

# I Am an American Soldier

I am an American soldier. Since the earliest years of our Nation, I have taken part in its defense.

I marched with General Washington and the Continental Army, suffering with them the cold, harsh conditions of war. Sometimes, disguised as a man, I shouldered a rifle and fought the enemy.

During the War of 1812 and in the War with Mexico, I cared for the wounded. I was on the battlefields of the Civil War, serving the North or the South. Whatever my task - soldier, spy, courier nurse or doctor, I performed my duties with courage and devotion.

Early in the Twentieth Century, our Nation recognized the caliber of my service by founding the Army Nurse Corps.

When the First World War came, I was one of the women who manned switchboards, drove ambulances and performed many essential tasks on the home front or with General Pershing's forces in France.

I gained the status of soldier in May 1942, when the Army formed the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. That summer I stood tall with the other volunteers on the parade ground at Fort Des Moines as we acknowledged our Debt with Destiny and Debt to Democracy.

Within a year I was no longer an Auxiliary. I was now a member of the Women's Army Corps, joining women known for their strong sense of duty and their esprit. We served the Army with pride, whenever our skills were needed - at home and abroad, in peace and in war, from Europe to Japan, Korea to South Vietnam.

In 1978, the Women's Army Corps passed into history. We became a truly integral part of the Army. Today, I honor all the women who came before us, who gave us our heritage and who made possible the opportunities we now have. The spirit of these women and the spirit of the Women's Army Corps will always live in our hearts.

Now I am one with the women who served in countless peacekeeping missions around the world, from Grenada to Panama, Desert Storm to Somalia and Bosnia. I am one with the long line of women who suffered wounds and died on the battlefield, endured separation and uncertainty, were prisoners of war and survived to return to serve again.

I am, indeed, an American Soldier: Proud of my profession, ready to perform any duty assigned to me and to answer the call when my country needs me.

-General Brigadeer Evelyn P. Foote

In service: 1959-1989