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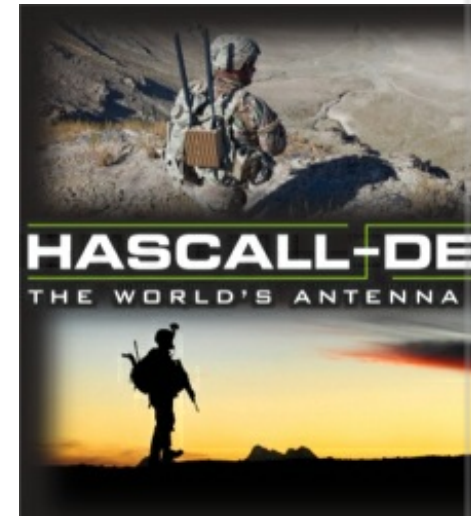
NEWS

VIDEOS

A History of Women in the U.S. Army

Incognito to Full Inclusion

BY **JAN TEGLER** - APRIL 12, 2018



POPULAR ARTICLES



The North American XF-108



Operation Flipper: The Cor
Raid on Rommel's Headqu



First Captain Simon Nakew leads the U.S. Military Academy Class of 2021 as they complete their 12-mile march back from Camp Buehler to West Point on Aug. 14, 2017. U.S. Army photo by Michelle Eberhart



Tampa Native Serves with Navy Half a World Away



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A History of Women in the

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Before there was a United States of America, there were women, as well as men, fighting to secure its future. From serving the nation's first organized military force – the Continental Army – in traditional and nontraditional roles to performing the full range of military occupations today, female participation



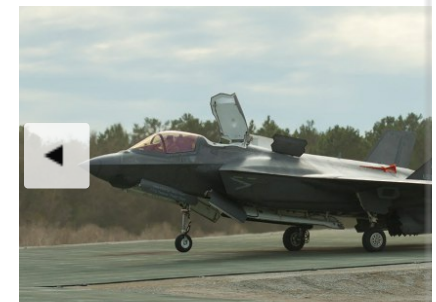
in the U.S. Army has been a constant.

Women began not only supporting combat operations unofficially as cooks, nurses, and seamstresses, but engaging directly in combat and as spies during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Their involvement continued with the creation of the Army Nurse Corps at the turn of the 20th century, work in the Army Signal Corps, and serving as Army nurses in World War I. The establishment of the Women's Army Corps during World War II and the integration of women into the regular Army in the 1970s advanced their roles and recognition further.

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In the spring of 1782, Sampson traveled to Worcester, Massachusetts, wearing a suit of men's clothes she had sewn during the winter. There, she successfully enlisted in the Light Infantry Company of the 4th Massachusetts Regiment under the assumed name of Robert Shurtleff.

POPULAR VIDEOS



F-35B Expeditionary Testing

FACEBOOK

In 2017, women reached new peaks, joining infantry and armor units for the first time and graduating from the Army's prestigious Ranger School as they began to fill the 138,000 combat positions opened to them in 2016.

On Aug. 1, 2017, West Point Cadet Simone Askew was selected as the "First Captain" at the U.S Military Academy, becoming the first-ever African-American female to lead the Corps of Cadets. Askew can trace her own achievement over an arc of female predecessors, dating all the way back to the American Revolution and daring women like Deborah Sampson.

WOMEN, THE ARMY, AND THE REVOLUTION

Sampson embarked on a radically different path than most of the women who were present at Army camps and garrisons during the Revolution. The majority was there to feed the soldiers, act as seamstresses, or fulfill one of the noblest and longest-standing military roles for women: nurse. In fact, shortly after the 1775 establishment of the Continental Army, Gen. George Washington asked Congress for "a matron to supervise the nurses, bedding, etc.," and for nurses "to attend the sick and obey the matron's orders."



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Disguised as a man, Deborah Sampson fought alongside men in the Continental Army. Library of Congress image

The Second Continental Congress adopted a plan to provide one nurse for every 10 patients and stipulated “that a matron be allotted to every hundred sick or wounded.” The assignment of female nurses to Continental Army units was vital to their effectiveness and cohesion.

Disease was as deleterious as battle wounds to the soldiers of the Army. Nurses were a bulwark against both, and their care not only saved lives, it helped keep units together. The promise of medical care had a decidedly positive impact on the desertion rate of fighting men from Army units. Many who might have fled otherwise stayed and fought.

But men weren't the only ones to engage in direct combat with the king's forces. Sampson fought alongside them – disguised as a man.



In 1779, Congress' Board of War, cognizant of Corbin's injuries and impressed by her service and bravery, granted her half the monthly pay of a soldier in the Continental Army and a new set of clothes or its equivalent in cash.

In the spring of 1782, Sampson traveled to Worcester, Massachusetts, wearing a suit of men's clothes she had sewn during the winter. There, she successfully enlisted in the Light Infantry Company of the 4th Massachusetts Regiment under the assumed name of Robert Shurtleff.

By that time, the fighting had migrated to New York, and Sampson marched with her regiment to West Point to protect the Hudson Highlands from the British, who still occupied New York City. There, she fought in several skirmishes, including a battle near Tarrytown, New York. She was wounded during fighting in New York, shot in the thigh; she removed the bullet herself, fearing discovery if she were treated by a doctor, but the wound failed to heal properly and caused her discomfort thereafter.

In the summer of 1783, while in Philadelphia, Sampson fell ill with a near-fatal fever and was cared for by a doctor named Barnabus Binney, who upon examining her discovered she was actually a woman. With her secret revealed, she was granted an honorable discharge in October and returned to Massachusetts. In the winter of 1792, Sampson petitioned the Massachusetts

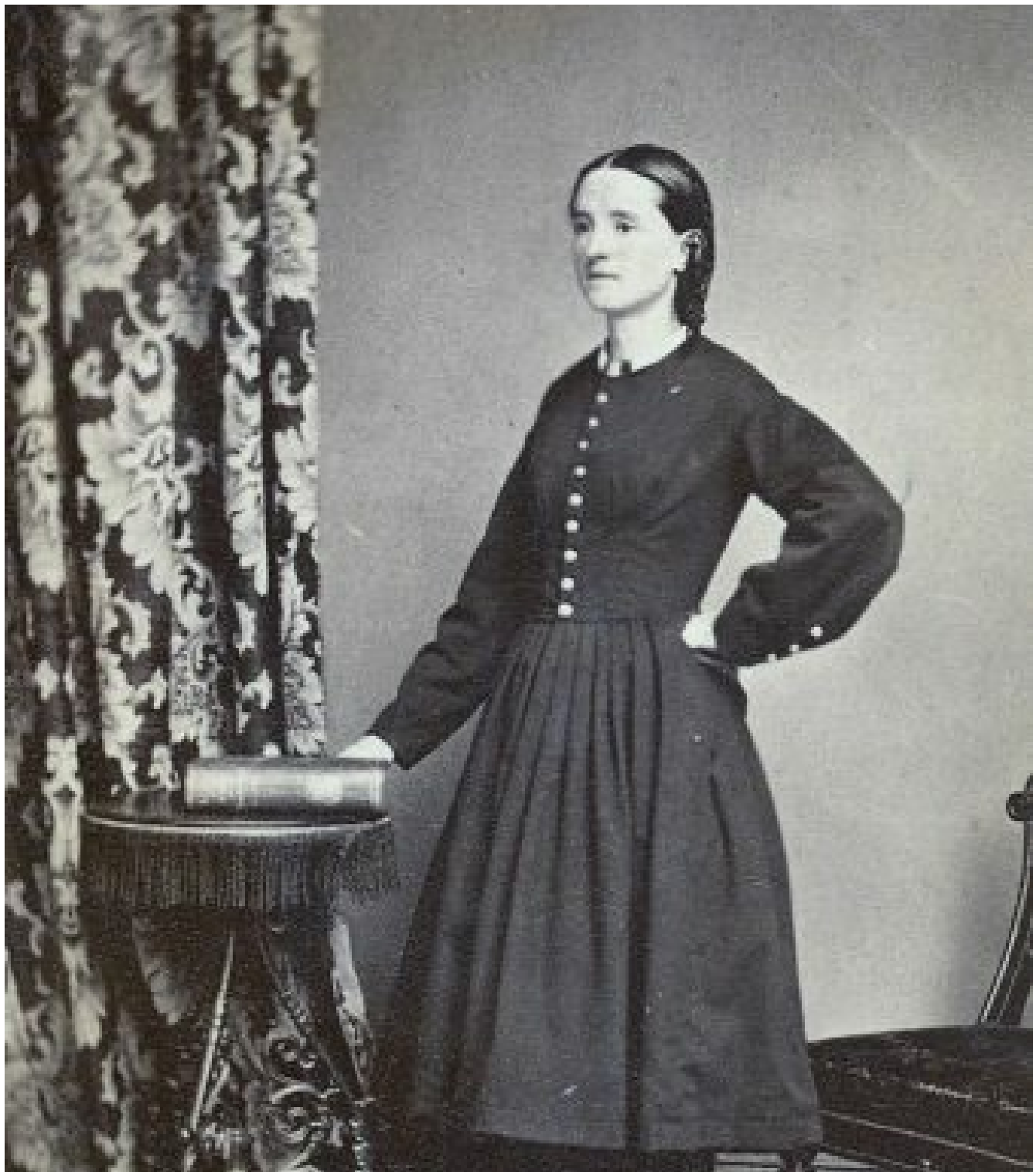
State Legislature for pay that the Army had withheld from her because she was a woman. The legislature granted her petition and Gov. John Hancock signed it. She received 34 pounds plus interest accrued from the time of her discharge in 1783.

In 1804, her friend Paul Revere wrote to Massachusetts Congressman William Eustis on her behalf, asking that the now-married mother of three be granted a pension. It was granted in 1805 and again in 1821. Congress further recognized her claims as a Revolutionary soldier after her 1827 death by granting her husband a widow's pension.

Sampson's experience may not have been singular but it was certainly uncommon. It's unknown how many women may have fought in combat during the Revolutionary War, but there were others. Margaret Cochran Corbin traveled with her husband, John Corbin, when he joined the First Company of the Pennsylvania Artillery in 1775. She became a camp follower, cooking and doing laundry for the soldiers.

Corbin was also at her husband's side at the Nov. 16, 1776 Battle of Fort Washington on Manhattan Island. Manning a cannon, John was killed during a Hessian assault. When he fell, Margaret took his place, continuing to fire the gun until her arm, chest, and jaw were hit by enemy fire. The British were victorious, taking Margaret and other Continental soldiers prisoner.







Civil War surgeon Mary E. Walker performed heroically as a volunteer field surgeon for the Union Army during the Civil War. She received the Medal of Honor. Library of Congress photo

Corbin was released along with wounded male soldiers by the British to recover from her injuries. She settled in Philadelphia, mostly disabled, and never fully recovered. In 1779, Congress' Board of War, cognizant of Corbin's injuries and impressed by her service and bravery, granted her half the monthly pay of a soldier in the Continental Army and a new set of clothes or its equivalent in cash.

She thus became the first American woman to receive a military pension and was included on military rolls until the war ended. Thereafter, she was enrolled in the Corps of Invalids created by Congress for wounded soldiers. She was discharged from the Army in 1783.

At the conclusion of the war, the Continental Army disbanded, and the U.S. Army was created in June 1784. The role of women in the newly established Army

remained modest until the nation's next great conflict.

WOMEN AND THE ARMIES OF THE CIVIL WAR

Women were secretly present on the battlefields of the Civil War just as they had been during the Revolution but in greater numbers. More than 400 women are estimated to have disguised themselves as men to fight for the Union and Confederate armies during the war.

Following the Civil War, the Army Adjutant General's Office (in charge of maintenance of the U.S. Army Archives) compiled military service records for both Union and Confederate participants in the conflict. Documentation of women's service was included, though the Army wasn't keen on revealing it.

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In recognition of her gallant service during these and other battles, President Andrew Johnson presented Walker with the Medal of Honor on Nov. 11, 1865. She wore the decoration every day for the rest of her life and remains the sole female recipient of the Medal of Honor.

Women like Sarah Emma Edmonds Seelye and Jennie Hodgers were among the

best documented, having served long term in the Union Army. Seelye served two years in the Second Michigan Infantry as Franklin Thompson, participating in the Peninsula Campaign and the battles of Second Manassas, Fredericksburg, and Antietam. In 1886, she received a military pension.

Hodgers enlisted as Albert D.J. Cashier in the 95th Illinois Infantry and served until Aug. 17, 1865, when the regiment was mustered out of the Union army. She's said to have participated in approximately 40 battles and skirmishes.

Exceedingly lax standards for recruitment in both the Union and Confederate armies allowed women who disguised themselves to enlist more easily than may be appreciated today. Assuming male names, dress, and cultivating the speech and habits of men, soldier-women were, like their male peers, not subject to proof of identity.

Physical examinations were cursory. And with so many under-aged boys in the ranks on both sides, women had a good chance of blending in. Soldiers slept in their clothes, bathed in their underwear, and went as long as six weeks without changing their underclothes. In addition, the vast majority of Union and Confederate soldiers were civilian enlistees, unfamiliar with Army life. This put women at little disadvantage to males in learning to be warriors.







Known as the Founder of the Army Nurse Corps, Dr. Anita N. McGee drafted the bill that led to the Army Nurse Corps' creation. National Library of Medicine photo

Nevertheless, discovery was always a worry – particularly for those women wounded in battle. A fascinating episode ties the experience of Civil War women and the Army together uniquely – with one woman in the unfamiliar guise of combatant, and the other famously in the familiar role as a nurse to soldiers.

A woman named Mary Galloway was wounded in the chest during the Battle of Antietam. Clara Barton, attending to the wound, “discovered the gender of the soft-faced ‘boy’ and coaxed her into revealing her true identity and going home after recuperation.”

Nearly 6,000 women performed as nurses for the Union Army, including an estimated 181 black nurses who served in convalescent and U.S. government hospitals during the war. Female nurses often performed their service close to the fighting or on the battlefields themselves, earning the respect of soldiers, and in Barton’s case, the nickname “Angel of the Battlefield.”

Barton was appointed “lady in charge” of the hospitals at the front of the Army of the James by Union Gen. Benjamin Butler in 1864. Other women distinguished

themselves as nurses as well, including Dorothea Dix. She served as superintendent of Army nurses for the Union, a role in which she set guidelines for nurse candidates and was an advocate of treating both Union and Confederate wounded equally.

Dr. Mary E. Walker performed heroically as a volunteer field surgeon with Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside's troops at battles in Warrenton and Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1862 and was appointed an assistant surgeon in the Army of the Cumberland's 52nd Ohio Regiment after tending casualties at the Battle of Chickamauga in 1863. In April 1864, she was captured by Confederate troops and spent four months in various prisons until she was exchanged for a Confederate surgeon in August 1864.

In recognition of her gallant service during these and other battles, President Andrew Johnson presented Walker with the Medal of Honor on Nov. 11, 1865. She wore the decoration every day for the rest of her life and remains the sole female recipient of the Medal of Honor.

THE CREATION OF THE ARMY NURSE CORPS

When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898 following the loss of the battleship USS Maine and American intervention in the Cuban War of Independence, military nursing was almost nonexistent. It had become an important component of modern conflict but had been almost completely

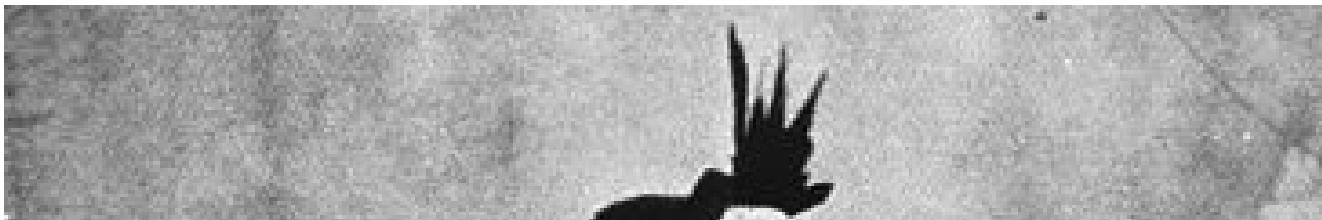
neglected since the Civil War.

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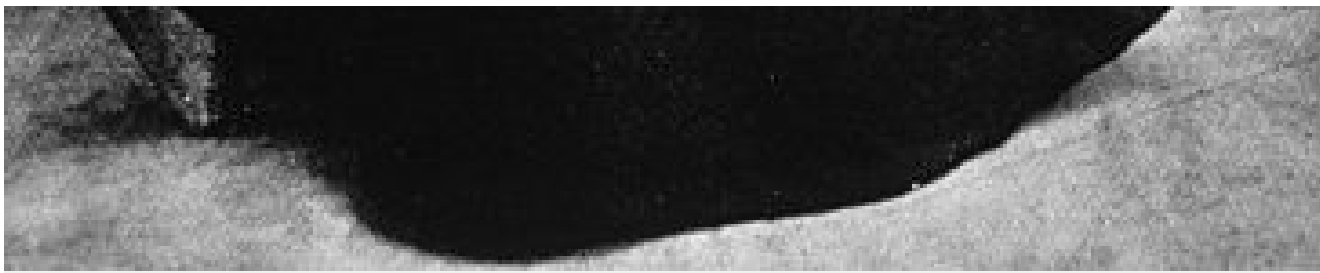
The bill that led to the Nurse Corps' creation was authored by Dr. Anita N. McGee, who was serving as acting assistant surgeon. Thereafter she was known as “the Founder of the Army Nurse Corps.”

However, on April 28, 1898, just three days after Congress declared that a state of war between the United States and Spain had existed since April 21, the surgeon general requested and was given authority to appoint female nurses under contract.

“Contract nurses” had existed during the Civil War. Walker was one, contracted as an assistant surgeon by the Army Medical Department. But the idea didn't really take hold until the Spanish-American War. Between 1898 and 1901, more than 1,500 female nurses signed government contracts and served in the United States, Puerto Rico, the Philippine Islands, Hawaii, China, Japan, and on the hospital ship *Relief*.







Dita H. Kinney was appointed the first superintendent of the Nurse Corps in 1901. National Library of Medicine photo

Recognizing the value of their service, the Army established the Nurse Corps as a permanent corps of the Medical Department under the Army Reorganization Act of 1901. The bill that led to the Nurse Corps' creation was authored by Dr. Anita N. McGee, who was serving as acting assistant surgeon. Thereafter she was known as "the Founder of the Army Nurse Corps."

Dita H. Kinney was appointed the first superintendent of the Nurse Corps in 1901. Nurses were appointed to the regular Army for a three-year period but were not actually commissioned as officers in the regular Army during that period of time. Their appointment could be renewed provided the applicant had a "satisfactory record for efficiency, conduct and health."

The Army Reorganization Act also stipulated that the surgeon general maintain a cadre of nurses who would be willing to serve in an emergency. These were women with at least six months of satisfactory service who were retained on a reserve status. This became the first-ever Reserve Corps of women.

ARMY WOMEN IN WORLD WAR I

When America entered World War I in April 1917, there were just 403 nurses on active duty. But like the rest of the U.S. military, the Nurse Corps was rapidly expanded. The Army Reorganization Act of 1918 led to a redesignation of the Nurse Corps as the “Army Nurse Corps,” and by the war’s end, more than 21,000 women were serving in the Army Nurse Corps in camps near the front lines and in station hospitals overseas and at home. This amounted to more than half of the American women who served during the Great War.





An Army nurse wears the Caduceus, the winged staff and serpent of the Medical Corps, with the "U.S." on her outdoor uniform. If she was a nurse who had entered the Army Nurse Corps from the Red Cross reserve for that Corps, she was permitted to retain the Red Cross on her service cap. Library of Congress photo

Army nurses on the Western Front often worked close to the trenches, living in bunkers and makeshift tents with few comforts. They withstood the horror of sustained artillery barrages and the debilitating effects of mustard gas. They also battled the global influenza outbreak of 1918, which took the lives of an 50-100 million people. More than 200 Army nurses succumbed to influenza and pneumonia.

While the Army Nurse Corps accounted for the greatest share of female

participation, it wasn't the only branch of the service in which women served. The U.S. Army Signal Corps turned to women to serve as bilingual telephone operators. More than 220 women were recruited and trained as French-speaking operators to meet the Army's needs overseas. Known as the "Hello Girls," they were required to purchase uniforms designed by the Army with Army insignia and buttons, and were issued travel orders and per diem orders reading "same as Army nurses in Army regulations." However, when the war ended, the women were not discharged; the Army claimed they'd never officially been "in" the service. It wasn't until 1979 that the women telephone operators of the Signal Corps were granted military status.



The Army Signal Corps also recruited and trained women as telephone operators. Library of Congress photo

Female participation in the “war to end all wars” demonstrated a contribution to America that could no longer be ignored. Social change accompanied their contributions when on June 4, 1919, the 19th Amendment passed, guaranteeing women the right to vote.

ARMY WOMEN IN WORLD WAR II

Women played many new roles during the largest conflict in history, supporting the war effort directly and indirectly. Opportunity expanded as never before, and with the entire American population mobilized, women entered professions that were previously the preserve of men.

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WAAC recruiting and training centers were quickly organized, with Fort Des Moines, Iowa, chosen as the first WAAC Training Center. More than 30,000 women nationwide applied for fewer than 1,500 positions, and the first arrivals streamed into Fort Des Moines in July 1942.

Nearly 400,000 women served with the armed forces during World War II, including 60,000 Army nurses. During the interwar period, the Army Nurse Corps was a shadow of itself, about 1/20th the size of its World War I peak. But wi





Oveta Culp Hobby, first secretary of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, first commanding officer of the Women's Army Corps, and chairman of the board of the Houston Post. Library of

th another war on the horizon, some leaders recognized that women would be vital to the effort as nurses and in other roles.

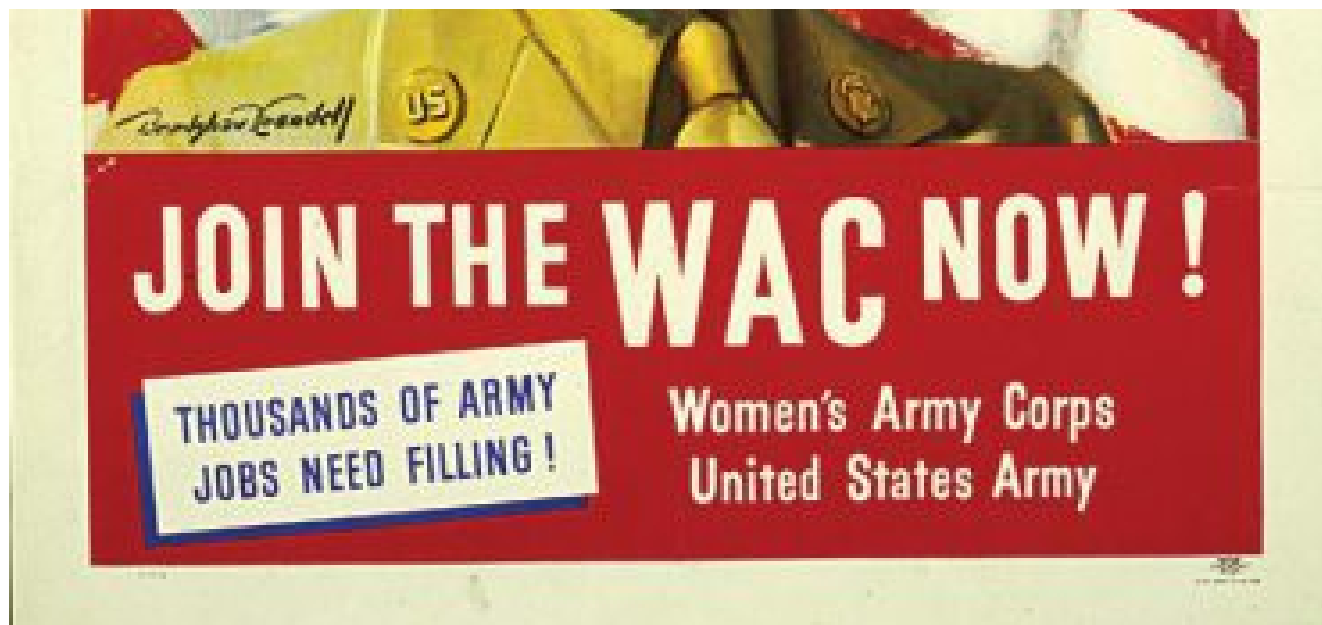
In May 1941, U.S. Rep. Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts introduced a bill for the creation of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). It languished, but the legislation was reintroduced after the attack on Pearl Harbor, America's entry into the war, and the stark realization that manpower challenges would mount quickly as war production increased. The bill passed the next year and freed men for combat duty by creating a cadre of up to 150,000 women in noncombatant clerical worker roles.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the bill into law on May 15, 1942, and the next day, Oveta Culp Hobby was sworn in as the first director. WAAC recruiting and training centers were quickly organized, with Fort Des Moines, Iowa, chosen as the first WAAC Training Center. More than 30,000 women nationwide applied for fewer than 1,500 positions, and the first arrivals streamed into Fort Des Moines in July 1942.

Among their ranks were 125 enlisted women and 440 officer candidates (including 40 African-American women), who had been selected to attend the WAAC Officer Candidate School (OCS). Their presence stirred considerable public interest as the corps presented the biggest opportunity to test integration in the Army. Following OCS, African-American officers and white officers were

segregated. In 1942, Charity Adams became the first African-American female commissioned officer in the WAAC.





A World War II recruiting poster for the Women's Army Corps. Library of Congress photo

Initially, WAAC officers and enlisted were only assigned as clerks, typists, drivers, cooks, and unit cadre. Within one year of the WAAC establishment, however, more than 400 jobs opened to women. But because WAAC legislation didn't make women an integral part of the Army, they could not be governed by Army regulations or the Articles of War. Women and men received the same pay at home, but women weren't eligible for overseas pay or government life insurance. Strong in its first year, WAAC recruiting was down by mid-1943; higher paying jobs in the war industries, unequal benefits with men, and difficulty navigating the male-dominated Army contributed to the decline.

With this in mind, Nourse Rogers presented bills to the House and Senate in January 1943 advocating for the enlistment and commissioning of women in the

Army of the United States, or reserve forces, as opposed to regular enlistments in the U.S. Army. The bills would end the “auxiliary” status of the WAAC, allow women to serve overseas, and “free a man to fight.”

Roosevelt signed the bills into law in mid-1943. The WAAC was now the Women’s Army Corps (WAC) and a constituent part of the United States Army. Women could enjoy all of the ranks, privileges, and benefits of their male counterparts.

More than 150,000 women served as WACs during the war, recruited from all 50 states and territories, including Puerto Rico. Nisei women (second-generation Japanese-American women) were also recruited. Hundreds were selected, with a number trained in linguistics at the Military Intelligence Service Language School at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. At war’s end, some Nisei WACs found themselves serving as translators and office workers at Gen. Douglas MacArthur’s headquarters in Tokyo.

In 1943, the WAC recruited a unit of Chinese-American women to serve with the Army Air Forces as “Air WACs.” Referred to as the “Madame Chiang Kai-Shek Air WAC unit,” the first two women to enlist in the unit were Hazel (Toy) Nakashima and Jit Wong, both of California. Air WACs served in a large variety of jobs, including aerial photo interpretation, air traffic control, and weather forecasting.

The 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion – an all-African-American, all-female battalion during World War II – worked in England and France in 1945, making it the first African-American female battalion to travel overseas. Now a major, Charity Adams commanded the unit.

WAC women were assigned to the Army Air Forces, Army Ground Forces, and the Army Service Forces' nine service commands, the Military District of Washington, and the Technical Services. Opportunities rapidly expanded with WAC assignments in the Army Air Forces, where they served as weather forecasters/observers, electrical specialists, sheet metal workers, Link trainer instructors, control tower specialists, airplane mechanics, photo-laboratory technicians, and photo interpreters.



Maj. Charity E. Adams and Capt. Abbie N. Campbell inspect the first contingent of African- American members of the Women's Army Corps assigned to overseas service. Library of Congress photo

WACs also served with Army Ground Forces at Armor and Cavalry Schools as radio technicians and maintainers, and trained men in field artillery and code sending and receiving. The Army Service Forces' Signal Corps used WACs as photographic experts, telephone, radio, and teletype operators, cryptographers, and cryptanalysts.

WACs were assigned to the Technical Services' Transportation Corps, processing troops and mail, and as medical and surgical technicians within the medical department. They also served with the Adjutant General's Corps, Chemical Warfare Service, Quartermaster Corps, finance department, provost marshal, and Corps of Chaplains.

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Thousands of WACs went on to serve during the war in a multitude of roles – most notably as nurses in Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) units close to the front lines, and on Army transport ships.

Following the war, WACs had no peacetime component or inactive Reserve. Lacking re-employment rights, employment for women would be meager in

peacetime. Hobby disbanded the WAC when the war ended, and Congress mandated re-employment rights for WAACs and WACs in August 1946.

POSTWAR LANDMARKS

WAC service during World War II proved to be exceptional. This led to the signing of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act by President Harry S. Truman in June 1948. The act granted women a permanent presence in the military, including Army WACs, Navy WAVES, and Air Force and Marine Corps women. Women were also eligible to serve in the Reserve components of each service.

Executive Order 9981 established equal treatment and opportunity in the armed services one month later, opening the door for the racial desegregation of the Army. Later in 1948, the first training center for the permanent WAC opened at Camp Lee, Virginia. WAC Organized Reserve Corps training got underway in 1949, with direct commissions offered to female college graduates in the Organized Reserve Corps.

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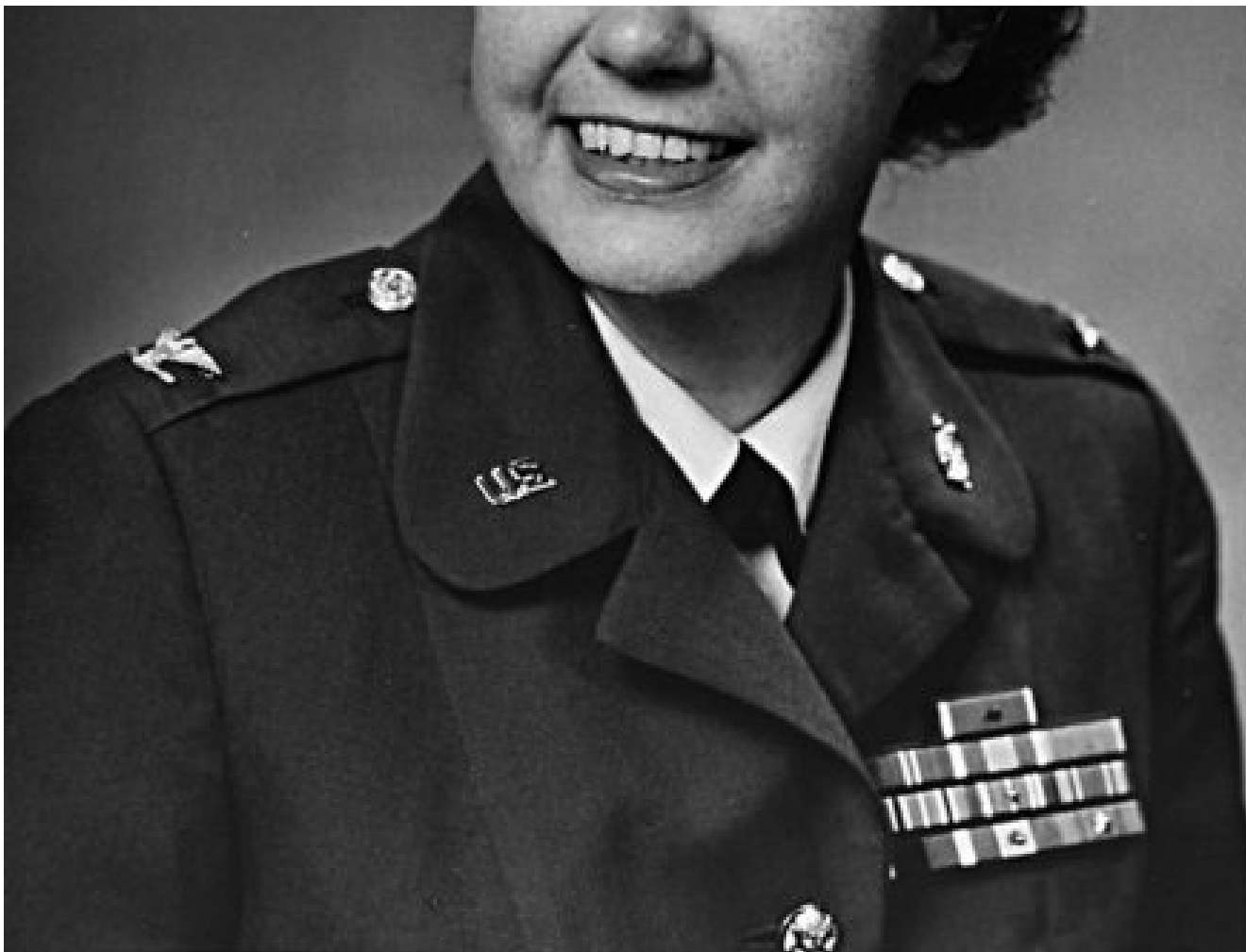
The major milestone of the period was the full integration of women into the all-volunteer military that followed the Vietnam War. Women entered Army ROTC programs

**alongside men in 1972, the U.S. Military Academy in 1976,
and integrated basic training in 1977.**

The Women's Medical Specialist Corps and the Army Nurse Corps were established as part of the regular Army in 1947, with military nurses receiving permanent commissioned officer status.

When the Korean War broke out in June 1950, WAC officers were involuntarily recalled, marking the first time women were summoned to active duty without their consent. Thousands of WACs went on to serve during the war in a multitude of roles – most notably as nurses in Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) units close to the front lines, and on Army transport ships.





Elizabeth P. Hoisington, seen here as a colonel, was director of the Women's Army Corps and one of the first two women generals in the U.S. Army. Library of Congress photo

Through the 1950s, refinement of the WAC continued. Restrictions were lifted on the number of women who could be recruited, and the Army standardized Army-green service uniforms for men and women. The first WACs to serve during the Vietnam War went overseas in 1962, but it wasn't until 1965 that WACs could serve in support elements. Army nurses accompanied the rapid buildup of

American forces in theater, and by the end of the war, more than 9,000 Army nurses had served in hospitals and clinics throughout Vietnam.

With promotion and retirement restrictions lifted in the late 1960s, Army women rose to new levels. President Richard M. Nixon selected Col. Anna Mae Hays, chief of the Army Nurse Corps, and Col. Elizabeth P. Hoisington, director of the Women's Army Corps, for promotion to brigadier general in June 1970.

The major milestone of the period was the full integration of women into the all-volunteer military that followed the Vietnam War. Women entered Army ROTC programs alongside men in 1972, the U.S. Military Academy in 1976, and integrated basic training in 1977. Their contributions were essential in the smallest peacetime military force in decades, and their status was influenced by the feminist movement of the 1970s.

By 1978, the need for a separate Women's Army Corps was gone, and the WAC was disestablished in October of that year. Women were authorized to serve the same 36-month overseas tours as their single male counterparts, and Army enlistment qualifications became identical for men and women in 1979.

Through the 1980s and 1990s, Army women broke more barriers. More than 100 women participated in the U.S. invasion of Grenada in 1983. More than 600 were involved in Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989. Capt. Linda Bray, a military police commander in Panama, became the first woman to command men in battle.



Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announces the full integration of women into the armed forces in 2015. U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kaily Brown

During Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, women were utilized in a wide variety of roles, from leading a company of Chinook helicopters into Iraq on day one of the ground war to guarding POWs and commanding battalion-sized material management centers. More than 40,000 women deployed for the conflict. Fifteen were killed and two were imprisoned by Iraqi forces.

By 1994, the “Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule” allowed

women “to be assigned to all positions for which they qualified, except for units below brigade level whose primary mission is to engage the enemy in direct combat.”

WOMEN IN THE 21ST CENTURY ARMY

Steady progress toward women’s participation in the full scope of Army missions continued in the wake of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and the advent of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.



U.S. Army soldiers from the Cultural Support Team (CST) and Female Treatment Team (FFT) are introduced to members of the women's shura held at a local compound in the village of Oshay, Uruzgan province, Afghanistan, May 4, 2011. With the support of U.S. special operations forces, the CST and FFT worked closely together in order to bring health education to women in the area, as well as give them a voice in the district. U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kaily Brown

In 2005, Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester became the first woman to be awarded the Silver Star for heroic actions in direct combat on March 20, during an enemy ambush on a supply convoy near the town of Salman Pak, Iraq. Hester and her military police squad leader, Staff Sgt. Timothy F. Nein, assaulted a trench line with hand grenades and M203 grenade launcher rounds. Nein and Hester assaulted and cleared two trenches during the 25-minute fire fight.

In 2010, the Army began utilizing Female Engagement Teams and Combat Support Teams in Afghanistan to engage female populations. Three years later, Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta ended the Defense Department's ban on women in direct ground combat roles, opening the path for their service in artillery, armor, infantry, and other combat roles and military occupational specialties.



Capt. Kristen Griest (right) and 1st Lt. Shaye Haver (left) receive their Ranger tabs during their graduation From the U.S. Army Ranger School at Fort Benning, Georgia, Aug. 21, 2015. Griest and Haver became the first female graduates of the school. U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Cortez

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter cemented the full integration of women in 2015, and beginning in January 2016, all military occupations and positions opened to women, without exception.

Now a line can be drawn from Deborah Sampson's service incognito during the Revolution to Capt. Kristen Griest and 1st Lt. Shaye L. Haver, who in 2015

became the first women to complete the Army's acclaimed Ranger School and earn their Ranger tabs. Griest and Haver accomplished their feat as fully integrated members of the U.S. Army.

This article first appeared in the Women in the Armed Forces: A Century of Service publication.



BY JAN TEGLER

Jan Tegler is a writer/broadcaster from Severna Park, Md. His work appears in a variety...

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