ARMY RESERVE

A CONCISE HISTORY

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OFFICE OF ARMY RESERVE HISTORY

U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND

The Office of Army Reserve History reports to the commanding general of the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) and has been in existence since 1992. The office provides advice and recommendations to the USARC commanding general and the leadership of the Army Reserve on Department of Defense and Army historical policy, operations, and developments, and exercises overall staff responsibility for military history programs within the Army Reserve community. The office is comprised of the director, Publications Section, Field Programs, the U.S. Army Reserve Historical Research Collection, and the National Museum of the Army Reserve. One of its functions is to write the official history of the Army Reserve. This history not only provides a comprehensive account of Army Reserve activities in peace and war, but also serves as an important tool in the on-going training of officers and noncommissioned officers in the profession of arms. The office prepares and publishes historical monographs and special historical studies on topics and events of historical significance to the Army Reserve and the Army.

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THE HERITAGE

1756-1908

The Army Reserve of today can trace its roots as a "national" or federal Citizen-Soldier force back to the French and Indian War (1756-1763) on through the Civil War (1861-1865) to the Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection (1898-1902). From its birth in 1776 through the nineteenth century, the United States remained a regional power, protected from invasion by the vast expanses of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. A large standing army was not required and the nation's defense was based primarily on the militia systems of the individual states.

After the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, with the absence of any real foreign threat, a small standing army was all that was needed to maintain peace on the frontier between the settlers and American Indians. With the crisis of a major war, the federal government mobilized large Citizen-Soldier forces and trained them for combat operations. At the close of these conflicts the Soldiers were sent home, again leaving a small standing army. However, by the turn of the twentieth century, the United States emerged as a world power with global trade routes and security concerns beyond the Western Hemisphere.

Consequently, during this transition, the United States Congress created an official Army Reserve organization in order to place a major portion of the nation's Citizen-Soldier establishment under federal control during times of peace, as well as war. Financially, this was the best option for maintaining and projecting overseas a land-power force capable of facing the military might of the other world powers. Four significant events in United States history shaped the modern Army Reserve: (1) the sinking of the battleship Maine in 1898; (2) the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941; (3) the defeat of communism with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989; and (4) the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 that live in infamy as "9/11" for most Americans.

Stand Your Ground, Lexington, Massachusetts, 19 April 1775. In the early hours of 19 April 1775, Captain John Parker was alerted to mobilize the "minutemen" of Lexington, Massachusetts, in anticipation of the British who were marching to Concord to capture provincial arms. Captain Parker's minutemen fought the first battle of the American Revolution. The "minuteman" was established as a part of the heritage of the Army Reserve by the War Department in 1922. (A National Guard Heritage Painting.)

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A MILITARY MANPOWER RESERVE:

1908 - 1945

At the end of the Nineteenth Century, a new "manifest destiny" wave carried the Americans beyond the continental United States and into the Pacific and Caribbean. Consequently, on 15 February 1898, the sinking of the American battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor ushered in the Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection (1898-1902). Mobilization problems of the Army during these conflicts, specifically shortages of medical professionals, trained officers and non-commissioned officers, caused the national leadership to finally establish a formal structure for federal volunteers during peacetime.

Initially, in 1908 Congress created the **Medical Reserve Corps**, the official predecessor of the Army Reserve. Subsequently, using its constitutional authority to "raise and support armies," through the National Defense Act of 1916 and the sweeping amendment of that law in the National Defense Act of 1920, the federal government created the **Organized Reserve Corps** (ORC). This organization would last into the 1950s, providing a peacetime pool of trained Army Reserve officers and enlisted men for use in war. The ORC included the **Officers' Reserve Corps**, **Enlisted Reserve Corps** and **Reserve Officers' Training Corps**.

Consequently, the Army mobilized nearly 90,000 Reserve officers for World War I (1917-1919), one-third of which were medical doctors. More than 80,000 enlisted Army Reserve Soldiers served of which 15,000 were assigned to medical units. The individual Army Reserve Soldiers were placed into newly organized units, were trained, and then deployed to the war zone. During the interwar period (1920 - 1940), the Army planned for an Organized Reserve force of thirty-three divisions, existing either as paper units or in a cadre status.

American Troops Advancing, Northern France, Harold Brett. (Courtesy of the Army Art Collection, U.S. Army Center of Military History). The Army mobilized nearly 90,000 Army Reserve officers for World War I. Over 80,000 enlisted Army Reserve soldiers served.

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The years between the world wars were austere, with few opportunities for training. A contingency for service, however, was created during the Great Depression. One of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs, the **Civilian Conservation Corps**, placed young men in barracks and military-style organizations to work in national forests and other outdoor projects. Between 1933 and 1939, more than 30,000 Army Reserve officers served as commanders or staff officers at the 2,700 conservation corps camps. Army Reserve participation in the American defense effort began before the United States entered the Second World War in December 1941.

The Army began calling Army Reserve officers to active duty in June 1940. In the year that followed, the number of Army Reserve officers on active duty rose from fewer than 3,000 to more than 57,000. During World War II (1941-1945), the Army mobilized twenty-six Army Reserve (designated) infantry divisions. Approximately a quarter of all Army officers who served were Army Reserve Soldiers, including over 100,000 Reserve Officers' Training Corps graduates. More than 200,000 Army Reserve Soldiers served in the war. World War II signified the beginning of a new era in national security, and from that point to the present the United States took-on the role as the "arsenal of democracy" and "world guardian," a new mission in which the Army Reserve would play a major role.

Go For Broke, H. Charles McBarron. (Courtesy of the Army Art Collection, U.S. Army Center of Military History). France, October 1944. The rain and chill which precedes winter in the Vosges mountains of France had started. The 442d Regimental Combat Team was weary and battle-scarred after fighting in Italy. On 27 October, the 442d was called on to rescue a surrounded U.S. battalion. They attacked the heavily fortified defenses of a superior German force. Fighting was desperate, often hand-to-hand. By 30 October, nearly half the regiment had become casualties. Then, something happened in the 442d. By ones and twos, almost spontaneously and without orders, the men got to their feet and, with a kind of universal anger, moved toward the enemy positions. Bitter hand-to-hand combat ensued as the Americans fought from one fortified position to the next. Finally, the enemy broke in disorder.

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THE STRATEGIC RESERVE:
1946 -1990

The Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, 7 December 1941, woke the American people from the century-old complacency that the United States, as an "island bastion," was eternally safe behind the "ocean moats" of the Atlantic and Pacific. Air power had changed the strategic paradigm forever. The 1940s also witnessed the emergence of strategic bombing, rocket (missile) technology, and nuclear weapons. After World War II, the world divided into two opposing armed camps: the Soviet Union, China, and the Warsaw Pact versus the United States and its allies. The communist nations maintained armies with millions of highly trained Soldiers and stood poised to overrun Europe and Asia at a moment's notice. The entire world and global market lay open to conquest and the spread of communist dictatorships.

To face this new threat, the United States developed a "Containment Policy" to check the growth of communism over the next forty-five years. For the first time in our history, a large military force would be required during peacetime to implement this new grand foreign policy. The units of this military force needed to be manned, equipped, trained, and ready for deployment at all times to a combat zone within a few month's notice. The Department of Defense established a system of "unified commands" in Europe, the Far East, the Pacific, Alaska, and the Caribbean to provide strategic direction for global operations. The old days of relying on untrained citizen Soldiers, which required nine months to a year to mobilize into deployable units, were over. To defray the cost of maintaining such a large military force, Congress placed heavy reliance on establishing and sustaining a more combat ready Army Reserve to deploy together with the Active Army for operations worldwide.

Recognizing the importance of the Organized Reserve to the World War II effort, Congress authorized retirement and drill pay for the first time in 1948. The Korean War (1950-1953) saw more than 240,000 Army Reserve Soldiers called to active duty. That large number reflected the Army's need

K1950 Withdrawal From KAT'O-RI, Master Sergeant Henrietta Snowden. (Courtesy of the Army Art Collection, U.S. Army Center of Military History). The Korean War saw over 240,000 Army Reserve soldiers called to active duty. More than seventy Army Reserve units served in Korea.

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for organized, trained personnel in a short period of time. More than seventy Army Reserve units served in Korea. While the Korean Conflict was still underway, Congress began making significant changes in the structure and role of the Army Reserve. These changes transformed the Organized Reserve into the **United States Army Reserve** (USAR). This new organization was divided into a Ready Reserve, Standby Reserve, and Retired Reserve. Army Reserve units were authorized twenty-four inactive duty training days a year and up to seventeen days of active duty (called annual training). The president was given authority to order up to one million uniformed personnel of the reserve components from all services to active duty. These congressional actions were directly related to experiences gained during the activation and subsequent service of Army Reserve units in the Korean War. Acting to signify the new vital role of the Reserves to the nation's defense, President Harry S. Truman established the **Armed Forces Reserve Medal** by executive order in 1950. For the first time, Army Reserve Soldiers received an official award for consecutive periods of service in ten year increments.

In operations following the Korean War, the Army intended to maintain the integrity of mobilized Army Reserve units. As a standard, officers and enlisted men were not stripped out of organized units and sent into operations as replacements. Instead, the Army attempted to mobilize and deploy fully trained and manned Army Reserve units at the outbreak of the conflict. Thus, the lessons learned from the Korean War set the precedent for readiness of all Army Reserve organizations in future call-ups. During the period from 1968 to 1974 and with the end of the Vietnam War (1961-1975), Congress reduced the Army end-strength from 1.5 million to 785,000 Active Duty Soldiers. The end of the draft coincided with the announcement of the **Total Force Policy** in 1973. This new policy, also known as the **Abrams Doctrine** for Army Chief of Staff General Creighton W. Abrams, Jr., placed an increased reliance on reserve component units for rapid deployment to military operations. It called for the United States to maintain an active force capable of maintaining peace and deterring aggression across the globe. Those forces would be reinforced, when necessary, by a well-trained and equipped reserve component within a month's notice.

The effect of an all-volunteer Army and the Total Force Policy was a shift of important responsibilities and resources to the Army Reserve. The intent was to ensure that the Army would never again engage in a major conflict without the reserve components. To support this concept, after 1967 the Army Reserve became increasingly combat support and combat service support oriented, and in that same year Congress established the **Office of the Chief, Army Reserve** (OCAR) within the Army Staff to give Army Reserve Soldiers an official spokesman at the Department of the Army level. However, throughout the entire Cold War period, after the Korean War, the Army Reserve was mobilized only twice; over 68,500 Army Reserve Soldiers for the Berlin Crisis (1961-1962) and nearly 6,000 for the Vietnam War during the period from 1968 to 1969. In reality, it existed as a strategic reserve and the Active Army handled most military operations without the reserve components. This would all change with the end of the Cold War and the further draw-down of the Active Army in the 1990s.

Convoy from Cu Chi to Tay Ninh, Vietnam 1967, William Linzee Prescott. (Courtesy of the Army Art Collection, U.S. Army Center of Military History). Forty-two Army Reserve units were mobilized in 1968, with thirty-five going to Vietnam.

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THE OPERATIONAL RESERVE:

1990 - Present

The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 marked the symbolic end of the Cold War and a victory of the free world over totalitarianism. The likelihood of the Soviet Union posing the threat it once did seemed unlikely. The world looked safer. Thus, in the post Cold War period, the United States perceived a reduced danger and sought a "peace dividend" through significant reductions in military budgets and manpower levels. The mission for America's armed forces to remain the "world guardian," however, did not change. In fact, by this time, the unified command system had expanded to include Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. Meanwhile, the late twentieth century experienced a revolution in military affairs through advances in information management (digital technology), which seemed to render past forms of warfare obsolete. This new technology was significant because it allowed Soldiers to view the battlefield in real-time and enhanced logistical management to better control supplies. Also, throughout the twentieth century, the demands of modern warfare caused the number of combat support and combat service support specialty branches to multiply and grow in complexity, making the manning of such units more difficult.

Faced with implementing a global peacekeeping mission with a greatly curtailed military budget and active military force, Congress intended to leverage the reserve components and the new technologies to make up the difference. This required the Army Reserve to be manned, equipped and trained at levels comparable to the Active Army. Such a capability allowed the Army components to be more versatile and function as one team on the battlefield. It was from this concept that the Army Reserve "Operational Reserve" would evolve over the next twenty years. Consequently, to improve the combat readiness of Army Reserve units, Congress mandated the creation of the **United States Army Reserve Command** (USARC) in October 1990 to provide for more centralized management. In addition, a major post Cold War effort to restructure the Army's reserve components culminated with the 1993 "**Offsite Agreement**." This compromise stabilized force structure and end-strength reductions, so the Army could place more reliance on the reserve components for military operations.

Saudi Arabia, January 1991. The 316th Quartermaster Company distributes water at an XVIII Airborne Corps site in central Saudi Arabia. The 316th, an Army Reserve unit from San Diego, California, distributed 8.4 million gallons of water during the Persian Gulf War and in support of Kurdish relief efforts in northern Iraq. Army Reserve Units contributed significantly to the Total Army's success by providing the bulk of water purification and distribution, civil affairs support, enemy prisoner-of-war handling, postal work, petroleum handling, military history, and psychological operations. Other participating Army Reserve units included chemical decontamination, transportation, military police, maintenance, and engineer. (An Army Reserve Historical Painting.)

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The agreement led to the National Guard specializing in combat arms and divisional level combat support and service support, allowing the Army Reserve to specialize in combat support and service support at corps levels and above. This enabled the Active Army to maintain higher levels of combat arms troops. Nothing epitomized this change in mission better than the amendments made in the 1990s for the **Armed Forces Reserve Medal**, which authorized its award for mobilization and later added an "M" Mobilization Device and numbers for each different contingency operation a Reserve Soldier was called-up to serve.

Meanwhile, the hope for world peace was soon shattered by new crises and instabilities. Countries with their regional tensions once held in check by the bipolar superpower struggle surfaced, creating a multi-polar threat. The period of relevant calm was shattered on 2 August 1990, when more than 100,000 of Saddam Hussein's soldiers invaded Kuwait. For forty years, the reserve component units had been a warfighting force trained and held in strategic reserve for low probability/high intensity conflicts. Now, because of massive manpower cuts, the Active Army could not deploy without the Army Reserve. Consequently, the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990 led to the largest call-up of reserve component personnel since the Korean War for operations DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM. Approximately 80,000 Army Reserve Soldiers provided combat support and combat service support to the coalition forces fighting Iraq in the Persian Gulf and site support to the armed forces of the United States elsewhere in the world. Of that number, over 35,000 Army Reserve Soldiers deployed to Southwest Asia. Included in the call-up were 21,000 members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) who filled vacancies in units or performed other specialized duties. Army Reserve Soldiers were among the first called to active duty, and were among the last to leave the desert. Army Reserve units prepared equipment for retrograde to the United States or Europe long after the conflict ended.

Follow-on short-term contingency operations started to show a similar pattern, including Operation RESTORE HOPE (the Somalia relief expedition), where nearly fifty Army Reserve volunteers staffed a postal company. Army Reserve civil affairs and public affairs Soldiers also served in Somalia until United States forces departed in 1994. Four hundred Army Reserve Soldiers from seventeen units served in Haiti as part of Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY. In 1995, forty-one volunteers served as engineers, military police and radar specialists in the multi-national peacekeeping force in Egypt. Army Reserve Soldiers from 1995 to 2000 made up 70 percent of the combat support and service support element for the United States Army peacekeeping implementation force (IFOR), and subsequent stabilization force (SFOR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The total number of Reserve Soldiers mobilized for Bosnia-Herzegovina exceeded 16,000. By the close of the twentieth century, the Army Reserve comprised almost 25 percent of the Army's total combat support and 45 percent of combat service support units.

The terrorist acts of 11 September 2001, soon after abbreviated to just "9/11", ushered in the new millennium and established a milestone in the nation's history. Over ten years of persistent conflict, with the attendant continual rotation of Army forces, required paradigm changes in the way the Army fights and generates forces. The size of the active Army proved insufficient to the demand required. Accordingly, both the United States Army Reserve and the Army National Guard were routinely called upon to satisfy requirements both in the Homeland and globally – but primarily in the Southwest Asia Theater of Operations, Iraq and Afghanistan. Prolonged force generation required the Army to develop a new force provision model titled "Army Force Generation" (ARFORGEN). As a result of increased resources for training and the experience derived from multiple combat rotations, the Army Reserve achieved unprecedented levels of readiness. This confluence of events led to the Army Reserve being "dubbed" as an "operational force."

Not willing to sacrifice the decade long investment in this Army Reserve reformation, the nation now calls upon Army Reserve Soldiers to expect mobilization as a probability, not a possibility. Business as usual, one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer, is anachronistic, representing the "old legacy" strategic reserve, not the evolving operational, "expeditionary" Army Reserve, the seeds of which had been planted in the 1990s. Since, 9/11 approximately 200,000 Army Reserve Soldiers have been activated in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Today, almost 150,000 Army Reserve Soldiers serve in over 1600 units progressing through the Army's five year, rotational ARFORGEN model. Quite simply, the nation cannot go to war without the critical capabilities resident in the Army Reserve. Accordingly, victory can only be attained with a totally integrated, three component (active Army, Army National Guard, Army Reserve) expeditionary force capable of persistent decisive action together with the other branches of the armed forces. Army Reserve Warrior Citizens have been tested in the crucible of combat, earning their status as full partners in those operations; no longer a supplemental, strategic reserve force but rather an able and operational force upon whom the Nation must routinely call.

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During Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the 459th Engineer Company (Multi-Role Bridge), an Army Reserve unit from Bridgeport, West Virginia, lays an aluminum float ribbon bridge under enemy fire across the Diyala River southeast of Baghdad. The spearhead of the 1 Marine Expeditionary Force required the crossing in order to expand its dismounted infantry bridgehead with tank support before entering Baghdad. Other missions accomplished by the 459th included bridging the Euphrates River and convoy security. (An Army Reserve Historical Painting)

Army Reserve Heritage, 1775-Present. The citizen-soldiers of the American Revolution were the precursors of Army Reserve Soldiers who proudly serve our country today. Since 1908, the federal citizen-soldiers of the Army Reserve have answered the call to duty in all of the nation's major conflicts. Army Reserve Soldiers have also contributed to our national security through humanitarian and nation-building actions both overseas and at home. Today's Army Reserve is ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century as it has in the past. (An Army Reserve Historical Painting.)

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