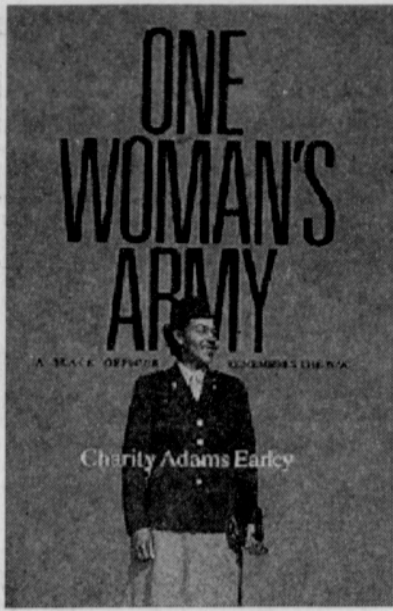


## Charity Earley's Command in WW II

Commanding America's only company of black women overseas in World War II, Charity Earley's biggest battle might have been against her own country. Although she was commissioned as an army officer after training at Fort Des Moines on Aug. 29, 1942, she would still have to face many racial barriers.

While in Europe, she was in command of the 6888<sup>th</sup> Central Postal Directory Battalion. Receiving discriminatory and heavy criticism from her general, she spoke out. When she did, he threatened to replace her with a white junior officer who would "show her how to do her job." Earley's comment, "over my dead body," caused him to promise her a court martial. Earley stood tall and fought back, an act that was very brave and even considered dangerous in those days. As she pressed for him to be court martialed for discriminatory behavior, the general backed down. She continued fighting unfair housing and other conditions involving black military personnel. Her efforts produced better treatment by the military toward blacks.

After leaving the Army, Earley received a Master's degree in Vocational Psychology at Ohio State University in 1946 and worked for the Veterans Administration of the United States. Earley will always be remembered as being the first African American woman to become a commissioned officer in the



Charity Adams Earley commanded a company of black women in war-torn Europe during World War II. She battled discrimination within the military, helping to advance her race. Her book, "One Woman's Army" details her experiences.

Women's Auxiliary Corps. Her commanding a military unit in war-torn Europe during WWII would show our nation that a black woman could do anything.

In 1982, Earley would be honored by the Smithsonian Institute as one of our nation's top women in Black History. That year, she would also receive the Walter White Award from the NAACP for her pioneering efforts in the military. Her experiences in the United States Army prompted her to publish a book called "One Woman's Army, Black Officer Remembers the WAC."


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