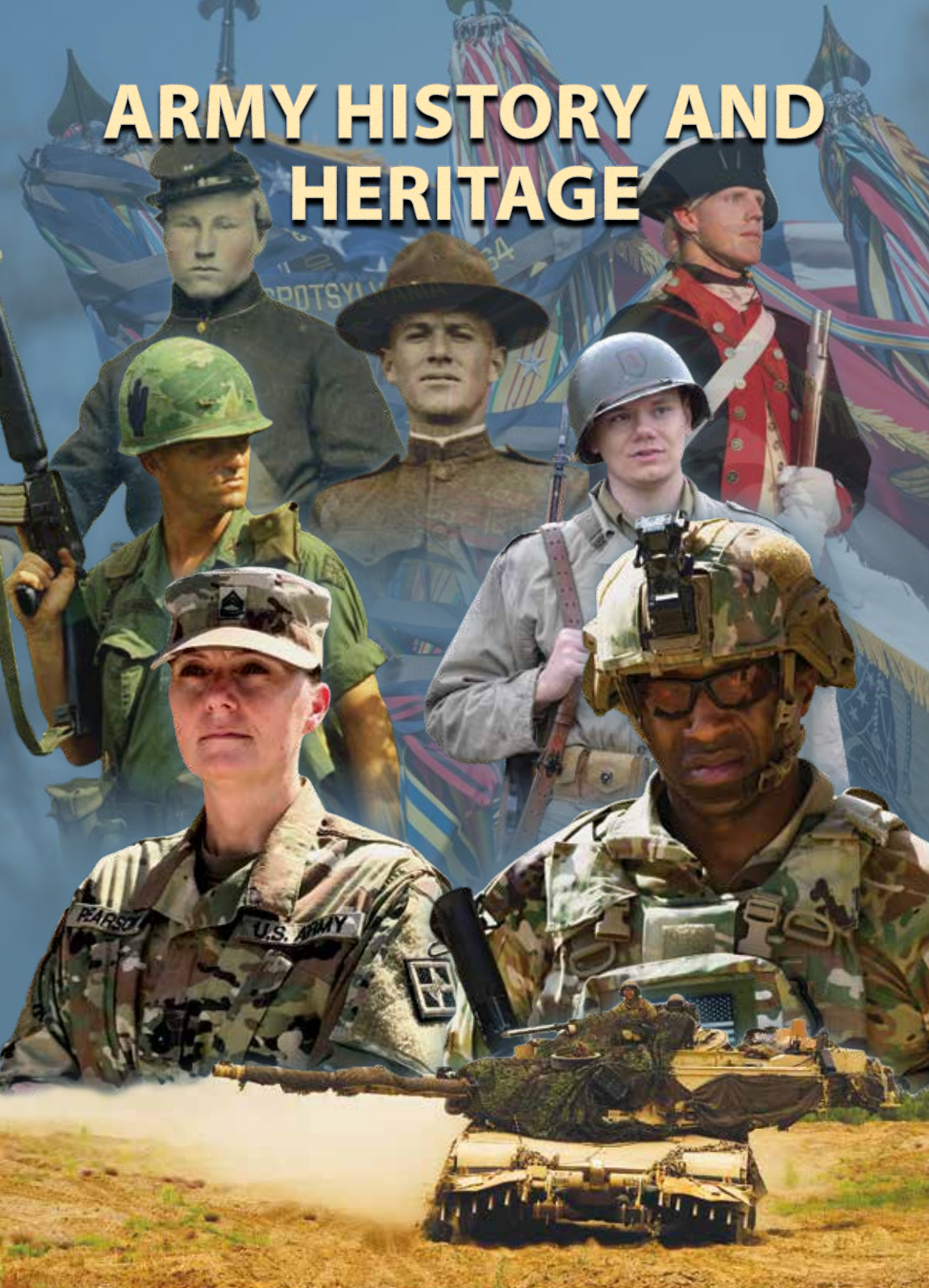


# ARMY HISTORY AND HERITAGE



General Paul E. Funk II, United States Army



# ARMY HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Foreword by General Paul E. Funk II, United States Army



Center of Military History  
United States Army  
Washington, D.C. 2022



# FOREWORD

This book is dedicated in honor and in memory of General William W. Hartzog, the ninth commanding general of the Training and Doctrine Command and a historian at heart. He wrote the initial version of this book, *American Military Heritage*, “to provide a reference that could help drill instructors and other Army leaders instill an appreciation for the lore and traditions that make up the Army’s rich heritage.”

The study and understanding of military history and appreciation of our proud and rich heritage are critical to personal and professional growth for soldiers. They are the foundation that allows us to expand our expertise within the profession of arms. They lay the cornerstone for our personal contribution to our Army, and give us the means to leave it in a better place than we found it.

We stand on the shoulders of the exceptional men and women, who, for nearly 250 years, have made history and forged our shared heritage. Our history is our incredible legacy. It connects the current generation of soldiers to our departed but not forgotten brethren. It demonstrates that no matter how much time has passed, we continue to be the most lethal and powerful Army in the world. History reminds us that we serve for something far greater than ourselves and that we are willing to endure incredible sacrifices for the love of our great nation.

A professional Army continuously strives for excellence and self-improvement. Learning from significant historical events can be painful, informative, and incredibly inspirational. Let us strive to learn from the lessons of those proud warriors who came before us, so that we never need to relive the trials of the past.

Victory Starts Here!

Fort Eustis, Virginia  
7 January 2022

GENERAL PAUL E. FUNK II  
17th Commanding General,  
U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command





# **A CHANGING WORLD: FROM THE PERSIAN GULF WAR TO THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM**

*by Nicholas J. Schlosser*

When the Cold War ended in 1989, the U.S. Army found itself at a crossroads. The fall of the Soviet-led communist bloc heralded a peace dividend as the U.S. government cut defense spending and reduced the size of the military. The Army inactivated a number of divisions and quickly drew down its forward-based posture in Western Europe. The total strength of the force went from more than 770,000 soldiers in 1989 to 529,000 in 1994. Nevertheless, the Army juggled a wide range of missions and responsibilities—peacekeeping, preparing for large-scale conflict, disaster relief, and other contingency operations—with a force much smaller than in previous decades.

Within months of the dissolution of the Soviet bloc, the Army confronted a new threat in the Middle East. On 2 August 1990, Iraq invaded its neighbor to the south, Kuwait. Iraq's dictator, Saddam Hussein, now controlled a substantial part of the world's oil supply and threatened its neighbor to the west, Saudi Arabia. In response, President George H. W. Bush launched Operation DESERT SHIELD. The United States assembled a coalition of more than thirty countries, including the United Kingdom, France, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates, to defend Saudi Arabia from Iraqi invasion. U.S. Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf Jr. oversaw the allied forces. During the fall of 1990, the United States and its coalition partners assembled a massive force in Saudi Arabia numbering around 750,000 troops.

On 17 January 1991, after months seeking a diplomatic solution, the U.S.-led coalition launched Operation DESERT STORM to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. The war began with an air campaign against Iraq, bombing its key infrastructure and armed forces. After weeks of









Abrams tank in Operation DESERT STORM (U.S. Army)

unremitting air strikes that devastated the Iraqi military, the coalition commenced a ground war on 24 February 1991. As U.S. Marines and coalition allies advanced into Kuwait, Lt. Gen. Frederick M. Franks Jr.'s VII Corps and Lt. Gen. Gary E. Luck's XVIII Airborne Corps swept across Iraq's southern border and struck the enemy's western flank. During the offensive, Army units fought a number of large-scale armored battles, including at 73 Easting and Medina Ridge. Iraqi forces were unable to stop this armored onslaught. After four days of fighting and mass surrenders, Iraq agreed to a cease-fire. The Americans suffered 148 battle deaths and the coalition allies 99. Estimates for Iraqi killed in action were about 20,000. The war demonstrated both the effectiveness of the all-volunteer force and the battlefield superiority of the Army's Big Five combat systems. However, although the allies liberated Kuwait, Saddam Hussein remained in control of Iraq. After the end of the Gulf War, the United Nations ordered Saddam Hussein to destroy his arsenal of weapons of mass destruction—consisting of chemical and biological munitions—and open up his country to weapons inspectors. Throughout the 1990s, Saddam regularly thwarted these inspections. He also threatened to invade Kuwait again and ruthlessly crushed several rebellions against his rule. In response, the United States and allied states established no-fly zones across Iraq's north and south to protect vulnerable populations and regularly sent Army forces to Kuwait in case Saddam launched a second invasion.

The coalition's overwhelming victory against the Iraqi military led many observers to declare that a revolution in military affairs



A U.S. Army medic renders aid to a Somali child. (U.S. Army)

was underway. Arguing that advanced technology had altered radically the nature of war, some pressed the Army to embrace greater transformation initiatives such as enhanced battlefield networks, the global positioning system, and other digital innovations to make the service into a lighter, more agile (but still lethal) ground combat force that could deploy quickly across the globe. Among the most significant results of these initiatives was the introduction of the Stryker brigade combat team at the turn of the century. Using the Stryker light armored vehicle and a new system of battlefield network capabilities, Army Chief of Staff General Eric K. Shinseki intended to create a unit that balanced the light infantry divisions' agility with the firepower of heavy armored divisions.

As planners explored new transformation initiatives back home, various missions continued to test the Army overseas. In 1992, the United States joined a United Nations intervention in the Somali Civil War to help end a famine afflicting the country and to restore political stability. Both Regular Army units and special operations forces participated in the peacekeeping mission. On 3 October, militias in Mogadishu downed two Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters. Over the course of a brutal ten-hour battle marked by intense, close-quarter gunfights, U.S. soldiers fought to secure the crash sites and rescue survivors. The battle ended with seventeen U.S. soldiers killed in action. With the American public unwilling to accept casualties in support of an ill-defined, open-ended mission, President William J. Clinton decided to withdraw the American forces from the country.



Soldiers from the 2d Platoon, Company B, 9th Engineer Battalion, take a break while conducting a bunker-busting operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1996. (U.S. Army)

The Army participated in several other peacekeeping operations during the 1990s. In 1994, U.S. soldiers arrived in Haiti to help restore its democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who had been in exile since a military coup deposed him in 1991. In 1995, the Army also deployed to southeastern Europe to serve as part of an international force to prevent further outbreaks of violence among different ethnic and religious groups after the breakup of the multiethnic country of Yugoslavia. Soldiers helped secure the former Yugoslav states of Bosnia and Herzegovina beginning in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999.

As the twentieth century ended, many Army planners anticipated the service would continue to perform these types of peacekeeping missions well into the new century. These predictions proved false when on 11 September 2001 members of the radical Islamic group al-Qaeda hijacked four airliners, flying two into the World Trade Center's twin towers in New York City and one into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. Passengers thwarted hijackers' attempts to use the fourth plane as a missile, crashing it in Pennsylvania. The attack's architect, Osama bin Laden, coordinated the strikes in response to the presence of U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia, America's continued support for Israel, and his belief that the United States was at war with the Islamic world.

In response to al-Qaeda's attacks, President George W. Bush launched the Global War on Terrorism. Bush declared that his administration

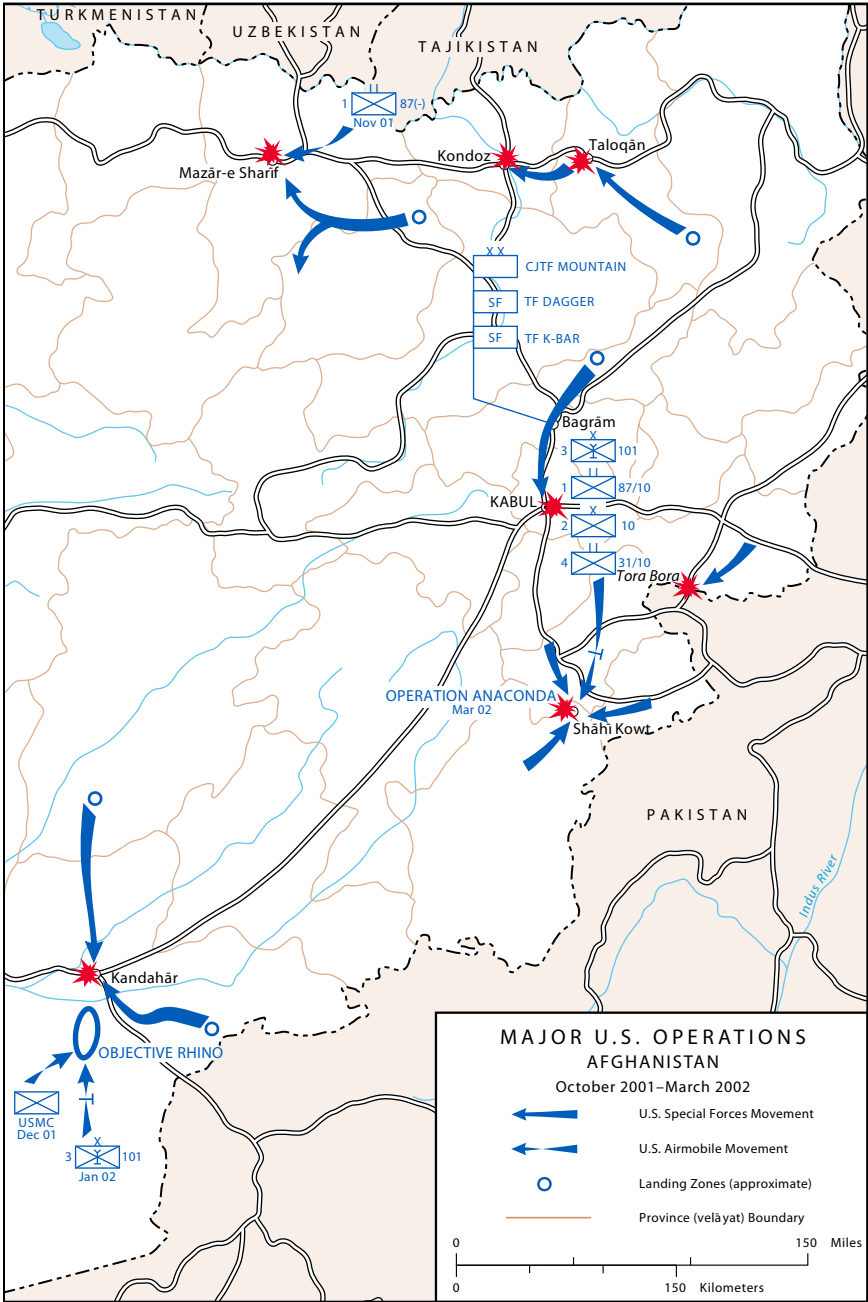


Aerial view of the Pentagon during post-11 September 2001 rescue operations (*U.S. Air Force*)

would “pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.” President Bush saw the War on Terrorism as a global conflict in which the United States would fight all possible terrorist threats, even if it meant preempting attacks before they occurred. This marked a radical shift in American foreign policy. Whereas before 2001, the U.S. military posture was primarily defensive, the United States now would use its forces to prevent potential terrorist threats against the American homeland.

At the time of the 11 September attacks, al-Qaeda’s leadership had been afforded safe haven in the southwest Asian country of Afghanistan, which was ruled by a group of religious clerics called the Taliban. On 7 October, the United States launched Operation ENDURING FREEDOM to destroy al-Qaeda’s refuge in Afghanistan. Special Forces helped Afghan resistance groups overthrow the Taliban while American airpower hammered enemy defenses and provided critical close air support. By the end of the year, the U.S.-led coalition had driven the Taliban from power. One of the resistance’s leaders, Hamid Karzai, became the country’s new president.

Afterward, U.S. forces and a NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)-led International Security Assistance Force remained in Afghanistan to help the country rebuild. At the same time, American



Map 2

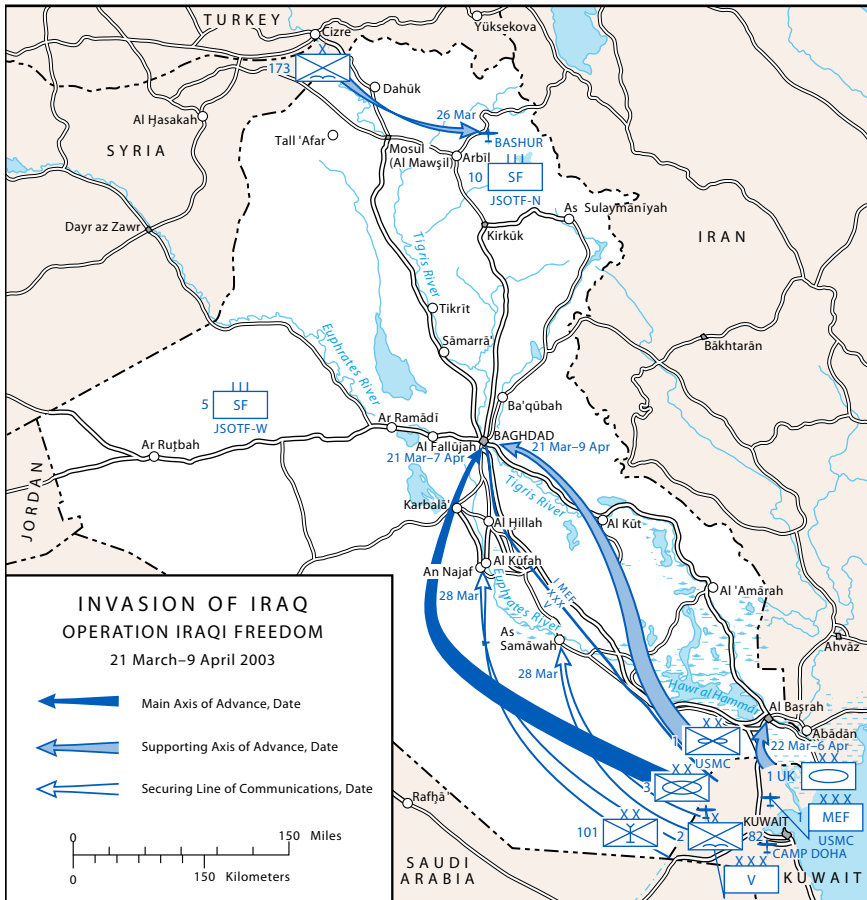
troops continued efforts to locate Osama bin Laden and destroy al-Qaeda, whose members largely had dispersed into the mountainous terrain along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The U.S. armed forces maintained pressure on the terrorist organization, but bin Laden nevertheless remained at large.

Afghanistan proved to be a difficult country to stabilize. It was also just one theater of a much larger struggle against international terrorist organizations. As soldiers fought in the frigid mountains of eastern Afghanistan, Army personnel also deployed to warmer climes to assist countries such as the Philippines in Southeast Asia and Djibouti in Africa defeat terrorist organizations in those regions.

President Bush believed Iraq—still ruled by Saddam Hussein—was a potential threat and likely sponsor of terrorism. The dictator continued to impede United Nations inspectors, leading senior figures in the Bush administration to conclude that he was likely hiding stores of chemical and biological weapons. Bristling under the American-enforced no-fly zones, and with his economy crippled by sanctions, Saddam had a motive to sell his weapons to terrorist groups as a means of striking at the United States. Concluding that allowing Saddam to remain in power constituted a risk to U.S. security, the United States launched an invasion of Iraq in March 2003. Under the overall command of Lt. Gen. David D. McKiernan's Coalition Forces Land Component Command, the Army's V Corps and the I Marine Expeditionary Force reached Iraq's capital, Baghdad, within a matter of weeks. However, although Saddam's regime collapsed, the coalition lacked enough troops to secure Iraq's capital and other critical cities.

U.S. planners anticipated that the handover of power from coalition forces to a new democratic Iraqi government would be a relatively smooth one. However, mass looting in Baghdad and general disorder prompted the Bush administration to create a U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to administer Iraq. The CPA dissolved the Iraqi Army and purged its civil service of members of Saddam's political movement, putting thousands of individuals out of work and leaving them embittered and frustrated with the new, post-Saddam government. Over the summer of 2003, Iraqis opposed to the presence of U.S. occupation forces began staging attacks against coalition forces and the new government.

Realizing that the Army would now need to support long-term security campaigns in both Iraq and Afghanistan, Chief of Staff General Peter J. Schoomaker accelerated efforts to transform the Army into an expeditionary force. During the Cold War, the Army had based entire divisions overseas permanently. Now, most of these units were located in the United States. Whereas previously the Army built its force structure



Map 3

around the division, now the primary deployable unit was the brigade combat team. Army leaders also created the Army Force Generation planning model to coordinate deployments and ensure units had sufficient recovery time in the United States between overseas duties. The National Guard and Army Reserve—once strategic reserves—now became operationalized elements of the total force whose members could expect to deploy overseas on a regular basis.

Between 2003 and 2006, the United States struggled to stabilize Iraq and lay the foundations for a new democratic government. The insurgents used ambushes and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to disrupt coalition supply lines, staged mass-casualty attacks, and plunged Iraq into chaos. Although the coalition successfully cleared a number of insurgent



strongholds, such as the city of Fallujah in 2004, the insurgency remained a persistent threat to stability in Iraq. After the destruction of the Golden Mosque, a major shrine in the northern city of Samarra, open fighting erupted between Iraq's two Islamic sects: the Sunni and the Shi'a.

In 2007, President Bush committed a "surge" of Army and Marine Corps forces to restore security across the country and protect the Iraqi people. His administration also extended the standard deployment period for units in Iraq and Afghanistan from twelve months to fifteen months. This decision was a difficult one,

placing considerable burdens on soldiers and their families. However, the Defense Department believed it was necessary for the Army to maintain enough forces in Iraq to turn the war in the coalition's favor. Under the leadership of General David H. Petraeus, the newly expanded force reduced violence and significantly diminished the threat posed by insurgent groups such as al-Qaeda in Iraq and Shi'a militias such as Jaysh al-Mahdi. The number of attacks dropped to such a level that President Barack H. Obama felt confident he could withdraw most American forces from Iraq at the end of 2011. However, after the U.S. withdrawal, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki pursued a pro-Shi'a policy that alienated many of Iraq's Sunni. This decision would have major consequences a few years later.

By 2008, Afghanistan threatened to fall once again into disorder. Pakistan allowed the remnants of the Taliban to rebuild their forces, and the United States had insufficient troops to secure the entire country while also conducting operations in Iraq. The newly resurgent Taliban commenced attacks in a bid to undermine the effectiveness of President Karzai's government and to take control of the country once again. The success of the surge in Iraq convinced President Obama to employ a similar strategy in Afghanistan in 2009. Under the leadership of Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, reinforced U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan conducted a comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign to protect the people



General David H. Petraeus  
(Department of Defense)

from Taliban attacks and create conditions that would allow the Americans and their allies to transfer the security mission in the country to Afghan forces.

Although the surge in Iraq led to a dramatic drop in violence across the country, the results of the Afghan surge were uneven. Many Afghan government officials were corrupt and the population did not feel that their leadership represented them. Taliban fighters could withdraw across the border to safe havens in Pakistan, where they regrouped, rearmed, and recruited new members. Many Afghans living in remote villages also came to see the Taliban as a more effective government than the official one in Kabul. At the same time, the

United States degraded al-Qaeda's forces with a mix of conventional operations, special operations forces, and unmanned aerial vehicles. The United States achieved a major victory on 2 May 2011 when U.S. Navy special operations forces located and killed Osama bin Laden in a hide-out in Pakistan. At the end of 2014, President Obama declared an end to Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and withdrew U.S. combat troops from Afghanistan. However, the United States still maintained a contingent of military advisers to assist the Afghan security forces.

Concurrently, U.S. forces were engaged in another war in Iraq—this time to defend it from the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). In 2011, a civil war in Syria broke out and immediately began to impact neighboring states, including Iraq. In 2014, ISIS—which had emerged from the remnants of al-Qaeda in Iraq—took advantage of the war's chaos to launch a large-scale offensive. It took over a huge swath of territory encompassing most of eastern Syria and western Iraq. ISIS subsequently declared this area a new Islamic caliphate and set about creating a new religious government over the region.

In response to ISIS's offensive, the United States launched Operation INHERENT RESOLVE in the summer of 2014. Wary of committing U.S. soldiers in large numbers to Iraq, the Obama administration focused



General Stanley A. McChrystal  
(Department of Defense)



An M109A6 Paladin self-propelled, 155-mm. howitzer supports Iraqi security forces' push toward Mosul, 17 October 2016 (U.S. Army)

instead on rebuilding the Iraqi Army—badly battered by ISIS’s assault—and providing close air support. Using a deliberate, patient approach, the United States assembled a coalition to assist the Iraqis, who were then able to halt ISIS’s offensive and lay the groundwork for a counterattack. Many of those involved in the American effort were veterans of the Iraq War with experience working alongside and advising Iraqi security forces.

At the end of 2016, Iraqi forces began a large-scale offensive in the north to retake the city of Mosul, the largest city under ISIS’s control in Iraq. By December 2017, Iraq had destroyed the bulk of ISIS’s forces in the country. At the same time, Syrian resistance groups, with the assistance of U.S. special operations personnel, successfully liberated the Syrian city of Raqqa, which ISIS had used as its capital. By the spring of 2019, ISIS’s physical caliphate had all but collapsed. Wary that ISIS could regroup and reemerge as a threat, the United States continued to maintain a force of advisers in Iraq through 2021 and beyond.

As the United States conducted operations throughout Southwest Asia, it also began to recommit more of its forces to Europe and the Pacific. After the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula in 2014, the Obama administration deployed Army units to Europe to strengthen the U.S. commitment to NATO. Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE constituted the first regular rotation of American Army units to Europe since the end of the Cold War. Meanwhile, the continuing rise

of the People's Republic of China and its increasingly assertive posture in the South China Sea led the Obama administration to pivot to the Pacific and ensure the United States had sufficient forces in the region to defend its allies throughout southern and eastern Asia.

Meanwhile, the United States ended its involvement in Afghanistan. In 2019, President Donald J. Trump, negotiated a truce with the Taliban and his successor, President Joseph R. Biden Jr., withdrew the last U.S. personnel from the country in 2021. Unfortunately, the Afghan security forces were unable to stave off the Taliban's final offensives, which ended with the religious group once again taking control of the country at the end of August 2021.

As the twenty-first century enters its third decade, the Army remains the United States' principal ground warfare service. It continues to train and equip soldiers to fight and win our nation's wars across the full spectrum of conflict.

# TIMELINE

## Gulf War (1990–1991)

### 1990

- 2 August: Iraq invades Kuwait
- 7 August: Operation DESERT SHIELD begins. U.S. and coalition forces deploy to defend Saudi Arabia.

### 1991

- 17 January: Operation DESERT STORM begins with a coalition strategic and tactical air war against Iraq.
- 24 February: Coalition ground offensive begins against Iraq to liberate Kuwait.
- 26 February: Battle of 73 Easting
- 27 February: Battle of Medina Ridge
- 28 February: Cease-fire

## Somalia Intervention (1992–1995)

### 1992

- 4 December: President George H. W. Bush orders deployment of U.S. combat forces to Somalia to protect humanitarian aid efforts.

### 1993

- 3–4 October: Battle of Mogadishu

### 1994

- 25 March: Majority of U.S. troops withdraw from Somalia

### 1995

- 3 March: Last United Nations soldiers withdraw from Somalia.

## Bosnian War (1992–1995)

### 1994–1995

- United States participates in NATO air campaign against Serb militant forces to protect Bosnian Muslims.

### 1995

- 2 December: U.S. troops deploy to Bosnia-Herzegovina to enforce the Dayton Accords, ending the war in Bosnia.

## Haitian Intervention (1994–1995)

- U.S. Army and Marine Corps forces deploy to Haiti to help remove a military regime and restore President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to office.

## **Kosovo War (1998–1999)**

### **1998**

- 28 February: Major fighting begins between the Serbian government and Kosovo Liberation Army.
- 24 March: NATO begins a bombing campaign against Serbia to force it to withdraw its forces from Kosovo.

### **1999**

- 12 June: Kosovo Force peacekeepers, including U.S. soldiers and marines, enter Kosovo.

## **Afghanistan War (2001–2021)**

### **2001**

- 11 September: al-Qaeda terrorist attacks on the United States
- 7 October: Start of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM
- 7–19 December: Battle of Tora Bora

### **2002**

- 2–19 March: Operation ANACONDA

### **2006**

- 2–17 September: Operation MEDUSA

### **2008**

- 13 July: Battle of Wanat

### **2009**

- 3 October: Battle for Combat Outpost KEATING

### **2010**

- 13 February–7 December: Battle of Marjah

### **2011**

- 2 May: U.S. Navy SEALs locate and kill Osama bin Laden, architect of the 11 September 2001 attacks, in Pakistan.

### **2014**

- 28 December: Operation ENDURING FREEDOM ends in Afghanistan. Succeeded by Operation RESOLUTE SUPPORT. United States adopts an advisory role in Afghanistan.

### **2018**

- 27 February: Afghan President Ashraf Ghani proposes peace talks with the Taliban.

### **2020**

- 29 February: United States and Taliban conclude peace agreement calling for the eventual withdrawal of U.S. forces.

### **2021**

- 1 May–30 August: Taliban launches summer offensive and takes control of Afghanistan. Last U.S. forces withdraw from the country.

## **Iraq War (2003–2011)**

### **2003**

- 20 March: Coalition forces invade Iraq.
- 3–12 April: Coalition forces reach Baghdad. Saddam Hussein's regime falls.
- 16 May: Coalition Provisional Authority assumes control of Iraq.
- 13 December: U.S. forces capture Saddam Hussein.

### **2004**

- 4 April–1 May: First Battle of Fallujah between Coalition forces and Sunni insurgents
- 5–27 August: Battle of Najaf between Coalition forces and Shi'a militias
- 7 November–23 December: Second Battle of Fallujah between Coalition forces and Sunni insurgents

### **2005**

- 1 September–19 February 2006: Battle of Tal Afar.

### **2006**

- 22 February: Sunni insurgents destroy Golden Mosque in Samarra, sparking sectarian war between Iraqi Sunni and Shi'a.
- 14 September–15 February 2007: Battle of Ramadi and birth of the Al-Anbar Awakening

### **2007**

- 10 January: President George W. Bush announces surge of U.S. forces to secure Iraq from the insurgency and sectarian violence.
- 14 February–24 November: Battle of Baghdad
- 16 June–14 August: Operation PHANTOM THUNDER: Surge summer offensive

### **2008**

- 23 March–20 May: Battle of Sadr City

### **2011**

- 18 December: Last U.S. combat troops withdraw from Iraq.

## **Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE (2014)**

- April: First rotation of U.S. Army forces to Europe to participate in NATO deterrence operations against Russia.

## **War against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (2014–)**

### **2014**

- 8 August: U.S. forces commence air strikes on ISIS positions in northern Iraq.

### **2016**

- 16 October–16 July 2017: Battle of Mosul. U.S.-advised Iraqi forces retake Mosul from ISIS.
- 5 November–17 October 2017: Battle of Raqqa. Syrian resistance forces, assisted by U.S.-led coalition, drive ISIS from its capital city.

### **2019:**

- March 23: Liberation of the last ISIS-held territory

## PEOPLE, ARTIFACTS, EVENTS

**General Colin L. Powell** was a major architect of American foreign policy during the final decade of the twentieth century. Born in 1937 to Jamaican immigrants in New York City, Powell attended City College of New York, joined the Reserve Officer Training Corps, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army in 1958. He subsequently served two tours in Vietnam and became Deputy National Security Advisor in 1986, National Security Advisor in 1987, and then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1989.

As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Powell articulated the principle that the United States should go to war with a clear and attainable objective and commit overwhelming military force against the enemy. The Powell Doctrine saw its clearest demonstration during the Gulf War from 1990 to 1991, as the United States and its coalition allies built up a massive force to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. General Powell also oversaw the U.S. intervention in Panama and the opening phase of the American peacekeeping mission in Somalia.

Powell retired from the military in 1993. He returned to government service in 2001 when President George W. Bush appointed him Secretary of State. The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq dominated his term. During his tenure, he also helped increase American funding to fight AIDS in Africa and continued to support and foster the international partnerships upon which he believed the United States' security and prosperity depended.





General Colin Powell by Henrietta Snowden  
(U.S. Army Art Collection)



Gary I. Gordon and Randall D. Shughart (photographed as Sergeants First Class)  
(Department of Defense)

On 3 October 1993, U.S. special operations forces supporting international humanitarian efforts in Somalia launched a raid into the city of Mogadishu against local warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid. During the operation, enemy militants brought down two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters. The leader of the sniper team aboard a third helicopter, **M. Sgt. Gary I. Gordon**, repeatedly requested permission to protect the survivors at one of the crash sites. He finally received the go-ahead. Landing 100 meters south of the crash, Gordon and a teammate, **Sfc. Randall D. Shughart**, fought through dense urban terrain. Upon arriving at the crash site, they were all that stood between the helicopter's badly injured pilot, CWO3 Michael J. Durant, and Aidid's militia fighters. Using just sniper rifles and pistols, Gordon and Shughart held off repeated enemy attacks. When they expended their ammunition, they pulled weapons out from the helicopter and fought to the last bullet. Enemy fighters fatally wounded both soldiers and then captured Durant, whom they released two weeks later. Both Gordon and Shughart received the Medal of Honor for their actions.



Then a captain in the Illinois Army National Guard, Tammy Duckworth stands by her UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. Duckworth spent 23 years in the Illinois Army National Guard, retiring as a lieutenant colonel. (*U.S. Army*)

Born in 1968 to a Thai mother and an American father who was a veteran of both World War II and Vietnam, **Ladda Tammy Duckworth** grew up in a family that valued service to the country. She was commissioned in the Army Reserve in 1992. Seeking service in a combat arm, Duckworth became a helicopter pilot, training on UH-60 Black Hawks.

Duckworth's unit, the 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation Regiment, of the Illinois National Guard, deployed to Iraq in 2004. During a flight north of Baghdad on 12 November 2004, an insurgent rocket-propelled grenade struck then-Captain Duckworth's helicopter. The projectile pierced the aircraft's hull directly where Duckworth sat, and exploded. Her wounds were so severe that Duckworth's copilot assumed she had been killed in the attack. Captain Duckworth was quickly transported back to Baghdad and then to Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C., a few days later. Doctors were able to save her life, but had to amputate both of her legs.

Duckworth remained in the National Guard, retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 2014. During this period, she continued her career in public service as a civilian—serving as director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs from 2006 to 2009 and the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs from 2009 to 2011. In 2012, voters in the Illinois 8th Congressional District elected Duckworth to the U.S. House of Representatives. Four years later, she became a United States senator from Illinois.

There were no front lines in the Iraq War. **Sgt. Leigh A. Hester** quickly discovered this fact when insurgents attacked her company in 2005. Born in 1982 in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Hester joined the Army in April 2001 and deployed to Iraq with her Kentucky National Guard Unit, the 617th Military Police Company, in 2004. On the morning of 20 March 2005, her company was escorting a supply convoy south of Baghdad when insurgents opened fire with AK47s, PRK machine guns, and rocket-propelled grenades, using nearby irrigation ditches for cover. Sergeant Hester maneuvered her soldiers to protect the convoy and defeat the attackers. She ordered her gunner to open fire on the insurgent positions using an MK19 grenade launcher and an M240B machine gun. She then dismounted her Humvee and engaged the insurgents herself using her M203 grenade launcher to suppress enemy fire. She and her squad leader then destroyed one of the insurgent fighting positions with fragmentation grenades and M4 carbine fire. Although outnumbered five to one, Hester and her fellow soldiers successfully protected the convoy and defeated the insurgent ambush after a 45-minute, close-quarter firefight.

For her actions on 20 March 2005, Sergeant Hester received a Silver Star, the first woman to do so since World War II. In 2009, Hester left the military and became a police officer in Tennessee. She later rejoined the National Guard, serving as an instructor at the 117th Regional Training Institute Military Police School and deploying to Afghanistan in 2014 with a Cultural Support Team. Sergeant First Class Hester also served in military relief efforts in the U.S. Virgin Islands after Hurricane Maria in 2017.



Sgt. Leigh A. Hester stands at parade rest after receiving the Silver Star at an awards ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq, 16 June 2005. (U.S. Army)



Alwyn C. Cashe (photographed as a Staff Sergeant)  
(U.S. Army)

Born in 1970, **Sfc. Alwyn C. Cashe** enlisted in the Army in 1988. An infantry soldier, he served in the Gulf War in 1991 and during the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. During his third combat tour, Sergeant Cashe served with the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment. On the evening of 17 October 2005, he was on a patrol in northern Iraq when his Bradley fighting vehicle struck an IED, crippling the vehicle and igniting its fuel cell. The Bradley erupted into flames. Drenched in fuel, Sergeant Cashe nevertheless leapt from the gunner position and ran to the rear of the vehicle to help soldiers escape through its back hatch. The fuel on Cashe's uniform ignited and started to scorch his body. Despite this, he repeatedly braved the flames engulfing the Bradley, ultimately pulling six soldiers and a translator from the burning armored vehicle. Despite being in excruciating pain—he suffered second- and third-degree burns over 72 percent of his body—Cashe continued to take the lead in administering aid to his soldiers and comrades before being evacuated for medical treatment.

Cashe died of his wounds on 8 November 2005 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. He received a Silver Star for his actions; the award subsequently was upgraded to a Medal of Honor in 2021.

Born in 1985, **Salvatore A. Giunta** joined the Army in 2003. He deployed to Afghanistan's Zabul Province in 2005, serving with the 173d Airborne Brigade. Giunta originally had signed up for four years. However, Giunta's term of service was extended because of the stop-loss policy, by which the Defense Department could extend a service member's active duty service beyond their original enlistment date.

During his second tour to Afghanistan on 25 October 2007, enemy forces ambushed Giunta's patrol from Company B, 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry Regiment. Taking cover and engaging the fighters, Giunta ran under fire to assist his squad leader, who had been injured in the fighting. Afterward, he continued across the battlefield, searching for other wounded soldiers. Pinned down by the heavily armed enemy's well-coordinated ambush, Specialist Giunta realized one of his teammates was missing. Despite the withering hail of fire, he moved forward and saw two insurgents fleeing with a wounded American soldier. He opened fire on his opponents, killing one, wounding the other, and rescuing his fellow soldier, to whom he immediately provided medical assistance. "For all intents and purposes," one of Giunta's comrades observed, "with the amount of fire that was going on in the conflict at the time, he shouldn't be alive." Specialist Giunta received a Medal of Honor for his heroic actions. He left the Army in 2011 as a staff sergeant.





Salvatore A. Giunta (photographed as a Staff Sergeant)  
(U.S. Army)



General Ann E. Dunwoody (center) receives her fourth star at the Pentagon, 14 November 2008 (U.S. Army)

On 14 November 2008, **Ann E. Dunwoody** became the first woman promoted to the rank of four-star general in the U.S. Army. It was one of many highlights defining a remarkable career of service. Born in 1953, Dunwoody was commissioned as a 2d lieutenant in the Quartermaster Corps after taking a Women's Officer Orientation Course in college. Dunwoody would go on to serve at every command level. As commander of the 407th Supply and Transportation Battalion, 82d Airborne Division, in 1990 and 1991, she helped deploy the division to defend Saudi Arabia after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990. After the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, Dunwoody—now a brigadier general in command of the XVIII Airborne Corps' 1st Corps Support Command—oversaw the creation of a joint logistics headquarters in Uzbekistan to support U.S. operations in Afghanistan. Subsequent assignments included Commanding General, Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (2002–2004) and Deputy Chief of Staff, G-4 (2005–2008). In 2008, after promotion to full general, Dunwoody took command of the U.S. Army Materiel Command.

As one of the Army's senior logisticians throughout the Global War on Terrorism, General Dunwoody ensured soldiers and the joint force received the equipment and materiel they needed to fight on multiple fronts and diverse environments across the globe.



Bradley fighting vehicle  
(U.S. Army)

During the Gulf War, two new armored vehicles spearheaded the attack—the M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank and the **Bradley fighting vehicle**. The Bradley was one of the Army's Big Five weapons systems introduced during the 1970s and 1980s to modernize the force. Combining the capabilities of an armored personnel carrier and tank killer, the armored Bradleys could transport six infantry soldiers into battle and its three-person crew could engage an enemy with its 25-mm. M242 Bushmaster chain gun, 7.62-mm. M240 machine gun, and a Tube-launched, Optically tracked, Wire-guided (TOW) missile system.



During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S.-led coalition experimented with a variety of technologies to counteract IEDs, such as new tracking and surveillance systems. The coalition's primary mode of transport, the Humvee, was particularly vulnerable to these weapons. They were armored lightly and had a flat bottom, which meant that an IED blast could rip apart the vehicle and its crew. The Army and Marine Corps eventually looked to an older solution—a South African system from the

The first shipment of MRAP vehicles arrive at Camp Liberty in western Baghdad, 6 November 2007 (*U.S. Army*)



1970s known as the mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle, or **MRAP**. Sitting high above the ground, the MRAP had a V-shaped bottom that redirected the energy of an IED blast out and away from the vehicle and its occupants. By 2007, both the Army and Marine Corps began deploying MRAPs in Iraq and Afghanistan. Soldiers who would have died when a Humvee struck an IED now walked away battered, but alive.



Pfc. Ferrari Jean from the 603d Military Police Company captures his photo for a facial recognition scan on a BAT Army Kit during Operation READY WARRIOR at Fort Hunter Liggett, California, 15 September 2020.  
*(U.S. Army)*

During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, soldiers regularly employed a sophisticated system known as the **Biometrics Automated Toolset (BAT)** to collect and organize information about local populations. By assembling fingerprints, iris images, facial photographs, and other basic data, the handheld BAT devices—a digital camera, fingerprint reader, iris scanner, and reinforced laptop computer—allowed soldiers to know who lived in a particular town or village and who was an outsider. More often than not, outsiders were likely insurgents attempting to hide in plain sight. In an insurgency, the population is the center of gravity and the BAT allowed soldiers to better understand and protect that population.



*(Left to right) Spc. Logan Houser, Spc. Phillip Villegas, and Pfc. Ryan Longnecker mount a RQ-7B Shadow tactical unmanned aircraft system onto a hydraulic launcher at Balli UAS Airfield, Vilseck, Germany, 26 July 2019. (U.S. Army)*

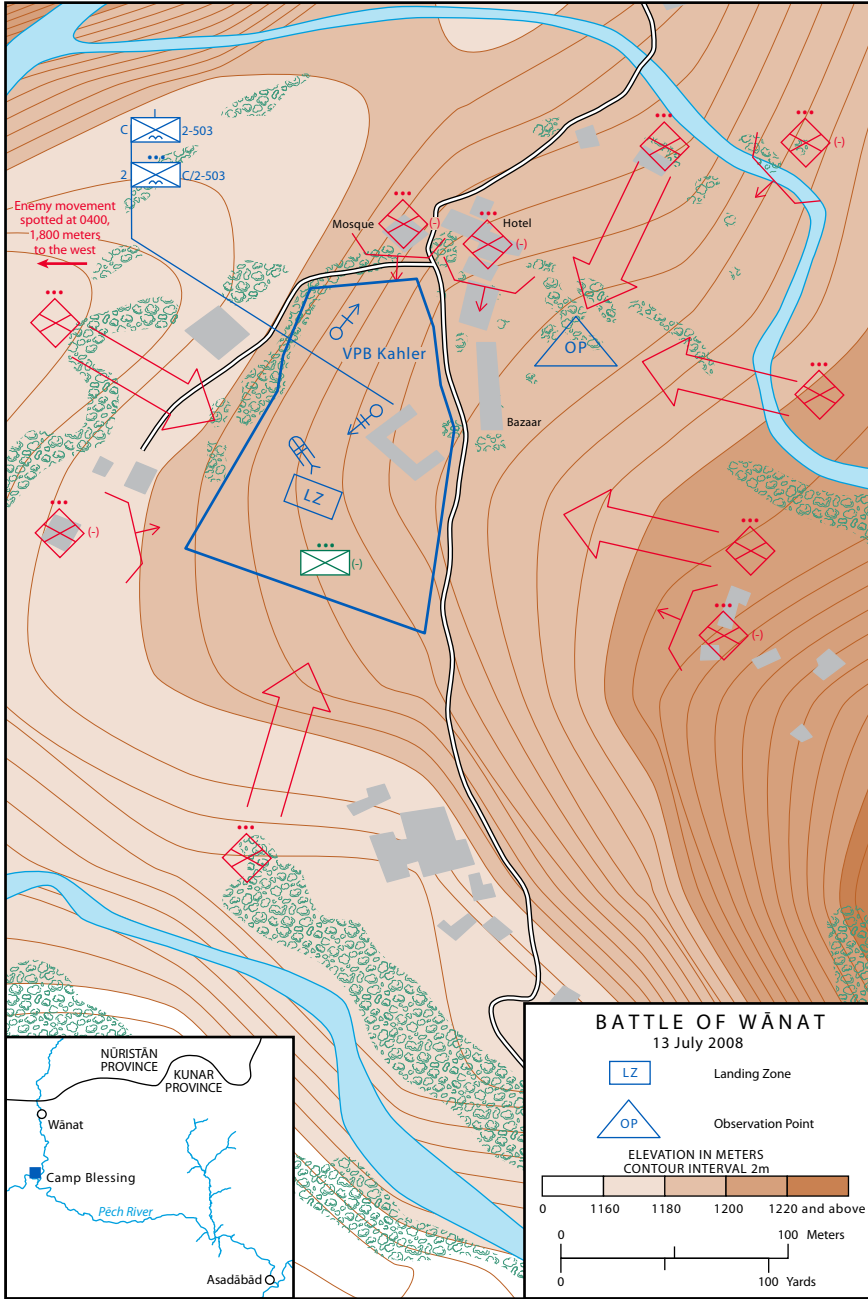
During the past two decades, unmanned aerial vehicles, also known as drones, have become a common feature on the modern battlefield. In 2002, the Army began deploying the **RQ-7 Shadow**, which measures just 11 feet long with a wingspan of 14 feet. Its launch platform is a trailer-mounted catapult. The Shadow's infrared camera relays real-time video feeds to soldiers on the ground, providing them with immediate information about conditions on the battlefield. Able to loiter up to 9 hours in the air, the Shadow's real-time observation capabilities proved critical to locating insurgents, neutralizing IEDs, and disrupting enemy networks in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

An army that does not eat cannot fight. The **Meals, Ready to Eat (MRE)**, recognizable in their brown pouches, is the most recent of a long line of standard rations issued to American soldiers. Throughout the Army's history, these have ranged from standard portions of beef and rice (during the Revolutionary War), canned meat, bread, and coffee (the Civil War), and C rations (World War II, Korea, and Vietnam). During the 1960s, the Army began to develop a new type of ration that would be more portable and cater to a greater variety of tastes. Introduced during the 1970s, the MRE was the standard ration for soldiers deployed in the field during the Global War on Terrorism. Each MRE provides 1,200 calories and has a shelf life of three years. There are more than twenty different menus, ranging from Mexican to Italian to vegetarian meals. However, although food technologists strived to make the MREs as appetizing as possible, soldiers have nicknamed the ration "Meals Rejected by Everyone."





The beef goulash MRE, introduced in 2019  
(Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center)



Map 4



Paratroopers with 2d Platoon, Company C, unpack gear and begin digging in after arriving at Wanat, Afghanistan, July 2008. (U.S. Army)

On 13 July 2008, the **Battle of Wanat** began when insurgent fighters commenced a large-scale attack on a U.S. patrol base, established just a few days earlier, in the remote Afghan village. The 2d Platoon, Company C, 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry Regiment, held the position, which was typical of the difficult terrain and conditions regularly faced by soldiers operating in Afghanistan. With the bulk of U.S. combat forces engaged in the surge campaign in Iraq, U.S. commanders in Afghanistan carried out an economy-of-force campaign. For months, the soldiers of the 2d Battalion had operated in the country's austere, mountainous eastern region. Carrying out patrols from isolated firebases and observation posts, the Americans frequently encountered a populace often hostile to the presence of foreign troops. Meanwhile, enemy forces could retreat across the border into safe havens located in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

The enemy attacking Wanat were well-equipped and familiar with coalition tactics, and they understood the terrain. They took advantage of the high ground surrounding the base. Their opening salvo of rocket-propelled grenades successfully destroyed the 2d Platoon's heaviest weapons—its TOW missile launcher and a 120-mm. mortar. The engagement then became a grim contest in which each side sought to maintain fire superiority. The insurgent forces were able to advance close

enough to lob hand grenades at the American defenders and even briefly breached the U.S. perimeter. After several hours of fighting, AH-64 Apache helicopters and other U.S. close air support assets were able to drive off the enemy assault. Nine American soldiers, including the 2d Platoon leader, died in the fighting. A further twenty-seven U.S. soldiers and four partnered Afghan troops were wounded.

It later emerged that local officials in Wanat had assisted the enemy in the fight. Concluding that the risks of placing isolated units in these vulnerable positions were too high to justify their continued use, the Americans began withdrawing from remote bases. The battle drew renewed attention to the war in Afghanistan and led the United States to commit more forces to the conflict.



Col. Scott A. Jackson, the commander of the 1st SFAB, observes as the unit unveils its colors for the first time in history during an activation ceremony at the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning, Georgia, 8 February 2016.  
*(U.S. Army)*

Throughout the Army's history, soldiers have carried out missions across the spectrum of conflict, beyond combat operations against peer and near-peer opponents. Security assistance has been a regular mission, with soldiers training foreign armies such as those in the Philippines during the early twentieth century, South Vietnam during the 1960s and 1970s, and Iraqi and Afghan security forces during the first two decades of the twenty-first century. In 2017, the Army stood up the first unit dedicated to this unique and challenging mission, the **Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB)**. The Army created six SFABs, with one attached to each of the five major combatant commands and a sixth serving as a reserve. Soldiers serving in SFABs underwent training at the Military Advisor Training Academy at Fort Benning, Georgia, where they learned the skills necessary to support host nations, use interpreters, conduct mission analysis, and advise foreign counterparts from many different countries, each with their own unique politics and professional military cultures. The Army created these units to ensure that it would have both the capacity to train allied armies and to allow brigade combat teams to focus on their combat mission.

