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African Academy of Arts and Research

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presents

AFRICAN DANCE AND MUSIC Festival

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April 4th, Wednesday
April 6th, Friday

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(Continued on reverse side)

March 31, 1945

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I wish to thank you for the many contributions you have made to the Academy, also to acknowledge receipt of $100. These efforts are greatly appreciated.

We look forward to receiving you on Wednesday April 4th at Carnegie Hall's Art Gallery, 7:30 P.M.

I also wish to remind you of the message from the President, which will be read by you. We spoke of this when I made my last visit to the White House.

With best wishes.

Yours truly,

K. Ozuomba Mbadiwe

K. Ozuomba Mbadiwe,
President.

KOM/eh

Best for a letter
Lovely
Kwiti
I did enjoy
good
wishes

Guest of Honor and Speakers: Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, Willkie Award and Tribute to late Governor-General Felix Eboue.

Agnew

Spence Field, Moultrie, Ga.
March, 29, 1945.

APR 2 1945

To
Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mrs Roosevelt:

I have a story to tell, and I think you will be most interested. I hope you will be able to do something about it. It not only concerns me, but hundreds of other Americans, who, out of love for their Country and a sincere desire to serve that Country in its hour of need – did enlist in the United States Army.

On March 15, 1944 – at Newburgh – N.Y. I did enlist in the United States Army. It wasn't a "snap" enlistment. As a matter of fact, I had considered it for almost a year.

I was forty-nine years old. I had a nice home, a husband, four grown children and two grand-children. I had been a supervisor for Sweet Orr + Co. for eleven years. I was doing voluntary War work for the Red Cross – such as teaching First Aid – and I was spending many evening hours a week – sewing for the enlisted men at Stewart Field – (as a member of the American Womens Voluntary Services) In the Sweet Orr plant – I had charge of all the "Bond" drives, always making our quota – plus. – It seemed to be a full life. But I wasn't satisfied.

I wanted to go into Hospital work. I wanted to be able to help our Boys, back from the War zones. I had had a good First Aid back ground I had done practical nursing and I had the

 will to want to be of real service. I knew it was hard discouraging work - but I knew I could do it. I felt there was a definate place for women, such as me, in that sort of work.

So I took myself down and talked it over with the young recruiting officer. She assured me the Army did need women such as me. She told me I could pick out the branch of service I was most interested in and the location in which I desired to serve. I thought about it a couple of more weeks and then with due "Ceremony" I was sworn in - an enlisted woman.

I was sent to Fort Oglethorpe, Ga. -- I was given to understand that there - at classification I would be able to select my job and Field.

Right then - trouble hit me!

I was told that I should have done my choosing back home - where I had enlisted. I was foolish enough to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, concerning me, and that got me into more trouble. After looking at my record, they more or less decided that I didn't have much to offer the Medical Corps. I was almost heart broken at that, but the Classification officer was very nice, and I guess she believed that I was sincere in my desire to go into hospital work, so she assigned me, to the Medical Corps.

I struggled thru Basic training - and finally they sent out into the Field. I had expected to be sent back up North - but to my surprise and utter desolation I was sent to Maxwell Field - Alabama - before I even had a chance to get my bearings I was transferred to Spence Field. I have been here, more than ten months, which brings me up to the most important part of this letter! It concerns all women in the Medical Corps -- excepting those now enlisting

When I got to Classification here - again I was confronted with the skepticism of the Classification Officer. I finally talked her into letting me at least try to do the Hospital work.

The first thing that happened after that just about threw me entirely. I was assigned to the "Womens Ward" - of all places. - and Civilian women at that!!! - Words couldn't possibly discribe my disgust. Well - anyway I stuck it out for months and I was finally so fed up with it, I was all for being transferred anyplace - even on the "line" It didn't matter to me right then. Then the situation changed and the government decided to take care of the pregnant women belonging to service men. I was glad of that - because I love the Babies. So I buckled down to business and did my bit. I know I do a good job and I'm sincere in my work. But. — I didn't give up my civilian life and my babies to take care of a new generation! I resent it more than I can say.

I enlisted to take care of wounded and sick Soldiers. I was assured when I enlisted that I would be sent to school and trained to be a medical Tecnician. I never got to school. Lately here at the Post Hospital they have had what they call "Medical Classes" — Truthfully they were just a waste of time. They taught us nothing. After a few half hearted classes they just petered out.

The Army now is recruiting women for the Medical Corps — They get a few weeks training and then are classed as Medical Tecnicians and rated as Corporals !! —

Mrs Roosevelt — that is an insult to the hundreds of women already in the Medical Corps — some of them eighteen and twenty months and more — with not even a P.F.C. — stripe and no prospects! I think it is a shame! We have earned the right to some

sort of recognition. 4

Why are we not sent to school and trained? We are more than half trained now! — The general Hospitals are filling up faster than is realized — I dont need to tell you about the huge cost in lives — that we are paying. I only know they are begging for help in the nursing line — Why can't they use us, who are already here? — They dont need us in these small Hospitals — Honest!

The average census is 75 a day — We have Eight Army nurses — Eight WAC's and two civilian Nurses on four Wards! — Some of those Wards have convalescent patients in who are on their own — and a nurse only looks in now and then to see if things are O.K. —

There are maybe out of all those Patients four or five really sick ones. We have no injured patients — and so far as the Maternity Ward is concerned — those girls could be sent home in five days. — They are just using us for a good thing. — I dont blame them — They feel they are entitled to it — so they make good use of it.

But — and I speak for all Enlisted women who have had to serve on that Ward — We feel that the Civilian nurses, should take over there.

Most of us gave up a great deal to Enlist, and those of us who chose the "Medic's" certainly never expected to have to take care of Civilian women and their off-spring! —

Since this Recruiting drive for the "Medic's" with all the glowing promises spread all over every paper we pick up — the Morale of the girls in the Medical Corps has reached a new "Low" — We have nothing to look forward to — no prospects.

Today I asked the C.O. of the Medical Det here, if he didn't think I was entitled to at least a P.F.C. stripe — and he informed me that unless

there was a P.F.C. opening in the WAC - that we didn't have a chance! Isn't that discouraging? I've worked like a dog this past few months - not because I liked it - but because I'm conscientious and I wouldn't shirk any yet - longer - the time has come when I think something should be done about it.

I want to go to Medical Technicians School I would like to be assigned to Rhoades General at Utica, N.Y. - I think some of the promises made to me, when I enlisted, should be kept. I think I have a legitimate "Stripe". I'm willing and able to be of real help in caring for our Wounded and sick. I feel I should be given a chance at promotion.

I certainly would appreciate any help you can give me. The enlisted Women of the Medical Corps would be raised from the depths if some sort of recognition was accorded them. We are already in the Army - why won't they at least give us a chance.

I know you are a busy Lady - but I also know you are a fair-minded capable person, who really goes to bat for the under-dog. We hope you will talk it over with the Powers that be - if they have any perspective at all they will see how much Woman-power is being wasted right under their noses.

This really is an appeal for my own Benefit, I want to go to school I want to be transferred to Rhodes General Hospital - I want to serve the "Boys" - I think I've served my time on the "Civilian Roster" - I think I am entitled to something really worth while. After all - I'm not a Child, and I'm not exactly stupid. I feel I am a trust worthy - Capable Person. But they tell me - It isn't what you know - its what you know that gets you anyplace in this Mans Army!!! I wonder!!

I guess I've just about covered everything.

If I've forgotten anything, you can probably read it between the lines.

I hope you can do something about this situation I assure you I have tried all ligitimate Channels with out success. They all agree it is a shame and shouldn't be - but still it is and no one does anything about it.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Very truly Yours

May H. Agnew

Pvt. M. H. Agnew - A207858
2133 A.A.F.B.U. - Squadron D.
Spence Field - Moultrie, Ga