West Virginia Women in World War II: The Role of Gender, Class, and Race in Shaping Wartime Volunteer Efforts

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ABSTRACT

During World War II, women in West Virginia volunteered their time, energy, and skills to serve in the war effort. Whether for paid or unpaid work, at the core of almost all volunteer recruitment among women in West Virginia were existing women's organizations, such as women's clubs, professional associations, and home economic extension services. These long-established networks of communication and organization among women responded to volunteer recruitment efforts during World War II. Despite the constraints of sexism, racism, and class distinctions, the contributions of women to the organizational mandates of wartime demands between 1941 and 1945 were enthusiastically met by thousands of West Virginia women on a local, state, regional, national, and international level.

ARTICLE

During World War II, women in West Virginia volunteered their time, energy, and skills to serve in the war effort. In some cases, including all branches of the military, women were paid for their volunteer labor. In other cases, women in professional positions before the war simply expanded their duties to encompass wartime demands and civilian defense initiatives. While they continued to draw a salary, these college professors, teachers, and librarians, among others, were seldom compensated for their added hours or efforts. Still other women volunteered for labor that did not pay; they served as civilian defense coordinators, participated in local preparedness efforts, and oversaw salvage collection programs. Whether for paid or unpaid work, at the core of almost all volunteer recruitment among women in West Virginia were existing women's organizations, such as women's clubs, professional associations, and home economic extension services. These long-established networks of communication and organization among women responded to volunteer recruitment efforts during World War II.

Little has been written about the women of West Virginia and their activities during World War II, and what has been written reflects the broader historiographical focus on women in industrial production. More scholarship has been done on the work of women in West Virginia, generally, and without a World War II focus. A significant theme highlighting the history of women and work in West Virginia is the recognition of women's unpaid labor and their unpaid contributions to the West Virginia economy. This is not unusual, as women's history tends to emphasize the significance of unpaid labor and social reform or volunteer efforts. Since most women lived in rural areas and most were not employed in wage-paying positions outside the home or beyond the farm, a consideration of the unpaid labor and volunteer work of women may be a particularly essential component of women's history in West Virginia.1 While volunteer activities of middle-class white women and resistance to their full participation in the war effort receive

more attention, African American women and less affluent white women in West Virginia also volunteered, acquired training, and sought to express their patriotism in a variety of ways as paid and unpaid volunteers. At the same time, there is evidence of racial barriers to African American participation and frustrated efforts to create communities united across race, class, and gender divisions in support of the total war mentality promoted by Washington.

This article relies heavily on the War History Commission Papers located in the West Virginia and Regional History Collection at West Virginia University. The collection documents the activities of the West Virginia State Office of Civilian Defense, most significantly through the correspondence of local, regional, and state officials, which helps to identify federal mandates and to note their effect in specific West Virginia communities. Particularly significant were federal concerns to incorporate women and African Americans into civilian defense initiatives and local efforts to comply. The collection also includes numerous issues of the West Virginia State Nursing Association's newsletter, Weather Vane, which documents the military and civilian activities of West Virginia's nurses during World War II. While it is a strong collection, the War History Commission Papers do not represent a complete record of West Virginia women's volunteer efforts or non-industrial labor during World War II. When possible, additional sources, such as oral history interviews, personal manuscript collections, the West Virginia Division of Culture and History's West Virginia Memory Project database, and other materials have been consulted. This article is not comprehensive, but suggests numerous directions for more in-depth research and evaluation of the accomplishments and activities of West Virginia's women during World War II.

During World War II, nurses volunteered for military services in unprecedented numbers and those nurses who served abroad during the war saw the most hazardous duty. In fact, "of the 242,500 active professional nurses in the United States 42.9 per cent, or 103,869, volunteered and were certified for service by the Army and Navy."² In 1939, when World War II began in Europe, there were 949 nurses in the Army Nurse Corps; this number grew to 57,000 by 1945.³ Nurses serving abroad were often stationed close to the front lines and carried out their service under battlefield conditions. Many women from West Virginia joined the military as nurses. Some were recruited by veteran Army nurses who traveled throughout the state encouraging young women to train as nurses and enlist in the armed forces.⁴ Though thousands responded, and nurses served abroad in the Navy and Army Nurses' Corps, in the Red Cross, and on the home front in both veteran and civilian institutions, initial recruitment campaigns were stalled by administrative bottlenecks and a tendency to ignore applications made by married women, women over forty-five, African Americans, and men. In West Virginia, volunteers "were waiting as much as three months for assignment while their individual credentials were being checked; male nurses and Negro nurses who desired to volunteer were not being accepted during the alleged nurse shortage; and nurses were being rejected for slight and insignificant physical defects."5 May Maloney, president of the West Virginia State Nurses' Association, fought the delays; she "exchanged telegrams and letters with nursing leaders, Congressmen, and former students, served as the state's chief nurse in the defense and war mobilization setups, and was the governor's chief adviser on nursing matters."6



The U.S. Army Corps responded to a nursing shortage in World War II with recruitment campaigns asking all women to volunteer. Thousands of women served in hospitals on the home front and in every major military theatre.Courtesy of the National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, Md.

While African American women were allowed to and did volunteer as nurses during World War II, the vast majority were trained in segregated hospitals and served in racially segregated units.⁷ The National Nursing Council for War Services conducted an inquiry into race relations in the nursing profession and sought "to integrate Negro nursing more closely into the war effort" in hopes of circumventing "the growing racial tensions in some fields of work, which . . . 'aid and comfort the enemy.'" A survey sent "to sixteen institutions, including 7 schools admitting both races and 9 hospitals known to employ both colored and white nurses," concluded, "White and Negro nurses and students are working amicably side by side in a number of hospitals and schools of nursing in the United States." "No difficulties were met," one school director explained, "because the students were accustomed to working together in high school."⁸ The National Council for War Service survey indicates national interest in overcoming race barriers and awareness of this on the state and local level. National level interest and information, however, was often not converted into practice.

The Weather Vane newsletter published personal reports from hundreds of young women working overseas during the war.9 Nurses, who grew up in West Virginia or received their nursing education in West Virginia, served in every theater of World War II. The Clarksburg, West Virginia, Hospital Unit of the Army Nurse Corps served twenty-three months in North Africa and Italy before being transferred to Okinawa.¹⁰ Similarly, by the time the St. Mary's Hospital Unit was deactivated in 1945, the West Virginia nurses had served in Africa, Italy, on Okinawa, and in Kure, Japan. After spending twenty-two months in Italy, they lived through two typhoons in the Pacific and received a plaque for meritorious service. In 1945 one unit member, 1st Lt. Vaughn E. Fisher of Weston, was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in France, Belgium, and Germany. In reporting the activities of the St. Mary's Hospital Unit, Weather Vane noted: "Less than two hours after Lt. Fisher and her companions landed on the beach on June 10, they walked five miles to their station and started work," setting up a "hospital five miles from the front line" and preparing injured soldiers for evacuation to England.11

Many West Virginia nurses served close to the battlefront during World War II and many, like Lieutenant Fisher, were decorated for their courageous service, including 1st Lt. Emma Jean Hall Ralph, who served with the Eleventh Field Hospital and participated in the African, Sicilian, and Italian invasions before arriving in Europe on D-Day, and Lt. Dale Weese, who served for thirty-nine months in the South Pacific.¹² Lt. Vada K. Roberts earned two battle stars and 1st Lt. Lorraine Kennedy, who saw action in Italy, England, North Africa, southern France, and Germany, earned the American and European Theater ribbons with three battle stars.¹³ Lt. Margaret R. Thompson from Worthington, West Virginia, was "featured in the *Fairmont Times-West Virginian* . . . as 'The Yank of the Week.'" Thompson served with the Army Nurse Corps "field evacuation hospitals in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and Germany." Writing from the European campaign, she reported that "her unit had advanced as far as 350 miles in two days. They worked 53 days continuously without rest–yet they were 'happy in the knowledge that they can help and do for those who are in need of their service." Others, like Elizabeth Dale Fleming, who received five bronze stars, were stationed aboard hospital ships.¹⁴ The West Virginia Division of Culture and History's West Virginia History Project indicates that some Army and Navy Nurse Corps volunteers were killed during the period of their service.¹⁵

Local Nursing Councils for War Service in West Virginia sought to recruit military nurses, but they also attempted to alleviate nursing shortages on the home front. Local councils made appeals to retired or inactive nurses to return, and radio spots recruited volunteers for the Nurses Aide Program.¹⁶ Responding to "an acute shortage of nurses," the Nurses Aide Program recruited "healthy American women between 18 and 50, who are high school graduates and able to give a minimum of 150 hours service per year without pay" and provided them with intensive instruction administered by the Office of Civilian Defense and the Red Cross. By taking care of routine duties in hospitals, aides freed up professional nurses for the work that required their higher level of expertise.¹⁷ The Nurses Aide Program cut across race lines and some African American students at Bluefield State College completed the Nurses' Aide Course. Bluefield State boasted "the first graduating class in nurses" aide among Negroes in West Virginia," while other "young women assisted a Red Cross Unit set up on the college campus in making bandages."18

In April 1942, a newspaper article discussed the Nurses Aide Program in Monongalia County. According to that article, "Mrs. Edwards J. Van Liere chaired . . . [a] committee consisting of representatives of hospitals, public health organizations, the Office of Civilian Defense, welfare and social organizations, and lay members." Made up of fourteen women and five men, the committee selected, trained, and placed volunteers for the Nurses' Aide Corps. Female members, in addition to Van Liere, included representatives from several women's community organizations, including the Girl Scout Council, the Church Workers' Group, the Family Welfare Association, the Service League, and Farm Women's Clubs. Nurses were also represented on the committee, including the superintendent of nurses at the City Hospital and the Monongalia General Hospital, as well as a member of the Nurses' Association and the Public Health Department.¹⁹ In order to recruit nurses for military and civilian services, the Nurses Aide Program called upon existing local women's organizational networks in Monongalia and other counties to develop and maintain the effectiveness of their efforts.

While the vast majority served in either the Army or Navy Nurse Corps, other West Virginia women joined different branches of the military and civilian services, such as the WAVES, WACS, WASP, and the Women's Land Army. The West Virginia Farm Bureau, through its Agricultural and Home Economic Extension Services and Farm Women's Clubs, encouraged young women to volunteer for military and civilian services.20 The July 1944 issue of the West Virginia Farm Bureau's newsletter notes: "Forty West Virginia girls went to Ohio to start work June 12 at thinning, cultivating, harvesting, and packing vegetables and fruits."21 These young women volunteered for the Women's Land Army, a federal program that sent thousands of women to farms throughout the United States to serve as farm laborers, replacing male laborers who had joined the military.²² Twenty-nine of the young women from West Virginia lived in a camp near Toledo, and eleven others joined a camp at Huron, Ohio, where they harvested fruits and vegetables.²³ Recruitment for the Women's Land Army in West Virginia was coordinated by Jessie Lemley, an extension service home demonstration agent at West Virginia University in Morgantown.²⁴ Just as women's clubs and organizations helped to spread the word and to recruit nurses, they also encouraged West Virginia women to participate in the military services.

The West Virginia Memory Project indicates that at least one West Virginian, Frances Fortune Grimes of Morgantown, joined the WASP. Along with several hundred other female pilots, she delivered military aircraft and supplies to strategic locations around the country during World War II. A member of the lst Air Force, lst Tow Target Squadron, Grimes died in a plane crash at Otis Field in Massachusetts.²⁵ While other branches of the military, such as WACS, both Nurse's Corps, and WAVES, eventually allowed African American women to participate, though usually in segregated divisions, the WASP never accepted African American pilots. One West Virginian, Rose Rolls Cousins, attempted to challenge this policy of racial exclusion. Born in Marion County, Rolls grew up dreaming of being a pilot and achieved that dream; she "became the country's first black woman licensed as a solo pilot in the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP)." The CPTP was "administered at U.S. colleges and universities from 1939 through 1942 by the Civil Aeronautics Authority." Starting at West Virginia State College at age sixteen, Rolls worked her way into the CPTP, became a first rate pilot, and after graduating, she helped to run the CPTP at the College. When the United States entered World War II, Rolls applied to the U.S. Air Force training program for African American combat pilots at Tuskegee Institute, but she was turned down because she was a woman. After being turned down at Tuskegee, Rolls attempted to join the women military pilots who ferried planes and supplies for the troops, but she was not allowed to join the WASP because she was African American.²⁶



In the 1940s, Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts was instrumental in establishing the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, later the Women's Army Corps or WAC. Over 150,000 women joined and served in the WAC during World War II throughout the world. Quickly responding to a multitude of needs, they soon worked as file clerks, typists, laboratory technicians, teletype operators, and mechanical repairs; women were assigned to service units associated with Aircraft Warning, Chemical Warfare, the Quartermaster Corps, the Signal Corps, the Army Medical Department, and essentially all support services. Courtesy of the Library of Congress West Virginia women also volunteered for military service with the WACS and WAVES during World War II. The West Virginia Memory Project identifies at least four women who joined the WACS, including Anna Marie Fisher of Charleston, Louise G. Grumbach of Marion County, Edna C. McQuain of Gilmer County, and Veri Leith Williams of Harrison County. All of these women died during their WAC military service, and both Fisher and Williams were killed in action."²⁷ The very first woman to join the WAVES during World War II was from Martinsburg, West Virginia, and she had participated in the West Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs' "Scholarship Loan Fund in order to complete her education."²⁸ At least two other West Virginians joined the WAVES, Ruth Virginia Hunter of Huntington and Lillian Riddenhouse Colombo of Clarksburg.

Hunter graduated from Central High School in Huntington and Marshall College before joining WAVES in July 1943. She "was commissioned an ensign after indoctrination at the Naval Reserve Midshipman School at Smith College in Massachusetts." Initially, Hunter "served for several months as an instructor of naval history at the Naval Training School at Hunter College" in New York before being stationed in Washington, D.C. Her husband was a flight engineer on a B-29. When she was transferred to San Francisco to be closer to him, her plane crashed and she was killed.29 Riddenhouse trained at Hunter College and Ohio State Teacher's College before being stationed at Arlington Farm. She spent most of her two years of service working and billeting in Washington, D.C., where, as yeoman 2nd class, she served as secretary to Commander John Ball. In her office, the "men were all officers . . . the women were all civilian." In her oral history interview, Riddenhouse shares adventures characteristic of military life experienced by hundreds of women who served stateside, including USO shows and travel. In addition, she discussed the sensitive issue of race in a direct and honest manner.30

When she arrived in Washington for her first WAVES assignment, Riddenhouse explained that she was the only white woman in the office; all the other women were African American. Initially, she found this frightening; she had never been around African

Americans before and asked for a transfer. When the transfer was refused, she was so distraught that she "went back crying to Commander Ball." Ball's response to Riddenhouse's fears was to pull her out of the main office and make her his personal secretary. Despite the fact that this segregated her from the African American women in her office, Riddenhouse believed this experience broadened her awareness of race and race prejudice. When she returned to West Virginia, she worked with many African Americans at Union Carbide and felt that her World War II experience helped her to be less racially prejudiced.³¹ Riddenhouse acknowledged that she held preconceived prejudices and fears about African Americans-so much so that she refused to work side-byside with them. We do not know how often African American women and men experienced this kind of prejudice and rejection by whites during World War II, but we do know that it was highly prevalent. Segregation was enforced in every branch of the women's military, and it was a battle, directed from the White House and by African American women's organizations, to have African Americans included at all in the Women's Land Army, WAVES, and WACS; the WASP never admitted them.³²



Courtesy of <http://www.lindapages.com/>. This website includes a list of West Virginia nurses serving in World War II.

While women volunteered as nurses and for other military services during World War II, many others volunteered in different capacities on the home front. When World War II began, Professor Erbie Albright taught home economics at West Virginia University. In her capacity as a professor, secretary for the Department of Home Economics of the National Education Association, and state adviser for West Virginia's Home Economics Association, Albright transferred national concerns regarding the impact of war on families to the state and local level. During the war, she communicated with home economic teachers in public schools and helped to coordinate a statewide cooperative extension service in agriculture and home economics. She discussed family health and welfare, the role of the family in democratic societies, victory gardens, and other methods of conservation with home economics teachers throughout the state.33 While Albright worked through the extension service with white communities, Tanner J. Livisay and others associated with the West Virginia State College Extension Service worked with African American women throughout the state. Contacting women's clubs, 4-H programs, and other organizations through which women were associated, the African American Extension Service in West Virginia conducted workshops on home budget management, nutrition, food preservation, and mattress making. Working out of Bluefield State College, Patsy Graves organized a mattress-making campaign "as a part of the war effort to use surplus farm products . . . throughout Kanawha, Logan, and Boone Counties."34 Similarly, Susie Price and Tanner J. Livisay taught summer school courses devoted to using surplus foods to provide and prepare lunch for children at school.³⁵ Extension service programs expanded dramatically after 1941; the number of state extension agents increased and emergency war food agents were appointed.36

In her history of the Home Extension Service in West Virginia, Gertrude Humphreys informs those "who have been somewhat critical of Extension for not reaching low-income families" that they "might be surprised to learn that the homemakers in 1,053 of the families who made mattresses were farm women's club members."³⁷ In addition, she notes a positive result of the wartime Cotton Mattress Program was that "many of the homemakers joined the farm women's clubs nearest them." She concluded that this program "added to the comfort and health of many West Virginia low-income families . . . and brought extension in close contact with several hundred families who needed and welcomed the educational assistance."³⁸ In her discussion of the Neighborhood Leaders program, Humphreys noted that extension workers were "in contact with large numbers of families with whom they had not worked previously." But she also acknowledged that the program worked best, "in counties where the people were accustomed to working together. . . . Counties not having community organizations, farm women's clubs, or similar groups found it difficult."³⁹ The fact that Humphreys felt she needed to address critics and highlight the inclusion of less-affluent West Virginians suggests that class divisions were a recognized concern during the war years. It does appear that both African American and white extension service programs aimed at homemakers succeeded to some degree in cutting across class boundaries, perhaps more so than other women's organizations or clubs.

West Virginia's professional women were also instrumental in two other World War II campaigns: the Victory Book Campaign sponsored by the United Service Organizations (USO) and the Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA). E. Leonore White of the Kanawha County Public Library was state director of the Victory Book Campaign, which collected books for distribution to American servicemen and women through USO clubs and libraries. White described the work involved in organizing the statewide campaign, including finances, publicity, storage, sorting, packing, scheduling, recordkeeping, shipping, planning a regional convention, and finding alternate repositories for books not suited for the armed forces.⁴⁰ Because many librarians were women, many women participated in the Victory Book Campaign. White identified six single women on staff at the Kanawha County Public Library who hoped to attend the regional campaign conference.⁴¹ West Virginia University's professional librarians were also involved with the ALA's Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas. Through the International Relations Office of the ALA, the committee secured and shipped needed journals to foreign libraries destroyed or damaged in war zones. Miss Jessie Griffin, head of the reference department at WVU, sought to locate extra copies of essential journals and books so that libraries could replace those items at the lowest possible cost.⁴² The work of the committee helped re-establish and maintain library collections at universities and other educational institutions in Europe. While women working in

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libraries made significant contributions to West Virginia's Victory Book Campaign and the Aid to Libraries in War Areas Program, their experiences on the job during World War II demonstrate the restraints of gender and race faced by professional women and African American citizens during the 1940s.

Though a 1929 court decision forced the county to allow all citizens access, the Kanawha County Public Library continued to deny African American citizens equal access to the library stacks and this practice continued during World War II.⁴³ Similarly, in the 1930s, a decision by the new president of the board, John V. Ray, to upgrade the educational and professional standards of the staff led to the replacement of longtime head librarian, Bessie Von Schlechtendal, by a man. Von Schlechtendal had served as head librarian from 1913 to 1939. While the board of directors created a position for Von Schlechtendal, their tendency to treat longtime female employees differently than male employees was soon reinforced.44 When World War II began and the new head librarian, Charles E. Butler, was drafted, "the Board decided . . . he would be retained as the librarian without salary while he was in the military service." However, when Frances Alderson, head of the library's Extension Department, enlisted in the WAVES and requested a leave of absence from her position at the library, the request was denied.⁴⁵ While women working as professional librarians sought to serve their country through their participation in the Liberty Book Campaign and Aid to Libraries in War Areas, they faced attacks on their professional positions. Even as professional women volunteered to serve in the armed forces and in civilian defense capacities, they often did so without the employment security afforded to men. Similarly, while African American citizens responded to the call for military and home-front volunteers, they still faced the humiliation of legally sanctioned or de facto segregation in most public institutions and organizations.

By far the greatest number of women volunteered for programs initiated by the Office of Civilian Defense (OCD), which sought to maintain war readiness on a regional, state, and local level. OCD initiatives encompassed all sorts of unpaid, volunteer activities, from scrap metal salvage campaigns to emergency medical preparedness. Throughout World War II, civilian defense relied on the coordinated efforts of thousands of volunteers, and women made up a significant number of OCD recruits. The West Virginia State Council of Defense was established in 1941 under the chairmanship of Governor Matthew M. Neely.⁴⁶ Carl G. Bachmann was appointed executive director of the State Office of Civilian Defense, and local councils were set up in all fifty-five counties under county directors charged with actually putting OCD programs into practice. The OCD's purported goal was to organize the "Home Front Army," which included "men, women, boys and girls, without regard to race, creed, or color."47 In an attempt to honor this creed, Executive Director Bachmann quickly appointed Attorney D. W. Ambrose Jr. as assistant director in charge of Negro activities.⁴⁸ While no single individual was appointed to direct women's recruitment and activities, a concerted effort ensued to enroll West Virginia's women in OCD initiatives.49

As regional and state directors of the OCD attempted to promote and develop programs in West Virginia, they relied heavily on existing organizational structures. Supervisor Walter Mitchell instructed local and district leaders to "contact the Chairman of the County Nutrition and other groups, such as PTA, Women's Clubs, American Legion Auxiliaries and other service organizations too numerous to mention so that all these groups can be properly co-ordinated into one organization for the furtherence [sic] of this program."50 Informed of difficulties encountered in organizing recreational programs for industrial employees, Mitchell pointed out that too many "different clubs or associations are working separately on this program. If they can get the schools, industries and labor boards together, with representatives of Women's Clubs, something can be worked out jointly that will cut down overhead and give the community the type of setup they should have."51 District Supervisor Bell praised volunteers in Boone County, where they formed "a committee, which might be called a steering committee, consisting of a representative from the various organizations, civic, church, fraternal, etc., to meet with the Council. By doing this

they hope to have greater participation in the various programs."⁵² Within the organizational framework and ideology of the OCD was a recognition that existing women's organizations–organizations women already belonged to–could be used to develop civilian defense programs.⁵³

Mitchell recognized women's clubs as an organizational power that could be harnessed and used for OCD purposes. The power and influence of the women's club network is illustrated by a letter received by West Virginia's Governor Neely in April 1942 from Sara A. Whitehurst, president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs: "We are compiling for the use of our 2,000,000 club members a brief but comprehensive pamphlet on 'Women in National Defense'.... If there is a woman member of your main State Council, not local or committee chairmen . . . send us her name and . . . if she was appointed by you or by the State Legislature."54 Aware of her influence and position, Whitehurst had the ability to inform and motivate thousands of women in West Virginia to participate in civilian defense programs. She indicated that every state should have a woman appointed to the State Council of Defense and checked to make sure this was the case. Carl G. Bachmann, executive director of OCD in West Virginia, responded to Whitehurst: "Miss Ruth D. Noer . . . is a member of our State Council of Defense and was appointed to this place by the Governor."55 While national and state leaders sought to incorporate the network of women's clubs into the upper echelons of OCD organizing in West Virginia, women throughout the state contributed to OCD initiatives through their local clubs. For example, many members of the Martinsburg Women's Club "completed First Aid Courses, joined the Emergency Motor Corps and helped with the work at the Canteen that was stationed at the Public Square," and more than one hundred members attended a reception at the White House sponsored by Eleanor Roosevelt in honor of their defense related work.56

While women's clubs throughout West Virginia proved an important component of OCD organizational and volunteer recruitment efforts, other organizations–often closely aligned with women's clubs–also played significant roles. As noted above,

agricultural and home economic extension services centered at West Virginia University, West Virginia State, and Bluefield State helped to link farm women's clubs to 4-H clubs, churches, schools and other institutions. During the war, extension service women focused on food conservation, cotton mattress campaigns, and neighborhood leaders programs, as well as recruitment for the Women's Land Army.⁵⁷ In Monroe County, for example, the West Virginia for Victory Committee worked with farm women's clubs, "the only county-wide organization of women," making their members an essential organizational component of local OCD salvage, War Bond, and Red Cross membership drives.⁵⁸ Members of the Sweet Springs Farm Women's Club volunteered as "Grav Ladies at the Ashford General Hospital at White Sulphur Springs." In the Monroe "County War Fund organization all but one of the six chairmen" were farm women's club members.⁵⁹ Home economic extension service agents fostered the support of farm women's and 4-H club members throughout the state in support of civilian defense and other initiatives. The West Virginia Farm Bureau reported constantly on the combined effort of both groups in salvage campaigns, victory gardens, and other OCD projects.60

While most state and local OCD leaders in West Virginia were male, they responded to national initiatives to recruit women into local leadership roles and as participants in statewide campaigns. West Virginia's women volunteered and played significant roles in many OCD programs, including salvage campaigns, block-toblock civilian defense preparedness, the women's drivers' corps, and nutrition campaigns. Because common household items used by women on an everyday basis were often essential in successful salvage campaigns, national and state OCD executives called for co-chairmen in salvage drives-one male and one female. Writing to district supervisors, Executive Director Bachmann asked that directors in "each county, that have not done so, immediately appoint a lady to accept the responsibility of directing the women's activities in all phases of salvage."61 The sharing of responsibility for salvage planning between men and women reached the state level. Jo Blackburn Watts served as vice-chairman of the State

Salvage Committee in West Virginia, and she encouraged other women in each district and community to take leadership roles. When she traveled to Ohio and Hancock Counties in May 1943, district supervisors arranged "meetings with women" so that Watts might "sell the District job to some good woman."⁶² Watts carried considerable force in her position as vice-chairman of the State Salvage Committee. One district supervisor was reprimanded when he failed to "suggest the name of a woman who would act as chairman" in his district, having been asked "some time ago." Executive Director Bachmann advised him: "When the names from other districts were submitted to me, I held this matter until we could release the names of chairmen for the entire six districts, so I want you to take care of the matter immediately, advising Mrs. Watts and this office."⁶³

Women in communities all over West Virginia served as co-chairmen and block leaders for salvage efforts, and often they served with more enthusiasm than their male counterparts did. For example, one OCD supervisor had his concerns over a supposed lack of volunteers put to rest when he spoke with Mrs. Showalter in Fairmont, West Virginia:

Two minutes discussion with Mrs. Showalter afforded a conclusive answer to the question concerning block leaders propounded by Mr. Spurr. Mrs. Showalter dismissed the matter with a wave of her hand and with substantially the following statement: "Clint Spurr is a splendid and efficient person. He is our good friend. We fuss continually concerning the relative merits of the two divisions of Civilian Defense. The block plan bulletin, of course, should not have been sent to Clint but was sent to him through error. We will have absolutely no difficulty in obtaining all the block leaders we need and expect to have our block plan functioning efficiently in the immediate future so just forget about Clint."⁶⁴

The Supervisor for the First Congressional District, Joe Jefferson, concluded that "thousands of patriotic persons who have been inactive on the defense side . . . will be found and put to work by Mrs. Showalter, Mrs. Shurtleff and their associates in Marion County."65 At another time, Jefferson highlighted both the willingness of women to work for civilian defense and the reluctance of men to place women in leadership positions: "I regret exceedingly the inertia of Wetzel County.... Miss Carrie Probat ... would be glad to help if there was leadership. I am thinking of trying to enlist the Ministers of New Martinsville Churches to take over the job."66 Often the women who did accept leadership roles in salvage campaigns played dual roles in their communities. For example, Margaret Hannah led the Harrison County 4-H Club, but she also took a leading role in wastepaper salvage for civilian defense. When Harrison County received publicity for its shipment of some 90,000 pounds of wastepaper in February 1944, Hannah announced that the collection of wastepaper was a priority activity for all 4-H clubs in the county.⁶⁷ Through their existing club memberships and community service networks, women could initiate communication between established groups to co-ordinate wartime OCD initiatives.

Besides the salvage campaign, women also volunteered for OCD service in the Women's Driver's Corps, in nutrition campaigns, and as nurses' aides. The OCD organizational structure provided training in Civilian Protection Schools, offering classes on blackouts, plant protection, sabotage, bomb reconnaissance, and war gases.68 In many cases, women helped to organize civilian defense schools and special training workshops for supervisors. For example, in response to "an immediate nation-wide program on nutrition which necessitates the immediate organization in West Virginia of our OCD Nutrition and Block Plant," Eleanor Enright, regional director of the National Nutrition Committee, and Pauline Stout, state supervisor of vocational education, hastily arranged a meeting of civilian defense district supervisors. Stout attended a "two day session in St. Louis which was attended by a nutrition representative from each of the forty-eight states" in preparation for the West Virginia conference. With a focus on the OCD Share the Meat

Campaign, they sought to instruct all of West Virginia's community block leaders on how to "do the foot work on this highly important program."⁶⁹

Despite civilian defense schools and workshops, many women found themselves responsible for tasks not covered by training and with little or no direction or instruction on how to begin. For example, Josephine Jefferson took responsibility for organizing the Women's Driver's Corps in her county. Women in the Driver's Corps were responsible for providing ambulance and evacuation transportation in case of attacks or blackouts. She wrote to the state coordinator for civilian defense requesting information: "As you suggested am writing you concerning the Women Drivers Corp [sic]-there is no literature here on that subject-there is I believe a Book 'Emergency Drivers' put out by Defense Headquarters. Could use as many as you can send-there are 15 Captains and the staff here have none. Also what have you on Blackout Driving? Map Reading? Would appreciate anything at all on the above as I am in charge of training the whole Women's Corp [sic] and how I need information!"70 The emergency nature of the wartime situation women found themselves in was reflected in the reply to Jefferson's request. Bachmann's office had no literature, only a few pamphlets that did "not furnish the information desired, however it is the best we can do at the present."⁷¹ Despite this, the Women's Auxiliary Motor Corps drivers of Mineral County proved capable of organizing and excelling. During a "surprise twenty-minute blackout," the women proved to be "so trained and equipped that they hold themselves ready at all hours."72 Correspondence between the Office of Civilian Defense executive director and regional coordinators gives the impression that volunteers were responding to one crisis situation after another. As national directives reached the state, new priorities were constantly being set and local volunteers responded in the best way they could. While the national government could provide information and suggest strategies for organizing on the local level, each community responded to unique situations and problems. In almost every West Virginia community, women took on new challenges and leadership roles in civilian defense during World War II.⁷³

Most of the women who shouldered leadership responsibilities and the vast majority of those who volunteered were middle class. Recruiting volunteers among less-affluent West Virginians proved difficult for both male and female leaders, who tended to be from a white-collar, middle-class background. For instance, when Supervisor Jefferson asked that the Women's Unit for Salvage be headed by a "good woman . . . who has the time and means to do the job justice," his statement carries an implied characterization of middle-class women as more acceptable than less-affluent women for this unpaid volunteer position. He went on to say that she should possess "the wholesome inspiration to carry on," suggesting that women with "time and means" would also be "wholesome" and "inspired."74 Jefferson may have recognized that middleclass women had the time, money, and type of organizational contacts that those of lower socio-economic status were less likely to possess. Middle-class characterizations of the working class, or less affluent, were also revealed in the mainstream press. For example, a contemporary *Harper's Magazine* article described, "one of many girls from West Virginia recruited into the munitions plants" at Elkton, Maryland, in the uncomplimentary language of stereotypes: "She was a solitary girl . . . lonely and forsaken-looking. Her skirt flapped around her ankles, her hair fell lank about her ears. Everything about her spoke of some remote Southern hill town.... She hadn't a penny in her pocket ... you could feel her all aguiver like a taut violin string."75 Read primarily by a middle-class female audience, the language used in this article reinforced class stereotypes, as well as the prevalent idea that wartime work had an "uplifting" effect on working-class women. These attitudes and the middle-class club networks used to recruit volunteers tended to exclude poorer or working women.

During World War II, OCD volunteer positions and work were divided along gender lines. For instance in Bramwell, West Virginia, men held positions as commanders, wardens, policemen, firemen, messengers, and in utilities and public works. Women were members of the driver's corps and auxiliary medical personnel. This division of tasks carried out by the OCD on the local level tended to hold across counties, regions, and states. However, some women and men took positions normally held by the opposite sex. For instance, W. F. Bennett apparently volunteered for duty in auxiliary medical and Ethel Graham and Blanch Spicer were fire watchers, while Mrs. Jim Nowlin was a messenger.⁷⁶

Men and women volunteering for civilian defense throughout West Virginia sometimes found that they were required to report to and take direction from female supervisors. In some situations, women held authority over men who were unaccustomed to having women instruct them. For instance, when Helen L. Ludwig arrived in Morgantown in May 1942, the local OCD representative, Walter R. Mitchell, was told to "assist her in every possible way."77 Once she arrived, Ludwig and Mitchell worked together for two days, while he "introduced her to all the people she wanted to meet from the University, the local planning board-The Episcopal ministerthe County Farm Agent . . . some of the local defense Counciland several of the women who are interested in the ... OCD."78 In March 1944, Edith Renecker of the regional office arrived in Clarksburg; she "outlined her plan for a County War Council" and presented "the Introduction to the Armed Services program" to an all-male conference of local OCD leaders.⁷⁹ Carl Bachmann's deputy director made it clear to John Flynn that "the information that Mrs. Renecker will give you will be of value for these institutes" in your district and asked that he escort Renecker to her next War Service Boards Institute in Parkersburg to "see how it is done and set up the counties in your district accordingly."80

Similarly, when a Mrs. Reynolds accepted the position as head of civilian defense in a particularly difficult county, her male counterparts were glad to hear that she was "back on the job," but expressed concern that "she will just get an organization over there so that she doesn't have to run the whole works herself."⁸¹ The men were shocked when a "surprisingly well attended and enthusiastic meeting" took place in Reynold's Lincoln County and Supervisor Farley W. Bell praised her efforts: "The tin can collection progressing nicely, ordering drums for fat collection, and bringing in representatives from the various organizations at their next meeting, to hear a talk by Miss Reynolds, on 'What They Can Do in Food Fights For Freedom Program.''⁸² But as the executive director of civilian defense for the state praised the efforts of Reynolds in Lincoln County, in the same letter he seemed relieved that a woman in another county had been replaced: "I think we should get Easley over to a meeting in Wayne County in January. There are great possibilities in this county but we have always had a 'weak sister' for a director until Mr. Lake stepped into the picture. I believe that you should use Easley wherever you can.'⁸³

Men in both leadership and subordinate positions often expressed satisfaction with and respect for the work of the women engaged in civilian defense. For example, when the scheduled male speaker for a fourth district conference on civilian defense could not make it and a "Miss Davis from the OPA [Office of Price Administration] was substituted for Swire," Director Knapp acknowledged, "the Fourth district did not suffer by reason of this substitution Miss Davis put the program over in fine style and . . . everyone was satisfied."84 Similarly, after Supervisor Mitchell worked closely with Helen L. Ludwig in Morgantown for two days, he reported that "she put forth some excellent ideas and we will be glad to cooperate with her."85 State, regional, and national directors were almost always male, but they took care to introduce and advise their subordinate male counterparts when a female official would be presiding. In 1943, after attending a meeting of the State Nutrition Committee, Flynn reported to his regional director, Mitchell, that about "20 heads of the various organizations carrying a Nutrition Programs [sic] were represented." He noted that Gertrude Humphreys, of West Virginia University and president of the West Virginia State Nutrition Committee, presided and that "Mrs. Humphries [sic] wants some person to represent the State Office of Civilian Defense at all State meetings.... I suggested that she contact you."⁸⁶ When Mitchell responded, he thanked Flynn for attending the meeting and acknowledged the need to contact Humphreys regarding a state representative, but then he went on to provide Flynn with

some particular advice about Humphreys: "For your information, the name is *Miss* Humphrey [*sic*], not Mrs. She is very happy in her pleasant freedom so if you do not want to get in wrong with this young lady, please call her Miss!"⁸⁷ OCD correspondence suggests that tensions sometimes arose when women held leadership positions over men, but women such as Humphreys and Reynolds worked past those tensions to exert their own authority and, ultimately, to impress their male supervisors and subordinates.

Within OCD planning and organization in West Virginia during World War II, the need for racial inclusiveness in civilian defense initiatives was a recognized concern. In a November 3, 1942, letter to Executive Director Bachmann, Deputy Director Walter R. Mitchell stated, "We are now trying to get some of the money which is available through the Lanham act for Negro activities."88 In other words, the federal government made additional funds available to state civilian defense programs that incorporated African American communities and citizens. Correspondence between the directors and supervisors of OCD initiatives throughout West Virginia usually included information on the participation of African American communities and citizens in civilian defense programs. For example, writing to Attorney Harry H. Jones, statewide field supervisor of Civilian Defense for Negro Activities, the supervisor of civilian defense in the Fourth Congressional District, explained: "I just finished a conversation with Dr. Elliott concerning the appointment of L. H. Glover as advisor for the Negro Groups. . . . I am anxious to be of any help to promote greater activity from the Negroes in Cabell County, as well as any other county in my district."89 On another occasion, Bachmann reported that Grace Waters would "be the head of Negro activities in Monongalia County she will be in to see Mr. Cochran the first of the week and she will really be active."90 Earlier in the year, Mitchell reported that graduation exercises in Charles Town and Harpers Ferry included twelve African Americans in a class of eighty.⁹¹ When Mitchell reported that a large number of African Americans participated in the Philippi graduation, the news was received as evidence that "your district has not overlooked this highly important matter of Negro activity," and Bachman promised

to share the good news with Attorney D. W. Ambrose Jr., assistant director in charge of Negro activities for the entire state.⁹² In truth, any news that African Americans were being included in civilian defense planning brought a positive response from Bachmann, and Mitchell always included an assessment of the African American community in his reports. Evaluating the civilian defense training and control centers in Charles Town and Shepherdstown of Jefferson County, he noted, "The negro sections are very well taken care of."⁹³ When district supervisors reported to Mitchell, however, they were sometimes less optimistic. For example, the April 4, 1942, report from Monongalia County noted their failure to engage the African American community: "Nothing much has been done here as yet. The County has 2500 Negro population. It is a problem." His report also indicates that he sought guidance in handling the issue, asking: "What would you suggest?"⁹⁴

While Bachmann wanted to incorporate African Americans into West Virginia's civilian defense preparedness programs, he evidently had trouble doing so. The problems, however, did not stem from any unwillingness on the part of African Americans to participate. Just as African American men signed up in record numbers to join the U.S. military during World War II, African American women of West Virginia actively sought to participate in home-front activities. The 1944 Biennial Report of the Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics of the State of West Virginia listed several African Americans affiliated with Bluefield State College who were active in the Bluefield OCD, including Mrs. N. L. Whittico and Miss M. S. Brady. The 1942 report identified Hazel Wilson in Hancock County and Edna Knapper of Pocahontas County as members of the Local Councils of Civilian Defense.95 Closely associated with OCD activity was the neighborhood leadership system, which grew out of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Extension Service, "created for the purpose of disseminating information from National and State governments." By 1944, 475 of West Virginia's African American communities were organized and 861 African American citizens served as neighborhood leaders.96 African Americans throughout West Virginia participated in salvage programs, collecting used

cooking fats and scrap metal. In 1945 alone, African American 4-H club members and extension workers collected scrap metal, rubber, paper, rags, waste fats, and milkweed pods.⁹⁷

A key element of OCD organization and activities in West Virginia's African American communities during World War II was the existing network of agricultural and home economic extension services that radiated from the state's African American colleges, including West Virginia State and Bluefield State. Under the leadership of L. A. Toney, the extension program at African American colleges began in the 1920s and continued until extension services were integrated in the late 1950s. African American women served as home demonstration agents and helped to develop and coordinate farm women's clubs and 4-H clubs throughout the state.98 "Those who were working during World War II reached large numbers of families with wartime programs promoted by the extension service, including food production and conservation, victory gardens, Red Cross first aid and home nursing courses, conducting scrap metal drives, and buying U.S. Savings stamps and bonds."99 African American women agents successfully organized for civilian defense despite the "handicaps under which the Negro agents worked," including a "lack of office space and equipment." They often conducted extension service work out of "their own homes," and, in "spite of the unfavorable situations . . . did a remarkably fine job with families and communities."100

Just as Rose Rolls Cousins faced discrimination when she sought to join her male colleagues at Tuskegee, African American women sometimes confronted difficulties when they sought to participate in OCD initiatives. For example, when Elizabeth Wilson recruited twenty-five African American women for a civilian defense training class in Harrison County, Regional Director Flynn pointedly reported that he would teach the class himself: "Since there has been so much discussion regarding Negro activities" and "such difficulty in getting a class started." He also noted that, while whites had also been invited, with "considerable publicity," to take the class, "only Negroes are enrolled."¹⁰¹ In other words, whites were not willing to be trained with African Americans in the same classroom. At this time in West Virginia and throughout the American South, racial segregation was accepted, legal, and enforced. Schools, public transportation, theaters, and almost all public and many private institutions were racially segregated by law. Despite some efforts on the part of the federal government to integrate both military and civilian activities, very little progress was made during World War II. In this atmosphere, it is significant that civilian defense classes, or at least graduation ceremonies, in Charles Town and Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, appeared to be racially integrated.¹⁰²

As the class of women established by Elizabeth Wilson began their training, controversy brewed behind the scenes of the first all-African American training class in Harrison County. Initially, Flynn acknowledged that the services of the new graduates were needed as air raid wardens and believed that they would make "a big contribution to the Great War Effort." He even suggested that Jones thank Wilson "for the fine work done in getting up such a high type interested class," calling it "a wonderful contribution." He wanted her to "be reminded to keep an account of the hours spent in organizing the class for credit on her service ribbon."103 Harry H. Jones, statewide field supervisor of Negro activities for OCD, had encouraged Wilson to recruit women for the course. Oddly, as graduation day drew near for the female students, Flynn worried that he had "promised to let Harry Jones know when this exercise would take place," but "in view of the fact that he has caused some disturbance by going over Director [of Negro Activities for Harrison County] Kyle's head in having a Mrs. Wilson form the class without first consulting Director Kyle, I am wondering whether or not his presence would be advisable, and whether or not he should have a place on the program . . . caution Harry to by all means lay off Civilian Defense in Harrison County excepting through Directors Wade and Kyle. And tell him not to write Mrs. Wilson on Civilian Defense matters without sending a copy to Mr. Kyle and the writer."104 Twelve women completed the course of study and Jones did attend the graduation ceremony.¹⁰⁵ While graduation proceeded without incident and the class was considered a great success, white leaders struggled to deal effectively with African American citizens

and their concerns. Both Jones and Kyle were African American men.¹⁰⁶ It is not clear whether the problems that developed in Harrison County rested more with the fact that a woman, Elizabeth Wilson, organized the class, recruited the students, and made the training a reality, or that others felt bypassed in its initiation.

While women's volunteer organizations and reform activities have received considerable recognition in the broader evaluation of women's history, less attention has been given to the significance of women's volunteer efforts during World War II. West Virginia's women, like women throughout the country, volunteered in large numbers for both paid and unpaid positions, for military duty and for civilian defense initiatives during the war. Essential to women's volunteer efforts were their long-established volunteer activities in clubs, organizations, churches, and less-formal associations, which provided a pre-existing system for communicating, networking, and organizing when wartime volunteer needs developed. West Virginia's women utilized their networks of women's clubs, farm women's organizations, 4-H clubs, and other organizational affiliations as they responded to local, state, and federal mandates for total war preparedness and organization. In doing so, they recruited large numbers of women volunteers to participate in civilian defense initiatives, to serve as nurses and nurses' aides, to organize salvage campaigns, to join the military, and to pursue many other warrelated goals.

Historians examining women's increased industrial and paid labor during World War II stress the breakdown of the "separate spheres" that had for so long shaped American women's historical roles. Similarly, the increased economic activity of women during the war has been used to highlight the social construction of traditional gender roles, as gender distinctions in labor categories melted away under wartime production demands. Both paid and unpaid volunteer work during the war years, however, continued in many ways to be gendered. Women organized salvage efforts within the homes and among children at schools, while men organized salvage efforts for industry. Women headed programs dealing with nutrition and health care, while men focused on defense preparedness. Women volunteered to serve as nurses, men as soldiers. While gendered spheres are clearly indicated, research also suggests that the boundaries between those spheres broke down in wartime volunteer efforts much as they did in the industrial workforce, perhaps even more so. In home-front volunteer efforts, West Virginia's women took on leadership roles, often placing them in positions of authority over men. While most of these women dealt with nutrition, health, and home or school salvage programs, others also worked in local defense preparations. West Virginia women volunteered for service with the Army and Navy Nurse Corps, WACS, and other branches of the military; some were killed in action, several near the front lines.

Reflecting "the political currents of the second wave of feminism" that fostered it, women's history also stresses the "inequality and oppression" faced by women throughout history.¹⁰⁷ During World War II, as West Virginia women volunteered to work on an unprecedented scale, they faced barriers to their success. At times, men challenged their authority, sought to circumvent their participation, and refused to acknowledge their accomplishments. Similarly, women's history notes the struggle to organize women across ethnic, class, and race boundaries, citing the tremendous power of women's diversity and the social constructs, such as racism and class distinctions, which prevented full utilization of that power within the women's movement.108 While working-class women and African American women made significant contributions to West Virginia's war-preparedness efforts, their actions were sometimes constrained by race and class boundaries. West Virginia's workingclass women were overlooked in volunteer recruitment campaigns and, just as unions and employers denied them full benefits in the workplace, they were denied access to the middle-class women's clubs, organizations, and networks that fostered the volunteer efforts of World War II.

Racially segregated women's organizations and networks hampered organizational efforts across race lines. West Virginia's African American women, middle and working class, were excluded from white volunteer recruitment networks, were often segregated into all-African American training classes and military units, and found their leadership in civilian defense programs challenged by both white and African American males. Situations, such as integrated training classes, where racial divisions broke down and integration took place, were an infrequent exception. However, just as working women joined labor unions, West Virginia's African American women worked through their own networks and community organizations, which were well-established by the outbreak of World War II. African American women's organizational networks in West Virginia, operating through extension service agents, women's clubs, farm women's clubs, churches, professional associations, schools, colleges, and other women's groups, activated African American participation in military and civilian defense initiatives during the war.

Despite the constraints of sexism, racism, and class distinctions, the contributions of women to the organizational mandates of wartime demands between 1941 and 1945 were enthusiastically met by thousands of West Virginia women on a local, state, regional, national, and international level. The federal government's plea for and propaganda supporting full participation and unity in the face of total war seemed to breach, to a degree and for a time, the barrier of sexism, even as it failed to breach, to the same degree, the barriers of race and class. From the nurses who served on or near the front lines in the Pacific and European theaters, to the women and girls who planted crops for victory in mountainside gardens, West Virginia's women took action during World War II. In doing so, they challenged traditional gender stereotypes and demonstrated the power of women's networks, African American and white, rich and poor, nurtured and developed over the decades, to organize communities, foster communication, and respond to a national crisis.

NOTES

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1. See Mary Beth Pudup, "Women's Work in the West Virginia Economy,"

West Virginia History 49 (1990): 7-20; Shirley C. Eagan, "'Women's Work, Never Done': West Virginia Farm Women, 1880s-1920s," ibid., 21-36; Janet W. Greene, "Strategies for Survival: Women's Work in the Southern West Virginia Coal Camps," ibid., 37-54.

- "An Outstanding Record, Read and Rejoice!" Weather Vane: Official Publication of the West Virginia State Nurses Association 14, no. 1 (Jan. 1, 1946): 10, War History Commission Papers (AM 109), West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV (hereafter cited as WVRHC); "Enroute Home," ibid., 11; "Awards to Army Nurses Total Over One Thousand," ibid., 11-12; "Memorial to War Nurses," ibid., 12.
- 3. Norman T. Kirk, Surgeon General, "A Brief Review of the Army Nurse Corps—Excerpts," *Weather Vane* 14, no. 2 (Apr. 1, 1946): 12-14, ibid. See also Donovan H. Bond, *A Half-Century of Nursing in West Virginia: The History of the West Virginia State Nurses' Association, 1907-1957* (Charleston, WV: Jarrett Printing Co., 1957), 33-44, 108-21.
- 4. For example, see Carl G. Bachmann to Joseph J. Jefferson, June 1, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 2, WVRHC.
- 5. Bond, *A Half-Century of Nursing*, 42. The term "African American" will be used in this article except when the term "Negro" or "Black" occurs in a direct quote, or when they refer to titled positions or jobs conferred or used in the 1940s.
- 6. Ibid., 38-39.
- 7. See Representatives of Various Nursing Organizations (July 29, 1940), National Nursing Council for War Services, AM 109, Folder: Misc. Nursing Materials, WVRHC.
- 8. "White and Negro Cooperation," National Nursing Council for War Services, Summary of Activities (Dec. 7, 1943), ibid.
- 9. Mary Davenport Silvernale, "District Eight's Recruitment Program," *Weather Vane* 12, no. 3 (July 1, 1944): 8-9, ibid. Because educational facilities were segregated, the *Weather Vane* documented only the activities of white nurses, even though African American nurses also volunteered and served in the armed forces.
- 10. "Wheeling Hospital Alumnae–Service News," *Weather Vane* 14, no. 1 (Jan. 1, 1946): 24, ibid.
- "St. Mary's Hospital Alumnae Clarksburg–Service News," Weather Vane 13, no. 3 (July 1945): 23, ibid. See also Bond, A Half-Century of Nursing, 38-39.
- 12. "St. Mary's Hospital Alumnae, Clarksburg–Service News," *Weather Vane* 13, no. 3 (July 1945): 28, AM 109, WVRHC.
- 13. "District Five–Service News," *Weather Vane* 13, no. 3 (July 1945): 29-30, ibid.
- 14. "District Five–Service News," *Weather Vane* 13, no. 4 (Oct. 1, 1945): 31-32, ibid.; Ethel Martin Collection (AFC/2001/001/7870), Biographical

Information, Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

- West Virginia Veterans Database Detail, West Virginia Memory Project, West Virginia Division of Culture and History, http://www.wvculture.org/ history/ wvmemory/vetdetail?Id= (hereafter cited as WVDCH online). Search for the following record ID numbers: 8589 (Sara Blanche Vance), 7429 (Elizabeth A. Raycher), 10786 (Mary Margaret Griffith), 4181 (Helen E. Corra), 6179 (Virginia Louise Link), 8469 (Martha E. Thurmond), 475 (Decima E. McLaughlin). See also Remember . . . Virginia Louise Link, 1919-1943, West Virginia Veterans Memorial, West Virginia Division of Culture and History, http://www.wvculture.org/history/wvmemory/vets/link/link. html.
- 16. Walter Mitchell to Bachmann, May 30, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 4, WVRHC. See also "Organizing and Operating a Local Nursing Council for War Service," National Nursing Council for War Services, AM 109, Folder: Misc. Nursing Materials, ibid. This 29 page memo outlines procedures for developing a local nursing council for war services.
- "Mrs. Vanliere Chosen Head of Nurses' Aides," newspaper clipping attached to Mitchell to Bachmann, Apr. 6, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 4, WVRHC. See also "Kingwood, W. Va." (Aug. 27, 1942) newspaper clipping attached to Mitchell to Major U. A. Knapp, Aug. 28, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 3, ibid.
- C. F. Hopson, M.D., Director, Report of Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics of the State of West Virginia to Governor Matthew M. Neely, 1943-1944 (1944): 21-22.
- 19. Mitchell to Bachmann, Apr. 6, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 4, WVRHC; "Mrs. Vanliere Chosen Head of Nurses' Aides," ibid. "Mrs." and "Miss" are used as titles for women when they appear in direct quotes and when there is no other way to determine if the individual is male or female; otherwise women are referred to by name only.
- 20. Gertrude Humphreys, Adventures in Good Living: West Virginia Extension Homemakers Council (Parsons, WV: McClain Printing Co., 1972): 180-81.
- 21. Gertrude Humphreys, "News about Farm Women," *West Virginia Farm News* (July 1944): 10; Ibid., (Dec. 1944): 10.
- 22. See Stephanie Carpenter, *On the Farm Front: The Women's Land Army in World War II* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois Univ. Press, 2003).
- 23. Humphreys, "News about Farm Women," *West Virginia Farm News* (Dec. 1944): 10; Ibid., (July 1944): 10.
- 24. Ibid. See also Humphreys, Adventures in Good Living, 180-81.
- 25. WVDCH online. Search for record ID number 11363 (Frances Fortune Grimes).
- Mary Rodd Furbee, "Rose Rolls Cousins, Pilot," *American Visions* 13, no. 4 (1998): 22-25; Mary Rodd Furbee, "I Was Never Afraid of Anything: Pilot Rose Rolls Cousins," *Goldenseal* 23, no. 2 (1997): 36-41. Rose Rolls Cousins

is referred to here as "Rolls" because this was her maiden name and she was unmarried at the time.

- 27. WVDCH online. Search for record ID numbers: 8920 (Verl Leith Williams), 6560 (Edna C. McQuain), 4752 (Anna Maria Fisher), 5106 (Louise G. Grumbach). While data records identify both Fisher and Grumbach as white, they do not indicate race for either Williams or McQuain.
- 28. Dollie A. Bassel, compiler, A History of the West Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs (Charleston, WV: The Club, 1982): 11.
- 29. WVDCH online. Search for record ID number 10799 (Ruth Virginia Hunter).
- 30. Mrs. Lillian (Riddenhouse) Colombo, interview by Sandra Woods, Aug. 21, 2002, Veterans History Project, Clarksburg Public Library in conjunction with the Library of Congress, WVRHC.
- 31. Ibid.
- 32. See Gulielma Fell Alsop and Mary F. McBride, "The Negro Woman Serves America in Afra-American Woman's Journal," in *American Women in World War II: Contemporary Accounts from World War II*, edited by Judy Barret Litoff and David C. Smith (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Books, 1997): 157-66; Martha S. Putney, *When the Nation Was in Need: Blacks in the Women's Army Corps during World War II* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1992); Karen Anderson, "Last Hired, First Fired: Black Women Workers during World War II," Journal of American History 69, no. 1 (1982): 82-97.
- 33. Erbie Claire Albright, World War II Materials on Civilian Support Activities, AM 1991, WVRHC.
- 34. Tanner J. Livisay, *Reaching Out with Heart and Hands: The Memories of an Extension Worker* (Detroit, MI: Tanner J. Livisay, 1995): 31-32.
- 35. Ibid., 34-35.
- 36. Ibid., 37-49. See also Hopson, Report of Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics, (1944): 67-69.
- 37. Humphreys, Adventures in Good Living, 179.
- 38. Ibid.
- 39. Ibid., 180.
- 40. E. Leonare White to W. P. Kellam, Mar. 1, 1943, World War II War Loan Drives Records, 1942-1946, AM 234, Box 6069, WVRHC. See also White to Kellam, Feb. 12, 1943, ibid.
- 41. White to Kellam, Feb. 12, 1943, ibid.; See also Kellam to White, Mar. 4, 1963, ibid., and White to Kellam, Mar. 1, 1943, ibid.
- 42. Dorothy J. Comins to Jessie Griffin, Mar. 16, 1944, ibid.; Comins to Griffin, Nov. 30, 1944, ibid.
- 43. Kenneth R. Bailey, *Kanawha County Public Library: A History (Including Biographical Sketches)* (Parsons, WV: McClain Printing Co., 2004): 35.
- 44. Ibid., 53-55.

- 45. Ibid., 58-59.
- 46. "Creation of a State Council of Defense: A Proclamation by the Governor," Mar. 2, 1941, AM 109, Box 14, Folder 6, WVRHC.
- C. F. Hopson, M.D., Director, Report of Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics of the State of West Virginia to Governor Matthew M. Neely, 1941-1942 (1942): 93-97.
- 48. Ibid.
- 49. See County C. D. Quotas, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 2, and Box 14, Folder 3, WVRHC. County civilian defense quotas provide an idea of the number of women volunteering for various positions in each county.
- 50. Mitchell/Bachmann to John T. Flynn, Nov. 29, 1943, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 7, ibid.
- 51. Mitchell/Bachmann to Flynn, Oct. 14, 1943, ibid.
- 52. Farley W. Bell to Mitchell, Dec. 6, 1943, ibid.
- 53. For a discussion of the development and history of women's clubs and women's organizations in West Virginia, see Barbara J. Howe, "West Virginia Women's Organizations, 1880s-1930 or 'Unsexed Termagants . . . Help the World Along," *West Virginia History* 49 (1990): 81-102; Anne Wallace Effland, "A Profile of Political Activists: Women of the West Virginia Woman Suffrage Movement," ibid., 103-114; Lillian J. Waugh and Judith G. Stitzel, "'Anything but Cordial': Coeducation and West Virginia University's Early Women," ibid., 69-80.
- 54. Sara A. Whitehurst, President, General Federation of Women's Clubs, to Governor of West Virginia, Apr. 15, 1942, AM 109, Box 14, Folder 6, WVRHC.
- 55. Bachmann to Sara A. Whitehurst, Apr. 28, 1942, ibid.; "Creation of State Council of Defense: A Proclamation by the Governor," ibid. Ruth D. Noer was head of the Home Economics Dept. at WVU.
- 56. Bassel, A History of the West Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs, 88-90.
- 57. Humphreys, Adventures in Good Living, 173-81, 268-74.
- 58. Humphreys, "News about Farm Women," *West Virginia Farm News* (Jan. 1945): 10.
- 59. Ibid.
- 60. See Humphreys, Adventures in Good Living, 268-74.
- 61. Mitchell to Jefferson, Mar. 12 and May 17, 1943, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 1, WVRHC.
- 62. Jefferson to Bachmann, May 13, 1943, and Bachmann to Jefferson, May 12, 1943, ibid.
- 63. Bachmann to Jefferson, May 12, 1943, ibid.
- 64. Bachmann to Jefferson, Jan. 13, 1943, ibid. See also A. C. Sputt [sic] to Jefferson, Dec. 20/30, 1942, ibid.

- 65. Bachman to Jefferson, Jan. 13, 1942, ibid.
- 66. Jefferson to Bachmann, Dec. 14, 1942, ibid.
- 67. Sunday Exponent-Telegram Clarksburgh [sic], Feb. 13, 1944, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 6, ibid.
- Bachmann to Jefferson, Jan. 13, 1943, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 1, ibid.; Schedule of Classes, Civilian Protection School, Madison School, Wheeling, West Virginia, Nov. 28-29, 1942, ibid.; Spurr [sic] to Jefferson, Dec. 20/30, 1942, ibid.; Bachmann to Jefferson, May 28, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 2, ibid.; Bachmann to Jefferson, Mar. 18, 1942, ibid; Mitchell to Bachmann, Oct. 12, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 3, ibid.; Mitchell to Bachmann, Oct. 12, 1942, ibid; Mitchell to Bachmann, Sept. 12, 1942, ibid.
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- 70. Josephine Jefferson to Bachmann, Apr. 4, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 2, ibid.
- 71. Knapp to Josephine Jefferson, Apr. 14, 1942, ibid.
- 72. Cumberland News, Sept. 25, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 3, ibid.
- 73. For examples, see Philip J. Cochran to Bachmann, Jan. 14, 1943, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 5, ibid; Flynn to Mitchell, Mar. 12, 1944, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 6, ibid; Roster of Civilian Defense Personnel Eligible for Honor Awards, Mar. 1, 1944, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 5, ibid.
- 74. Jefferson to Bachmann, May 13, 1943, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 1, ibid.
- Mary Heaton Vorse, "The Girls of Elkton, Maryland: Munitions Workers," Harper's Magazine (Mar. 1943): 347-53.
- Bramwell Civilian Defense Corps, "Members Receiving Service Ribbons," (Bramwell, WV, 1943), AM 109, Box 10, Folder 2, WVRHC.
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- 78. Mitchell to Bachmann, May 7, 1942, ibid.
- 79. Flynn to Mitchell, Mar. 5, 1944, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 6, ibid.
- Mitchell/Bachmann to Flynn, Feb. 26 and 23, 1944, ibid.; Flynn to Mitchell, Feb. 19, 1944, ibid.
- 81. Mitchell to Bell, Dec. 7, 1943, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 7, ibid.
- 82. Bell to Mitchell, Dec. 6, 1943, ibid.
- 83. Mitchell/Bachmann to Bell, Dec. 7, 1943, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 7, ibid.; Mitchell/Bachmann to Flynn, Sept. 24, 1943, ibid.; Jefferson to Bachmann, Dec. 14, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 1, ibid.
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- 87. Mitchell/Bachmann to Flynn, Sept. 24 and 30, 1943, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 7, ibid.
- 88. Mitchell to Bachmann, Nov. 3, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 3, ibid.
- 89. Bell to Harry Jones, Sept. 17, 1942, AM 109, Box 12a, Folder 4, ibid.
- 90. Ibid.
- 91. Mitchell to Bachmann, Oct. 12, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 3, ibid.
- 92. Bachmann to Mitchell, Sept. 18, 1942, ibid.
- 93. Mitchell to Bachmann, May 23, 1942, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 4, ibid.
- 94. District Supervisor's Report for Week Ending April 4th, 1942, Monongalia County, ibid.
- 95. Hopson, Report of Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics (1942): 94-96, and (1944): 21, 68-70.
- 96. Ibid.
- 97. C. F. Hopson, M.D., Director, Report of Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics of the State of West Virginia to Governor Matthew M. Neely, 1945-1946 (1946): 71.
- 98. Humphreys, Adventures in Good Living, 63-71.
- 99. Ibid., 64-65.
- 100. Ibid., 65.
- 101. Flynn to Mitchell, Aug. 14, 1943, AM 109, Box 10, Folder 7, WVRHC.
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