



**Orlene 'Jackie'
Voelkl (nee Skaggs-
Ijas)**

Women's Army Corps (WAC)

Orlene 'Jackie' Voelkl (nee Skaggs-Ijas)

Dec 28, 1921 - Jun 8, 2014

BIRTHPLACE: Dinuba, CA

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: 1st SGT

**DIVISION: Women's Army Corps (WAC),
SHAEF**

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

SERVED: Dec 1, 1942 -

HONORED BY: Self

BIOGRAPHY

I heard about the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps that had started in December, 1942. Being eligible at 21, I was sworn in. I was ordered to Des Moines, Iowa, for basic training, and then sent to Arkansas to attend Army Administration School. Shortly thereafter, I attended (NCO) Non-Commission Officers Training School. Upon completion of the course, I was appointed "Acting First Sergeant." A few months later I became First Sergeant. Also, during my time in Alabama I was appointed the first woman Sgt Major of Cadets at an Advanced Single Engine School. Then I volunteered to go overseas. From New York we sailed across the North Atlantic Ocean to England where I was assigned as secretary to the Base Commander of Service and Supply. During the D-Day operations, many other WACS and I worked in SHAEF, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force. While the "Battle of the Bulge" raged on and no planes could aid the troops there due to the heavy fog, I returned to London to await assignment in France. The fog lifted in December and we flew to Paris. From there seven WACS and I commandeered taxis to General Eisenhower's headquarters in Versailles. I was assigned as secretary to Brigadier General Robert A. McClure, who was Chief of Psychological Warfare Division with offices on Champs Elysees where I worked until the end of the war on May 8, 1945. After celebrations with thousands of G.I.s and French people, I believed I would be going home to America. Instead, our organization's name was changed to "Information Control Division (ICD)." We moved to Germany to take over all the radio stations and newspapers in Germany. We set up offices in Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Norway. One of our jobs was to publish thousands of brochures showing the horrors of the concentration camps operated by the Germans, and photos of their scrawny captives. These brochures were dropped from planes for the German populace to see. In October 1945, I received orders to return home and be discharged. With 10,000 other soldiers, we sailed on the Queen Mary. We received a great welcome in New York.

['Veteran's Voices' interview by Bill Thomas, September 9, 2011, Sun Newspapers. Jackie Voelkl was 90 yrs. old.]