

3 pp (GUARD) STATE GUARD-WOMEN 171 SPAN 60B

OREGON STATE GUARD

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL

PORTLAND, OREGON

May 23, 1942.

Honorable Charles A. Sprague,
Governor of Oregon,
Salem, Oregon.

Dear Governor Sprague:

In line with the announcement of the Regular Army of the establishment of a women's auxiliary for semi-military service, it is desired to form a like organization in the Oregon State Guard.

The following plan is submitted for your approval:

Headquarters to be in Portland
Designation to be Special Service Section,
Oregon State Guard
To be composed of two divisions, headed
"Administrative" and "Women's Activities"

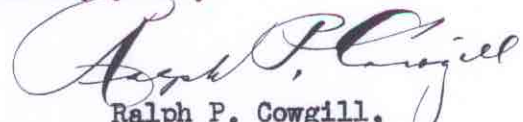
Personnel (women):

Captain to be placed in command of each
division
One First Lieutenant assigned to each
Battalion Headquarters
One Sergeant assigned to each company

It is believed that by so doing the administrative work of the State Guard will be simplified and that it will be much easier to keep it current; also men will be released for drill purposes. Unit commanders in some localities are having difficulty in obtaining typewriters for the use of their units, and by the enlistment of qualified stenographers as company clerks, the machines used by such stenographers in their civilian offices would in many instances be available.

Authority is also requested to adopt a suitable uniform for this organization, similar to that worn by the male personnel.

Respectfully yours,


Ralph P. Cowgill,
Brigadier General,
Commanding.

RPC/pm

May 29, 1942

Brigadier General Ralph P. Cowgill
Commander, Oregon State Guard
Multnomah County Armory
Portland, Oregon

Dear General Cowgill:

I have held your letter of May 23 for a few days so I could give a little more thought to the proposal you make to enlist women as auxiliaries to the State Guard.

If the women are to be enrolled in small numbers, merely for use as clerical assistants, then the suggestion would appear to be sound. I am afraid, though, if you get started you will wind up with a woman's army, officers and enlisted personnel as well. This would give you a lot of worry and many headaches. I do not feel at the present time that there is need for a complete woman's army in Oregon.

My conclusion is that it is not advisable to form a woman's auxiliary on the scale which you appear to have in mind, but if you can enroll women as auxiliary members in small numbers to handle definite tasks, then that would meet with my approval, including the expense of uniforming such assistants.

Sincerely yours,

Governor

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OREGON STATE GUARD

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL

PORTLAND, OREGON

June 1, 1942.

Honorable Charles A. Sprague,
Governor of Oregon,
Salem, Oregon.

Dear Governor Sprague:

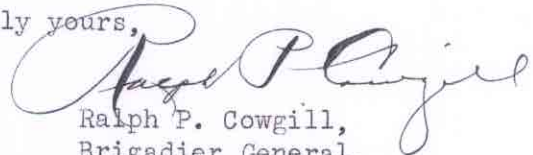
Your letter of May 29 concerning the enlistment of women as auxiliaries to the State Guard is acknowledged.

I think we are in complete agreement regarding the inclusion of women in the State Guard organization. It is not my intention to form any large group of women but only a sufficient number for clerical personnel necessary to handle the work of each unit. My thought was to enlist the women in a separate unit and assign one to each company and probably two to each battalion headquarters detachment. These women would be from the towns in which the units are located. Many of the battalion and company commanders have found it necessary to enlist the services of women and I thought it would be better for the esprit de corps if these women would be given noncommissioned ranks and required to wear a khaki uniform. Many of the units have already formed auxiliaries. These women hold regular meetings and are performing a fine service in strengthening public morale.

In going over the State, I have been told of numerous families who have packed up and are ready to move inland. I think this is a very dangerous situation. I have done everything within my power to stop talk of evacuation and to strengthen the idea of holding our State at all costs.

In view of the continued warning from Washington of a possible raid, constant attention must be given to holding a high state of morale among our people.

Respectfully yours,



Ralph P. Cowgill,
Brigadier General,
Commanding.

RPC:ES