full powers of Commanding Officer within the terms of existing C.W.A.C. regulations.

(HQS 20-4-Y, vol 1: D.A.G. to Chairman, W.E.C., 5 Aug 43)

56. On 26 Aug 43 a circular letter stated that the proposal for the change in policy regarding the C.W.A.C. companies had been approved. The letter read in part:

1. A change in policy has been approved under which C.W.A.C. Officers and Other Ranks employed with other than C.W.A.C. Units will be struck off strength their respective C.W.A.C. Companies and taken on strength by the Units with which employed. The only Officers and Other Ranks remaining on the strength of C.W.A.C. Companies will be:-

- (a) The administrative staffs of the Coys.
- (b) Newly enlisted personnel awaiting posting to Training Centres.
- (c) Other personnel specially posted under A.G. authority.

2. Upon being taken on strength by the Units with which they are employed, C.W.A.C. Other Ranks will be attached back to a C.W.A.C. Company for Administration inclusive of pay and discipline and where applicable for quarters and rations.

3. C.W.A.C. Officers employed with other than C.W.A.C. Units will be carried on the C.W.A.C. Corps List and shown as seconded therefrom to the Units with which they are employed. Where expedient they should be attached to C.W.A.C. Companies for administration including pay and discipline.

4. The new policy will be effective 1 SEP 43 and changes in strength will be completed in all respects by 8 SEP 43Y(Ibid: A.G. circular letter, 26 Aug 43)

57. G.O. 118 of 1944 authorized the redesignation of all C.W.A.C. companies as Administrative Units with effect from 1 Mar 44. On 1 Feb 44 it was noted that approval had been granted for the formation of No 1 and No 2 Group Headquarters, C.W.A.C., with effect from 15 Aug 43 (HQS 20-1-31-Y, vol 1: C.G.S. to A.G., I.M.G., M.G.O., 1 Feb 44). Each was to have a strength of four officers and six other ranks. These Headquarters functioned until 31 Oct 45.

#### DIRECTOR-GENERAL, C.W.A.C.

58. The only other major change in the organizational set-up of the C.W.A.C., was created. In March the matter was discussed, and it appeared that the appointment of one officer to have seniority over all other C.W.A.C. officers was necessary and in the best interests of the Corps. The appointment was to be analogous to that of Matron-in-Chief, Nursing Service, R.C.A.M.C. in that the officer selected would act in an advisory capacity and concern herself with Corps matters generally. No

change was to be made in existing administrative arrangements of the Corps. Lt-Col M.C. Eaton was chosen for the appointment and was given the acting rank of Col with effect from 24 Apr 44. The terms of reference for the D.G., C.W.A.C., were as follows:

- (a) The Director-General, C.W.A.C. is under the adjutant-General and is responsible to him for the well-being and efficiency of the C.W.A.C. as a Corps and of its personnel.
- (b) On matters both of policy and administration affecting members of the C.W.A.C., the Director-General, C.W.A.C. has direct access to the Minister and Members of Army Council.
- (c) The Director-General, C.W.A.C., will be consulted by all branches on matters of policy or administration whenever C.W.A.C. personnel are concerned.
- (d) The duties and functions of the Director-General, C.W.A.C., will not alter the responsibility of the various Branches and Directorates of the Army for the training, administration, organization, spiritual and medical care, welfare, accommodation and clothing of the C.W.A.C. subject always however to the obligation to consult the Director-GeneralY

(HQC 8686-4, vol 1: A.G. to  
Minister, 12 May 44)

59. On 10 Jun 44 C.M.H.Q. suggested that the senior C.W.A.C. officer at Headquarters in London, then Maj (later Lt-Col) E.A. Sorby, should fill an appointment known as Deputy Director, which should be authorized in place of the appointment of D.A.A.G. It was felt that such an appointment would better reflect the duties of this officer (Ibid: Tel A. 3951, Canmilitary to Defensor, 10 Jun 44). Brig R.E.G. Roome, D.A.G.(O), pointed out that the authorization of a Deputy Director overseas would probably tend to widen any gap between C.W.A.C. in Canada and overseas, and suggested that the matter be left in abeyance pending a visit of the D.G., C.W.A.C., to England (Ibid: D.A.G.(O) to D.G.C.W.A.C., 21 Jun 44). After Col Eaton had surveyed the situation at C.M.H.Q. she recommended that ~~A~~some title~~Y~~ be found for the Senior CWAC Officer Overseas, in order to help her function as she should ~~A~~(Ibid: D.G., C.W.A.C., to D. Pers, 5 Dec 44). Accordingly it was agreed to create appointments of Deputy Director at both C.W.A.C., at N.D.H.Q., assisting Col Eaton, was selected for the overseas appointment; and Lt-Col Eaton, was selected for the overseas appointment; and Lt-Col Sorby was returned from overseas to fill the Canadian appointment (Ibid: Tel A.G. 9484, Defensor to Canmilitary, 29 Dec 44).

60. In September 1945, on the request of Lt-Col Cronyn to be retired, Maj H.J. Hunt was despatched overseas to become Senior C.W.A.C. Officer at C.M.H.Q. Lt-Col D.I. Royal, then in command of No 1 C.W.A.C.T.C., was posted to N.D.H.Q. to cover the vacancy of Deputy Director, C.W.A.C., following the retirement of Lt-Col Sorby (Ibid: D.G., C.W.A.C., to D.A.G.(O), 19 Sep 45).

61. Further changes in the senior staff officer appointments occurred during the following month. On 24 Oct 45 Col Eaton wrote to the D.A.G(A) as follows:

Consequent upon my relinquishment of the appointment of DG/CWAC, 29 Oct 45, and the wish of the Adjutant-General that the title of DG/CWAC lapse with my retirement, and Y regarding the necessity of appointing a Head to the Corps, I discussed with the Adjutant-General the three Senior Staff Appointments in CWAC, and the titles of these appointments. He was agreeable to the suggestion that the Senior CWAC Officer hold the appointment of Director, CWAC. (Ibid: D.G., C.W.A.C., to D.A.G.(A), 24 Oct 45)

Col Eaton recommended the appointment of Lt-Col Royal as Director, C.W.A.C., of Maj P.H. Lee-Wright as Deputy Director, and of Maj Hunt as Deputy Director at C.M.H.Q. It was noted that this would necessitate a change in establishment and promotion of the three officers. As the policy then in effect was to discontinue or at least discourage promotion in Units or Corps where the strength during the next few months will be diminished, the D.A.G.(A) recommended that the appointment of D.G., C.W.A.C., be replaced by that of O.A., C.W.A.C., and that the Deputy Directors be known as Assistants to O.A., C.W.A.C. (Ibid: D.A.G. (A) to A.G., 31 Oct 45). This recommendation was approved on 5 Nov 45 (Ibid: Minute 2).

62. On 19 Jan 46 Brig J.R.R. Gough, D.A.G.(B), wrote to Lt-Col Royal as follows: In the past few months the name by which your appointment is known has changed from time to time and has been known as

- (a) AOfficer Administering@
- (b) AExecutive Officer@
- (c) AStaff Officer, CWAC@
- (d) ASenior Officer, CWAC@

In order to clarify your position in this regard, the writer discussed the matter with the Adjutant-General on the 18<sup>th</sup> Jan and the Adjutant-General has ruled that the appointment of the head of the CWAC Section at NDHQ shall in future be known as AStaff Officer@Y(Ibid: D.A.G.(B) to D. Org through S.O., C.W.A.C., 19 Jan 46)

Lt-Col Royal retained this appointment until September 1946 when the C.W.A.C. ceased to function.

## **RECRUITING**

63. As already pointed out, when the C.W.A.C. was organized in August 1941 recruiting was made the responsibility of the Department of National War Services. The first women were accepted

as members of the C.W.A.C. on 28-29 Aug 41<sup>5</sup> (H.S. 4) D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative, AC.W.A.C. History@ Appx 11, Annual Report, Canadian Women's Army Corps, 13<sup>th</sup> July 41 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 1942@. The method of recruiting adopted was very involved. The Department of National Defence was to requisition from National War Services numbers of women for employment with the Army. The women were then selected by N.W.S. from lists of applicants and ordered to report for enrolment.

64. Individuals who wished to enrol in the C.W.A.C. submitted applications through District Registrars to N.W.S. for consideration. A nominal roll of acceptable applicants was then sent to District Registrars who notified those selected. On the receipt of a satisfactory medical report<sup>6</sup> which the applicant had to obtain within three days after notification of acceptance had been given, instructions were given for the applicant to report for enrolment in the C.W.A.C. (HQ 54-27-111-2, vol 2: Notes on conversation with Capt Benoit, National War Services, 20 Aug 41).

65. This method of recruiting did not prove satisfactory in practice. N.W.S. found it impossible to handle quickly the large number of applications received for enlistment in both the C.W.A.C. and the C.W.A.A.F., with the result that recruiting was delayed. The fact that this system did not provide for direct and personal contact by Army or C.W.A.C. officers with the recruits prior to their reporting for enrolment was unsatisfactory. As early as November 1941 it was suggested that applicants be interviewed at District Headquarters and given a medical examination, after which the N.W.S. application form might be completed and forwarded through the District Registrar (Ibid: Precis No 1, Canadian Women's Army Corps, 27 Nov 41). It is not clear from the sources consulted whether this change in recruiting policy was made.

66. After the C.W.A.C. was authorized as a Corps of the Active Militia, recruiting became a matter solely for Army concern, and was taken over by the Department of National Defence in May 1942 ((H.S. 4) D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative, op cit, Appx 11), by which time approximately 2,752 had enlisted in the C.W.A.C. ((H.S. 4) C.W.A.C. Miscellaneous Statistics, Book 1, Appx AA1@). The Corps Headquarters and District Staff Officers handled all recruiting during the next few months. District Staff Officers interviewed applicants, enlisted them and allocated them to their duties. On 17 Jul 42 recruiting became the responsibility of the Directorate of Army Recruiting ((H.S. 4) D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative, op cit, Appx 12).

67. At this time demands for C.W.A.C. personnel were much greater than the supply, a condition which appears to have been chronic. The need for recruits began to be more widely advertised. In order to publicize this need a conference was held in Ottawa on 31 Jul 42, at which 55 delegates from various women's organizations throughout Canada were present (Ibid). A policy of wholesale enlistment was adopted, and age limits were extended from 21 **B** 40 years to 18 **B** 45 years (effective 1 May 42) (Ibid: Appx 13). On 23 Nov 42 a circular letter advised all Districts and Commands as follows:

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5 Mrs N.R. Kennedy, appointed District Staff Officer, M.D. 11, on 28 Aug 41, was the first member of the C.W.A.C. Two recruits reported on the following day.

6 Recruits were accepted on the report of selected doctors supplied with Government examination form. Prior to attestation, at the end of the probationary period as a recruit, each volunteer was medically boarded.

1. Detailed plans for a continuous national advertising and promotional effort on behalf of C.W.A.C. recruiting were presented to conference of District Recruiting Officers and C.W.A.C. District Staff Officers.

2. In order to derive the greatest possible benefit from this program and to increase enlistments to at least double the present monthly rate C.W.A.C. personnel are to be employed on the District Recruiting Staff and fill vacancies or replace men within the District Recruiting limited Establishment.

3. It is appreciated that accommodation and other factors have presented a problem in many Districts. Notwithstanding facilities available in your District at present this matter will be treated with the utmost urgency and general enlistment regardless of quotas will be carried out.

(HQS 20-6-Y: A.G. Circular letter, 23 Nov 42)

68. At a District C.W.A.C. Staff Officers conference held 18-20 Nov 42 a great deal of consideration was given to recruiting problems. Brig Sutherland pointed out that it was intended to employ 20,000 C.W.A.C. personnel to release that number of men for more active service. He stated also that future plans would call for 1,720 women to be enlisted monthly, and that recruiting efforts would have to be doubled ((H.S. 4 D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative, op cit, Appx 28).

69. In spite of all efforts, response was slow, and the number of women enlisted fell far short of the desired number. The following extracts from a letter written by the Command Recruiting Officer, Pacific Command, point out some of the reasons for the lack of success:

To my mind the great fundamental cause is that there has not been created (even after 3 years of war) a general public opinion that women are needed in the Army. Just how folks can be blasted from their complacency, is difficult to know Until this is done there will continue to be lethargy, and enlistments for the C.W.A.C. will continue to be comparatively meagre.

YYYYYYYY

It takes years to really make an efficient Officer or N.C.O. The C.W.A.C. has grown rapidly. Their Officers and N.C.Os. are very inexperienced. It is marvelous that they have done as well as they have, and that the discipline of the Corps is as good as it is; but there is not yet and esprit de corps formed, and the C.W.A.C. personnel in many cases are not the recruiting media they should be.

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There are still many soldiers (men) who resent women in the Forces. Many others do not encourage enlistment. It is difficult to break this down.

(HQS 20-6-Y; Command Recruiting Officer,  
Pacific Command, to Director of Army  
Recruiting, 10 Mar 43)

He suggested also that the C.W.A.C. rates of pay were not sufficient to encourage enlistment. D.A.R. expressed general agreement with these observations (Ibid: D.A.R. to District Recruiting Officer, Pacific Command, 18 Mar 43).

70. In order to discover why Canadian women were not enlisting, two public opinion polls were taken. The first, *An Enquiry into the Attitude of the Canadian Civilian Public towards the Women's Armed Forces*, was initiated by the Joint Committee on Combined Recruiting Promotion, Women's Services of the Three Armed Forces, to determine the reasons why more women were not offering themselves for enlistment in one of the Women's Services. The second, entitled *Canadian Women's Army Corps: Why Women Join and How They Like It: Report of Enquiry*, was conducted and prepared by D.A.E. and was undertaken to ascertain reasons why women did not join the C.W.A.C., the types of women who had enrolled and their reasons for enlisting. It was estimated that there were from 750,000 to 800,000 women who were eligible for enquired about enrolment from an authorized recruiting agent. Of these, 37,000 were medically examined and 28,000 accepted by three Services. Among the factors which seemed to handicap recruiting, it was noted that the civilian public felt that service in the armed forces was an unladylike occupation; that young women tended to dislike giving up civilian life and luxuries; and that men in the Services strongly opposed the enrolment of women ((H.S. 4) D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative, *op cit*, Appces 14 and 15).

71. Another factor which made it difficult to attract suitable recruits was a Dominion-wide *whispering campaign* regarding the morality of all three Women's Services. Many steps were taken in an effort to counteract it. A report on this subject by the Wartime Information Board stated:

The whispering campaign against the morality of women in the services is largely a symptom of resentment against an innovation which is somehow felt to be *un-womanly*. Opposition will not disappear until the Women's Services are taken completely for granted, but it can be substantially reduced by some of the following suggestions:

1. Appeal to the spirit of sacrifice by giving full weight to the hardships and disadvantages of service life
2. Support this by a sober, frank, matter-of-fact tone in all publicity **B** enlistment is a serious business and deserves to be taken seriously
3. Appeal directly to the families of potential recruits

(HQS 20-6-Y: J.D. Ketchum, Memorandum  
*Immorality of Service Women*, 19 Mar 43)

72. Lt-Col B.M. Clerk, S.A.A.G., wrote to the A.G. on 28 Jul 43 as follows:

I am in agreement that no published statistics or reports should be made in answer to rumours concerning C.W.A.C. The Women's Services provide, perhaps, the most difficult publicity problem of the whole Canadian war effort. The rumours and charges are exaggerated out of all proportion to actual facts. The problem cannot be solved immediately or by any simple formula.

(Ibid: Lt-Col Blair M. Clerk to A.G., 28 Jul 43)

He suggested also that a senior C.W.A.C. officer should make a coast to coast speaking tour in an attempt to alleviate the recruiting problems (Ibid). General Letson agreed to this suggestion (Ibid: Minute 2). Accordingly, Lt-Col M. J. Dover left Ottawa on 10 Oct 43, speaking in the larger centres, and completed her tour on 21 Jan 44.

73. It was obvious, however, that the policy of whole sale enlistment had had harmful results, and that many women were accepted who did not contribute to the good of the Corps.<sup>7</sup> The ultimate answer to recruiting problems appeared to be a new system of selective recruiting. This matter was discussed extensively at N.D.H.Q., and the results of the discussions were outlined on 28 Sep 43 as follows:

The Army is a male society developed by men over centuries around the role of the fighting soldier. This society is traditional and imposes rigid discipline and harsh living conditions on the individual in order to build up and maintain the type of physical and mental fitness required for effective action in the field. Upon entering the Army the modern civilian male soon learns to subordinate his own personality to his new role in the Army, for his life will eventually depend upon it. He becomes a soldier first and an individual second.

Modern Armies have incorporated women into their ranks. But Canadian Army women do not and are not expected to fight. Rather their function is to take over the non-combatant operations of the Army so that more men may be diverted to the fighting fronts. In short, women have been put into uniform to do static jobs.

YYYYYYY..

Though relegated to more static jobs in the Army, women have been made to perform these duties under the imposition of the traditional Army system, which was evolved for totally different purposes, i.e., the need of the fighting soldier. This indiscriminate application of masculine standards has created conflict. Current high C.W.A.C. rejection and discharge rates

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<sup>7</sup> From the writer's personal observation, the problems which arose as a result of the enlistment of poorer types was a great deal less serious as early as the latter part of 1945. Although there was no policy laid down stating that such women were to be discharged earliest, this was generally the case; and either because of misconduct or because replacements were available, the number of undesirable types gradually diminished.

on grounds of emotional instability are indicative of the difficulty of adjustment to the Army which women are experiencing. Our survey among C.W.A.C. Other Ranks illustrated that Army women were at a loss to understand a system which seems to do little more than put restrictions on their personal freedom and individuality, and to deny them ordinary living comforts. Women are resisting submergence of their own individuality to the Army system. They still remain women first and soldiers second.

To the extent that a happy Corps makes for a widely and well advertised Corps do the internal affairs to the C.W.A.C. become the concern of recruiting.

There seems to be general agreement that a policy of selective recruiting for C.W.A.C. should be adopted. It is felt that such a policy would:

1. Raise the general standard of enlistment.
2. Improve the prestige of the Corps.
3. Ensure a greater percentage of personnel suitable for trades training.
4. Remove discipline problems which frequently arise in low category personnel incapable of trades training yet unwilling to do general duties.

((H.S. 4) D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative, op cit, Appx 17)

74. Although the system of selective recruiting had the desired effects of raising the general standard of enlistment, improving the prestige of the Corps, and removing discipline problems, it provided no assurance that the Corps could be maintained at the desired strength. It appears, however, to have been the policy governing recruiting until recruiting was discontinued two years later.

75. Under the regulations drawn up on the formation of the C.W.A.C., only British subjects might be enlisted. On 19 Dec 43 it was noted that a ruling had been received from American authorities to the effect that they had no objection to the enlistment of United States citizens in the C.W.A.C. (HQS 20-6-Y: D.A.G.(C) to D.A.R., 19 Jan 43). When new C.W.A.C. Regulations were authorized in 1943, provision was made for women from the United States to enlist, and the C.W.A.C. was publicized at recruiting centres already set up in such centres as Boston, Buffalo, Detroit, St Paul and Seattle. It was noted, however, that most of those who presented themselves for enlistment were in the 18-20 age group and did not prove to be satisfactory soldiers. Accordingly, enlistment of United States citizens ceased in January 1944.

76. Recruiting was also carried on in Newfoundland from July 43 until February 1945. It was a difficult matter for many reasons: there was no accommodation in Newfoundland for the housing of recruits; no arrangements had been made for C.W.A.C. personnel resident in Newfoundland post-discharge benefits; and early results obtained did not indicate that a sufficient number of women could



be obtained to justify the administrative difficulties necessary (W.D., D.G., C.W.A.C., February 1945 Appx AB@).

77. At no time was the recruiting situation completely satisfactory. Lack of careful selection, particularly until February 1944, proved expensive and was also a deterrent to the enlistment of more desirable types of women. The demand appears always to have been generally greater than the supply, and the public never seemed aware of the genuine need for C.W.A.C. personnel.

## TRAINING

78. The Regulations which governed the C.W.A.C. from its formation contained no instructions regarding training beyond the general statement that D.Os.C. were responsible for whatever training was necessary for recruits. Such training was often carried out after duty hours, since recruits were usually employed immediately upon enlistment.

79. In October 1941 the Director of Military Training drafted a basic training syllabus which was approved and made available in pamphlet form in January 1942 (HQ 54-27-111-26, vol 1: Print to D.M.T., 7 Jan 42). Cadet training and other syllabi were also drawn up, and issued to Districts.

80. The need for a training centre which would provide standardized training soon became obvious, and on 1 Feb 42 part of MacDonald College at Ste Anne de Bellevue was leased from McGill University for this purpose (P.C.174, 1942). The new Training Centre was taken over officially by a Board of Officers on 22 Feb (W.D. No 1 C.W.A.C. (A) T.C., 22 Feb 42). Two male officers were placed in charge with C.W.A.C. officers assisting, and five male N.C.O. instructors arrived on 23 Feb (Ibid: 23 Feb 42). On the same day, the first basic training course, covering basic training and administration, commenced with a total of 156 all ranks in attendance (HQ 54-27-111-26, vol 1: O/A C.W.A.C. circular letter, 13 Feb 42). The course was completed on 14 Mar and the graduates were inspected by the Minister of National Defence (W.D. No 1 C.W.A.C. (A)T.C., 14 Mar 42). Seventeen women were selected from the course as potential instructors, and were required to attend a special course which began on 16 Mar (Ibid: 16 Mar 42). New basic training and administration course began on 30 Mar 42 for 176 all ranks (Ibid: 30 Mar 42). On the completion of these the same procedure was followed and courses for prospective instructors and provosts began on 20 Apr. Junior Commander Dover took over the command of the Training Centre on 31 Mar (Ibid: 31 Mar).

81. Approximately 300 newly-enrolled personnel attended the first basic training course for recruits which began on 27 Apr (Ibid: 27 Apr 42). Basic training at MacDonald College continued until November 1942, after which the Training Centre was given over to advanced and cadet training.

82. A new Basic Training Centre had been set up in Vermillion, Alberta, in July 1942, in buildings which had formerly housed the Provincial Agricultural College and which were capable of accommodating 500 basic trainees monthly. Basic training courses commenced on 3 Aug (W.D. No 2 C.W.A.C. (B)T.C., 3 Aug 42). Male personnel were supplied by M.D. 13 to take charge of training until sufficient C.W.A.C. instructors were trained and available. In 1944 it seemed obvious that no

marked increase in recruits was likely, and that the third Training Centre at Kitchener would be sufficient to handle all basic training. No 2 C.W.A.C. (B)T.C. was therefore reduced to nil strength on 15 May 44.

83. It was decided in 1942 that a second Training Centre was needed in eastern Canada, and the site decided upon was the camp occupied by No 10 C.A.(B)T.C. in Kitchener. The advance party of C.W.A.C. personnel arrived in Kitchener on 17 Oct 42, followed three days later by the first group of recruits (W.D. No 3 C.W.A.C. (B)T.C.) 20 Oct 42). Sufficient accommodation was available in this camp for training 1,000 personnel. Basic training began on 26 Oct 42. On 31 May 45, when No 1 C.W.A.C. (A) T.C. was reduced to nil strength, the cadet course moved to Kitchener. No 3 C.W.A.C. (B)T.C. was redesignated No 4 C.W.A.C. T.C. and was disbanded with effect from 30 Oct 45.

84. In addition to basic and cadet training, other regimental courses were given, including Advanced Corps Training, N.C.O. courses, Warrant Officers courses and Regimental Officers courses. A pre-basic English language course was begun at Kitchener in the summer of 1944 for French-speaking personnel. C.W.A.C. personnel also attended Chemical Warfare and Technique of Instruction courses at A-32 C. Pro T.C.

## TRADES TRAINING

85. When the C.W.A.C. was organized and it was expected that fully qualified recruits would be enlisted no provision was made for the trades training of its personnel. The fact soon became obvious that some special training in such Army trades as driving, cooking Ordnance duties, etc., would be necessary in order to enable C.W.A.C. personnel to replace soldiers satisfactorily. In addition, it had been noted from time to time that, while a type of girl with good educational standards is joining the Corps, she has no trades qualifications, but she could be quickly trained under proper instruction@ (HQS 8984, vol 1: D.M.&R. to D.A.G.(A), 10 Sep 42). Any such training was, however, to be the responsibility of the D.Os.C. (HQ 54-27-111-26, vol 1: D.A.G. to D.M.T., 23 Nov 41). In M.D. 2 advantage was taken of an offer made by the Regional Director of the Dominion-Provincial War Emergency Training Programme on 9 Oct 41 to train C.W.A.C. personnel as cooks at the Central Technical School in Toronto. On 29 Oct it was noted that a short course of instructions for drivers in motor mechanics@ was being held in M.D. 3 (Ibid: O/A C.W.A.C. to C.W.A.C. Staff Officer, M.D. 12, 29 Oct 41), and in M.D. 10 C.W.A.C. personnel underwent training as wireless operators at the University of Manitoba during the school year of 1941-42 (Ibid: D.O.C. M.D. 10 to Secretary, Department of National Defence, 3 Dec 41).

86. While undoubtedly the question of trades training had received general consideration at N.D.H.Q., the first large scale plan for training in any trade appears to have been advanced by the M.G.O., who wrote to the A.G. on 14 Jan 42 as follows:

It is proposed to utilize enlisted C.W.A.C. personnel to the maximum extent possible in the M.G.O. Branch in order to release AA@ category soldier personnel, particularly tradesmen for Overseas service. A programme, using such personnel in Ordnance Workshops in the

Army both in Canada and Overseas, can be undertaken with great confidence that it will succeed as women are now being used in industry, both in munitions and other war plants for heavy as well as light work of a similar nature.

Women are used in Ordnance Workshops in England to repair tanks and from observations of our officers during visits to Ordnance Workshops in England approximately 35% to 40% of the total personnel consists of women.

All Ordnance Workshops in Canada are being surveyed at the moment to determine the exact number of women that can be used. We know we can use a minimum of 1500 women. Authority is requested to recruit and train that number.

The Director of Mechanical Maintenance advises me you have agreed, in principle, to a separate establishment to be known as the ~~A~~Canadian Women's Army Corps ~~B~~ Ordnance Division~~@~~. The C.W.A.C. establishment, in part, will include one senior officer, three junior officers and four clerks in the Directorate of Mechanical Maintenance. In each District there will be a minimum of one officer with one clerk. The larger districts will have two or three officers with three or four clerks. The establishment will vary in accordance with the number of women undergoing training in each District. It is proposed to recruit 500 women per month for three months.

He stated that facilities existed to train the 1,500 women in technical schools in addition to those who were then in training, and concluded with the first definite proposal for the employment of C.W.A.C. personnel overseas:

~~Y~~the O.C. 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Base Ordnance Workshop~~Y~~ is aware of the large number of women already being used in Base Ordnance Workshops with the British Army and he has suggested, and we concur, that 500 of this 1500 women be despatched Overseas about the 1<sup>st</sup> August, 1942, to work in the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Base Ordnance Workshop.

(Ibid: M.G.O. to A.G., 14 Jan 42)

87. On the following day, however, it was pointed out that there was no necessity, but instead a ~~A~~positive objection~~@~~, to the formation of a ~~A~~separate division of the C.W.A.C. for the Ordnance~~@~~. It was agreed that the normal scheme of command and administration of the Corps was much more desirable and convenient than any special organization (Ibid: D. of O. & A. to D.A.G., 15 Jan 42). It was considered that eventually 1,500 C.W.A.C. personnel could be provided for employment with the R.C.O.C. (Ibid).

88. On 19 Jul 42 Maj-Gen H.F.G. Letson, then A.G., asked the opinion of the C.G.S., Q.M.G. and M.G.O. concerning an expansion of the programme of employment of the C.W.A.C. He wrote:

In view of the large drain that has been made on manpower in this Country for the Armed Services, I feel that the replacement of men by women in the Army can be extended beyond the point now contemplated.

I feel that they could be used extensively in Anti-Aircraft Artillery, actually manning and firing the guns, in the R.C.A.M.C., in the R.C.A.S.C., in fact in all places where they have the physical ability to perform the necessary duties.

The policy already approved does envisage a wide employment of women, but if my suggested course of action is to be followed it will be necessary to place women after they have completed their Basic Training **B** in advanced Training Centres. This will entail an expansion of these facilities eventually. The immediate problem is to seek authority for the extension of the employment of women in the Army, and to investigate means of giving them the necessary advanced training.

In South Africa, Great Britain and the U.S., this policy is now in effect, and I feel that the time is now due for us to extend the field of employment of women to the fullest extent.

A rough estimate has been made, indicating that eventually some 20,000 women can be usefully employed on tasks already approved; I feel confident then an extension of the above mentioned policy would result in a substantially larger number being employed.

(HQS 8984, vol 1: A.G. to C.G.S., Q.M.G. and M.G.O., 19 Jul 42)

The other Military Members concurred in the proposal (Ibid: Minutes 2,3 and 4). It was pointed out that the Minister, the C.G.S. and the A.G. were all pressing for action in this regard (Ibid: Maclin to D.A.G.(A) and D.A.G.(B), 30 Jul 42).

89. At a meeting of the Army Council on 29 Jul 42, the question of the employment of personnel of the C.W.A.C. in operational units was discussed generally. The C.G.S. stated that women were already being employed in Pacific Command in certain operational roles such as **A**the operation of predictors, G.L. sets, and in operation rooms and had proved quite satisfactory<sup>@</sup>. It was decided at this meeting that experimental training of C.W.A.C. personnel should be carried out with a view to their being eventually employed in the actual handling and firing of anti-aircraft guns (Ibid: Extract from minutes of meeting of Army Council, 29 Jul 42). D.M. & R. pointed out, however, that demands for several thousand C.W.A.C. personnel were outstanding, and that until sufficient cooks, clerks, and women for other **A**sedentary occupations<sup>@</sup> were provided no attempt should be made to place C.W.A.C. in operational duties (Ibid: D.M. & R. to D.A.G.(A), 9 Aug 42). It was decided, therefore, that **A**for the present<sup>Y</sup> C.W.A.C. may be employed in operational units only on H.Q. Comd Fortress Plotting Room and G.O.R.<sup>@</sup> (Ibid: Minute 2). D.M. & R. considered that the setting up of trades schools for C.W.A.C. personnel was **A**vital<sup>y</sup> necessary<sup>@</sup> unless it was anticipated that sufficient personnel could be found from enlistments in civil life for the **A**sedentary occupations<sup>@</sup> (Ibid).

90. Lt-Col J.E. McKenna was instructed to visit all Military Districts to ascertain the number and types of vacancies for women, the training facilities available. He reported on 19 Aug as follows:

YI would respectfully point out that in studying the types of present employment of C.W.A.C. personnel, there is a great similarity in all Districts. It comprises mostly clerical workers, (stenographers, typists and clerks) cooks, waitresses, store women and general duties. There is a conspicuous absence of demand for technically trained girls. This may be attributed to the fact that when original demands were asked for, a certain number of technicians were included in returns, but they were not available and there appeared no hope of their being supplied. Demands were then kept to more or less non-technical trades.

All Districts are anxiously looking forward to the establishment of trades training for C.W.A.C. personnel. This particularly applies to the mid-western Districts, where girls of good education, but without any specialized training are enlisting and performing more or less menial tasks.

After their basic training if they were sent to trades training courses they would become of special value in replacing AA@men.

When trades training for C.W.A.C. is actually in force and units are able to see them employed at specialized work, there should be no difficulty in obtaining through Districts the numbers that can be used to replace soldiers now so employed. (Ibid: A.A.G. to A.G., 19 Aug 42)

91. As a result, on 1 Sep 42 all demands previously submitted for C.W.A.C. personnel were cancelled, and D.Os.C. were requested to provide N.D.H.Q. with a complete statement of their C.W.A.C. requirements in order to ascertain the number for whom it would be necessary to provide trades training (Ibid: A.G. circular letter 1 Sep 42). The first trades training courses under N.D.H.Q. arrangements appear to have begun on 12 Nov 42, with 15 personnel attending a clerks= course at the Edmonton Wing, No 13 District Depot; 20 attending a cooks= course and 30 a drivers= course at No 13 Vocational Training School (Ibid: A.G. to D.O.C. M.D. 13, 26 Oct 42). During the next year, courses for Drivers I.C. were held at each of the C.W.A.C. Training Centres and at S-5 C.D. & M.S., Woodstock, Ontario.

As demands were filled it became possible to discontinue the courses at the Training Centres in 1945, leaving only the school at Woodstock, with a capacity of 50, to provide instruction for this trade. Courses for Driver Mechanics were held at A-20 R.C.A.S.C. T.C., Red Deer, Alberta, and No 1 C.W.A.C. (A) T.C. during 1943. Cooks= courses were established at Ste Anne de Bellevue, Kitchener and Calgary; but requirements were quickly filled and No 3 C.W.A.C. (B)T.C. with a capacity for 60 potential cooks was left to supply future demands. Courses for clerks and stenographers were used most extensively, and were held in a number of schools across Canada, including the Northern Vocational School, Toronto, the High School of Commerce, Ottawa, Vancouver Technical School, Edmonton Technical School, Saint John Vocational School, Gordon Bell High

School, Winnipeg, Kitchener-Waterloo Vocational Institute,<sup>8</sup> the Halifax Academy and the Saskatoon Technical School. In addition, instruction was provided for small numbers of the following tradeswomen: instrument mechanic draughtswomen, equipment repairers, painters, kinetheodolite operators, laboratory assistants, radiologists, storewomen, nursing orderlies, dental assistants and dental technicians, night-vision testers.

92. From an unsatisfactory beginning, training gradually improved and became standardized. Trades training fulfilled the standards laid down by D. Org, and the methods of regimental training which evolved were considered generally satisfactory.

#### DESPATCH OF C.W.A.C. OVERSEAS AND TO THE UNITED STATES

93. It is not clear from the sources consulted when the despatch of C.W.A.C. personnel overseas was first considered. In the various drafts of Regulations drawn up during 1940 and 1941, and in the Regulations finally adopted, provision was made that all women who enrolled must undertake to serve ~~at~~ home or abroad. The first definite proposal appears to have been put forth by the M.G.O. on 14 Jan 42. He pointed out that large numbers of women were employed in the British Army Base Ordnance Workshops, and suggested that 500 C.W.A.C. personnel might be despatched overseas in August 1942 to work in No 1 Canadian Base Ordnance Workshop (H.Q. 54-27-111-26, vol 1: M.G.O. to A.G., 14 Jan 42).

94. In February 1942 it was suggested by C.M.H.Q. that C.W.A.C. personnel might be employed to replace 150 other ranks in a Static Base Laundry which was about to be established. The manpower shortage was beginning to be a matter for deep concern, and any objections to the employment of C.W.A.C. personnel overseas were set aside. On 10 Feb 42 therefore, the proposal was submitted to N.D.H.Q. (Report No 120, Historical Officer, Canadian Military Headquarters, 31 Jul 44, paras 18-19). On 6 May 42 C.M.H.Q. was advised that the policy of employing C.W.A.C. personnel overseas had been approved. Two days later N.D.H.Q. inquired whether C.W.A.C. would be acceptable for employment at the Base Ordnance Depot, and added that 50 might be sent by June, and further drafts up to a maximum of 300 might be despatched by August (Ibid).

95. On 6 Jun 42 C.M.H.Q. requested 200 C.W.A.C. clerks. The request was approved, and it was stated that during August the first draft of 200 C.W.A.C. personnel would be moved overseas. Since the Static Base Laundry was not yet constructed, the clerical personnel were to be despatched first (Ibid: para 20). A survey was made of all C.M.H.Q. offices in order to ascertain the number of ~~AA~~@category soldiers who might be replaced by members of the C.W.A.C. The result revealed that 301 personnel could be employed as replacements which, with administrative personnel, would constitute a requirement of approximately 400 all ranks.

96. Accommodation consisted of three building converted to barracks and capable of housing 510 all ranks was acquired, and stores and equipment were to be provided by British sources on a scale equal to that of the A.T.S. (Ibid: para 24). Capt E.A. Sorby was appointed C.W.A.C. Staff Officer

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<sup>8</sup> Later completely under the auspices of No 3 C.W.A.C.(B) T.C.

overseas, and arrived in London on 18 Aug 42 in order to assist in preliminary preparations for the first draft.

97. Unexpected delays which had been encountered in completing arrangements for accommodation postponed the despatch of the first draft until 28 Oct 42. On 5 Nov, 104 all ranks arrived in the United Kingdom. Quartered at 38 South Street in London this group was designated No 41 Coy. A second flight of 141 C.W.A.C. personnel, later designated No 42 Coy, reached London on 19 Dec 42 and occupied Chesham Hotel Barracks.

98. The third flight of 103 all ranks did not arrive until 31 Mar 43. It was quartered in a group of houses known as Sussex Square Barracks and constituted No 43 Coy. On 17 May 43 the fourth flight of 85 personnel arrived for employment at Headquarters, C.R.U., and formed No 47 Coy. The draft for No 1 Static Base Laundry finally arrived on 29 Jul 43. The next five flights, disembarking in the United Kingdom on 21 Feb, 18 Apr, 8 May, 9 Jun and 4 Jul 44 respectively, served as reinforcements. A total of 25 drafts were despatched overseas, and two additional companies were set up later, i.e. Nos 50 and 51 Coys.

99. Women in the United Kingdom were allowed to enlist in the C.W.A.C. if they were:

- (a) Canadian-born
- (b) Canadian by right of domicile
- (c) Married to a Canadian soldier

They had also to obtain a release from the British Ministry of Labour and for A.T.S. personnel wishing to transfer to the C.W.A.C. the permission of the War Office was necessary. The total number of personnel enlisted in the United Kingdom was 322 ((H.S. 4) C.W.A.C. Miscellaneous Statistics, Book 1, Appx AB 1@, p.12).

100. Training for recruits in the United Kingdom was a modified form of the standard basic training syllabus. The first group of recruits, numbering 39, completed basic training on 19 Feb 43 ((H.S. 4) D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative, op cit, Appx 7). On 23 Feb a C.W.A.C. officers training increment was added to No 1 O.C.T.U. Wing, Overseas Canadian Training School at Bordon, Hants. A three-week course followed closely that of the regular O.C.T.U. At the end of the first course, the C.W.A.C. O.C.T.U. classes were transferred to an A.T.S. Training School, and the course was extended to cover eight weeks.

101. During her visit to Canada in September and October 1942 General Knox discussed with the A.G. the possibility of sending C.W.A.C. officers overseas for attachment to A.T.S. Training Schools. The proposal was approved by the War Office in November. It was agreed that the attachment would be of about three months' duration, and that approximately eight officers would be despatched each month. The first group, consisting of 12 officers, was despatched in December with the second flight of replacement personnel. The C.W.A.C. officers were to visit A.T.S. training centres, and were to be

attached in rotation in small groups to the War Office and to one of the British or Scottish commands. Senior officers were then to proceed to the Senior Officers School at Bagshott, and junior officers to the Junior Officers School at Bgham. This system was later replaced by an exchange of C.W.A.C. and A.T.S. officers for a period of three months= duty.

102. Early in 1944 both overseas and in Ottawa consideration was given to the question of employing C.W.A.C. personnel in rear areas of the operational theatre. The policy was approved, and a survey revealed that an additional 1,173 C.W.A.C. personnel could be employed in operational areas, at Headquarters, C.R.U., and at C.M.H.Q. Subsequently C.W.A.C. personnel served in Italy, in North-Western Europe, and with S.H.A.E.F.

103. C.W.A.C. personnel also served in the United States in Washington and Detroit. On 17 Dec 41 three C.S.Ms. were despatched to Washington for duty. By the end of March 1943 a total of 106 personnel were employed in Detroit & Washington, and were administered by No 36 Coy which had been established in Washington during the latter part of 1942. By the end of 1943 A.T.S. personnel recruited in the West Indies and trained in Canada had replaced the C.W.A.C. attached to the British Army Staff for duty, and it was estimated that thereafter no more than 100 C.W.A.C. personnel would be required for duty in Washington. No 36 Adm Unit was reduced to nil strength on 28 Feb 46 and its personnel were returned to Canada for disposal with the exception of 45 who remained behind on subsistence to be administered by the Canadian Army Staff (W.D. No 36 Adm Unit C.W.A.C., 28 Feb 46).

#### C.W.A.C. MILITARY AND PIPE BANDS

104. A brass band and a pipe band were authorized to form on 8 Aug 42 and were used generally for recruiting purposes during 1943-44. Between August and December 1943 the two bands made a coast-to-coast tour of Canadian cities accompanied by two C.W.A.C. officers and a recruiting Sergeant. The second tour held from March to November 1944 it was no longer necessary to use the bands for recruiting purposes. Accordingly both bands were despatched overseas and toured England and the Continent.

#### WOMEN'S SERVICES HEALTH CENTRES R.C.A.M.C.

105. Two Women's Services Health Centres were authorized to form in 1944, No 1 W.S.H.C. at Harrison Hot Springs, B.C., and No 2 W.S.H.C. at Oakville, Ontario. Their purpose was to provide convalescent and remedial care for female members of the three Services (W.D., D.G., C.W.A.C., March 1945, Appx AA@, para 71). It was anticipated that by the operation of these centres the number of discharges might be reduced to a large extent, but it was emphasized that psychiatric cases and behaviour problems were not suitable for admission to these centres@ (Ibid: par 72). No 1 W.S.H.C. functioned from 2 Jan 45 until 31 Jan 46, and No 2 W.S.H.C. from 1 Dec 44 until 8 May 46.



## MADRES

106. In October 1945 it was decided to appoint suitably qualified C.W.A.C. officers as Assistants to the Protestant Chaplains. Five AMadres@ were appointed and employed in Halifax, Toronto, Kitchener, Ottawa and Vancouver. Their duties, which were not confined to Protestants alone, were much the same as those of the Padres with the exception that they did not hold church services. It was considered that these officers contributed a great deal to the general welfare and morale of personnel.

## PROPOSALS FOR REORGANIZATION

107. Early in 1945 investigation proved that C.W.A.C. administration was top-heavy and uneconomical. Strength returns dated 12 Dec 44 showed that 566 officers and 11,576 other ranks were employed in Canada and adjacent regions as follows:

	All ranks
Employed as replacements	7,781
Depot staffs	661
Administrative unit staffs	1,650
Training centre staffs	368
In training (basic or advanced)	618
On draft	27
Miscellaneous (in schools, on discharge, etc)	1,037
	12,142

In other words, 2,311 all ranks on depot and unit staffs were employed to administer 7,781 all ranks. Since employing units were already allotted administrative personnel for their complete establishment, part of which the 7,781 replacements filled, two different staffs were being provided to administer the same replacement personnel. It was suggested therefore that all C.W.A.C. replacement personnel should be taken on the strength of the employing units; that C.W.A.C. administrative staffs should be reduced to a scale of one officer and two N.C.Os. in units employing up to 200 C.W.A.C. replacements (H.Q.S. 20-4-Y, vol 2: Chairman, W.E.I.C., to D.S.D., 20 Jan 45).

108. It was pointed out in considering these suggestions that the two main points to receive consideration were the increased responsibility which would be placed on the employing units, and the decrease in responsibility and control held by the C.W.A.C. as a Corps over its members employed in units. The advantages which would be gained by carrying out these suggestions were:

- (1) Unified responsibility
- (2) Unified control
- (3) Unified loyalty
- (4) C.W.A.C. Administrative Officers within the employing Unit who are familiar with that Unit's problems
- (5) Saving in administrative manpower by utilization of services already set up for administration within the employing Unit.
- (6) Saving in administrative manpower by eliminating duplication in paper work.
- (7) C.W.A.C. administrative personnel surplus in consequence of the above available to fill large demands for C.W.A.C. personnel now outstanding.

The disadvantages were listed as follows:

- (1) Reduction in C.W.A.C. esprit de corps so far as personnel employed with other than C.W.A.C. Units are concerned.
- (2) Administration of C.W.A.C. employed personnel decentralized.
- (3) Administration of C.W.A.C. employed personnel more dependent in the various Units upon the Officer Commanding who can not deal as adequately with problems peculiar to women as can a C.W.A.C. Administrative Unit Commander.

(Ibid: Survey of C.W.A.C. Administrative Organization, undated)

109. These suggestions were considered carefully during the following months. It was agreed that the reorganization of the Corps was not appropriate at that time, and that the matter should be reviewed in 1946. It was decided, however, that a test case should be set up at No 2 District Depot in Toronto by reducing No 19 Adm Unit to nil strength and placing its personnel on the strength of the Depot (Ibid: Minutes of a meeting held 13 Nov 45). The test was carried out and reported upon as follows:

No 19 Administration Unit, CWAC which administered CWAC at No.2 D.D. was reduced to nil strength effective 14 JAN 46 and its personnel absorbed into the HWE of No. 2 District Depot. This action involved a reduction in organization of 4 officers and 33 other ranks, the authorized strength of No. 19 Admin Unit, CWAC.

Consequent upon the reduction to nil strength of No. 19 Admin Unit CWAC, the OC No. 2 District Depot assumed full responsibility for the administration of CWAC on strength of No. 2 D.D. and also of a miscellaneous group of CWAC employed and living within his camp area, but carried on strength of other Units such as CDC, RCEME, RCE. These CWAC were attached from their respective units to No.2 D.D. for all purposes except duty.

The OC No. 2 District Depot then delegated disciplinary powers and responsibility for the CWAC within the camp area to the CWAC officer who had been OC No. 19 Admin Unit CWAC and who was now carried on the HWE of No. 2 District Depot. It is considered that

this centralization of control in the hands of a CWAC Officer is essential to the smooth administration of CWAC within an area or unit.

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Yon 29 Apr 46, after more than three months= trial, all concerned in MD 2 expressed great satisfaction with the changed system of administration, and could visualize no disadvantages arising as a result of the change. Administration was running along smoothly and efficiently and at the same time a saving in authorized organization of 4 officers and 33 other ranks had been effected by the reduction of No. 19 Admin Unit CWAC to nil strength.

In view of the success of the test case made in MD 2 at No. 2 District Depot, it is recommended that this new system of administration be put into effect generally should the CWAC mobilize again at some future date.

(Ibid: Capt I.F. Chesterfield to D. Org; 22 Jul 46)

It was pointed out that under this system of administration the only C.W.A.C units required would be C.W.A.C depots and Training Centres. All other serving members of the C.W.A.C would be carried on the strength of existing Army units (Ibid).

## DEMOBILIZATION

110. With the cessation of hostilities, the return from overseas of the men for whom the C.W.A.C had furnished replacements, and the reduction in strength of the Canadian Army, it was no longer necessary to retain C.W.A.C personnel in the armed forces of Canada. On 22 Mar 46 it was noted that the C.W.A.C was to be demobilized as rapidly as the exigencies of the Service permit. Instructions issued later stated that C.W.A.C demobilization was to be completed by 30 Sep 46.

111. Thus, after five years of service, the C.W.A.C disappeared. The efficiency of that service may be open to question, but it would appear that it had served its main purpose of relieving the man power shortage at a time when it seemed most critical. The fact that there was no precedent in Canada for a women's Army Corps, and that the five years of its existence were given over in a large measure to experimenting with various systems of organization and administration, undoubtedly hindered the quantity and quality of service.

112. The following message from the A/A.G. to all ranks, C.W.A.C., was despatched on 3 Aug 46:

On behalf of the Minister of National Defence and Members of the Army Council I extend heartiest congratulations to all members of the Canadian Women's Army Corps on the occasion of its fifth birthday 13<sup>th</sup> August 1946. During the past five years you have established

an enviable record of devoted and efficient service and as you stand down you can look with justifiable pride on your achievements. Now with your task completed, your objective attained, we are confident that you will carry into your homes and communities the same fine spirit, the same enthusiastic service you have shown in the Army remembering always that as citizens of this great Dominion you have an equal responsibility in peace as in war.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

113. In August, 1946, Lt-Col D.I. Royal, O.B.E., then C.W.A.C Staff Officer at N.D.H.Q., prepared a Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps submitted in the hope that it may be useful in the event of another emergency, necessitating the employment of women in the Army. She stated:

While it is appreciated that radical changes in Army organization may render these recommendations obsolete, it is felt that certain fundamentals will remain and that valuable time might be saved by experience gained in the handling of women during the past five years.

Col Royal pointed that it would be highly desirable that a Women's Force be approved immediately in the event of another war, thus paving the way for early manpower planning and the recruiting of women for employment in static formations. If it should be decided to enlist women, they should be represented in the initial planning and discussions by a panel drawn from the Reserve of C.W.A.C. officers. From this same source a nucleus of officers could be provided to functions until the responsibility could be handed over to younger women if necessary. If regulations were drawn up in advance, and if accommodation and uniforms were available when enlistment should commence, much of the difficulty experienced in the organization of the C.W.A.C., as noted in this report, would be avoided. Instead of publishing separate regulations for a C.W.A.C., amendments might be written into K.R. (Can) as was done with F.R. & I.

114. Col Royal pointed out that the system of administering the C.W.A.C had proven generally top-heavy and that in future care should be taken to reduce duplication of administration as far as possible. A special Directorate at N.D.H.Q. to deal with general matters pertaining to a C.W.A.C. would again be necessary. In addition to a Director of C.W.A.C., it might prove valuable to appoint an officer in other Directorates administering women to be responsible for any details pertaining to C.W.A.C. personnel. Liaison could be maintained between the Director, C.W.A.C., and these officers representing other Directorates.

115. Since the top-heavy administration was particularly noticeable at unit levels, it was suggested that unit staffs be decreased, and that administrative personnel be carried on District rather than unit establishments in order to establish a direct channel of communication to District Headquarters on welfare and policy matters; to facilitate training, movement and promotions of such personnel; to provide a pool of officers and N.C.Os. for replacement of personnel in C.W.A.C depots and Training Centres; and to assure a standardization of policy in areas where several units were concentrated.

116. The induction of women into the Army and their initial training seemed to be best done by women. Depots and Training Centres similar to those had been established and proven adequate might again be set up.

117. C.W.A.C personnel received 80% of the Army rates of pay, with equal trades pay and command and staff pay. Col Royal recommended that, should a C.W.A.C. again be organized, women be given basic pay equal to that of the men. It was felt also that dependent's allowance should be granted to C.W.A.C. personnel married to men in the armed forces to the same extent that it was granted to civilian wives to service men. The clothing allowance of \$15.00 on enlistment and \$3.00 quarterly thereafter proved inadequate, and should either be increased in future on the basis of prevailing costs or replaced by an issue of such clothing.

118. With regard to the issue of clothing, Col Royal stated that while the scale of issue proved adequate, the importance of appropriate and smart uniforms cannot be too greatly stressed, and added that its effect on morale, health, efficiency of serving personnel, recruiting and public opinion is great. The summer uniforms proved impractical and were seldom worn. The waterproof coat, which was worn as a topcoat, left much to be desired. Col Royal mentioned that, while it was not practical to make detailed recommendations regarding clothing, it was important that sufficient recommendations regarding clothing, it was important that sufficient stocks of clothing should be on hand when actual recruiting commenced.

119. Concerning training, Col Royal stated that it is considered important that in any future mobilization the necessity for training be realized immediately and that this is particularly vital in the case of officers. In addition she pointed out:

It cannot be over-emphasized that where CWAC Officers and NCOs are expected to act as personnel officers for female personnel, special and careful training is needed. Experience of the last 5 years has proven the need for instruction in woman management, welfare, medical education and the tendency has been to stress this training more and more. Lack of such training in early service proved a great handicap to many of our original officers.

120. As a result of the appointment of Educational Officers, the educational standards of the C.W.A.C. appeared to have been improved, and it was felt that such officers should be included in establishments from the beginning. A general improvement in morale was noticed with the appointment of C.W.A.C. Messing Officers, and in the event of future mobilization it was considered that these officers might be used to a great extent. C.W.A.C. Welfare Officers and Madres also proved useful in helping to increase the efficiency of C.W.A.C. personnel. Better medical education was recommended. With regard to recruiting, Col Royal stated:

It is essential that those in charge of recruiting realize the necessity for careful selection of recruits for a Women's Corps. Army life is harder for women to take than it is for men, and emotional stability and fairly high intelligence are essential. Experience has shown that the bulk of disciplinary cases were among the general duty types. A similar situation existed with the incidence of VD and illegitimate pregnancy. Lack of careful selection cost the Government a

great deal of money, with little return in the work carried out. The effect of having bad types in barracks was upsetting to the remainder of the personnel, and proved a deterrent to the more desirable type of would-be recruit.

Col Royal recommended that a suitable female recruiting staff should be provided in future, and that general recruiting should not be begun until provision had been made for a trained cadre of C.W.A.C. officers and N.C.Os. to handle first quotas, accommodation, clothing and training, and N.C.Os. to handle first quotas, accommodation, clothing and training.

121. Col Royal made the following recommendations concerning officers:

It is felt that selection of officers must be given careful attention from the start in any future mobilization. For all officers, maturity and emotional stability are essential. It is recommended that 21 years be set as the minimum age for appointment generally and 24 years for officers selected as Personnel Officers.

Facilities should be set up for appraisal before candidates are despatched to Training Centre. Some similar establishment to Auxilliary Territorial Service, War Officer Selection Board should be formed on a Command basis. Due consideration must, of course, be given regarding proposed employment of the candidate on commissioning but since all officers will probably require to administer CWAC personnel, even officers recommended for employment as specialists with other Corps should be selected with an eye to their potential ability as Awoman managers@.

Similarly, it is recommended that all CWAC Officers take OTC together and subsequently continue to Corps training with the Corps concerned. CWAC Officers employed as Personnel Officers should be given refresher training as required.

Employment of CWAC Officers could, it is felt, be enlarged in scope. It is recommended that, in the future, opportunities for direct appointment of personnel qualified by civilian employment, should be increased. Many well qualified women were prevented from enlisting by reason of uncertainty as to the length of time they would have to serve in the ranks before being commissioned. Some had financial commitments which made it impossible for them to accept service as privates.

122. There are four additional reports concerning the C.W.A.C. available in the Historical Section (H.S. 4):

D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative AC.W.A.C. History@ and Appendices.

Lt-Col D.I. Royal, O.B.E., AReport and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps@ 29 Aug 46.

Report No 120, Historical Officer, Canadian Military Headquarters, AThe Canadian Women's Army Corps Overseas September 1939 B June 1944@.

C.W.A.C. B Miscellaneous Statistics Book 1.

It was found that the D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative was not absolutely accurate, but the appendices to the Narrative are extremely valuable. Lt-Col Royal's Report and Recommendations have been summarized in this report, paras 110-119. The Historical Officer's Report was used as a source of some of the information in paras 90-99.

123. This report does not discuss accommodation, discipline, clothing, welfare, education, personnel selection or rehabilitation. These subjects are covered generally in the D.G., C.W.A.C. Narrative and appendices, and in Lt-Col Royal's Report and Recommendations.

124. This report was drafted by Miss J.N. Buchanan, Historical Section, Army Headquarters.

(C.P. Stacey) Colonel,

1 May 47