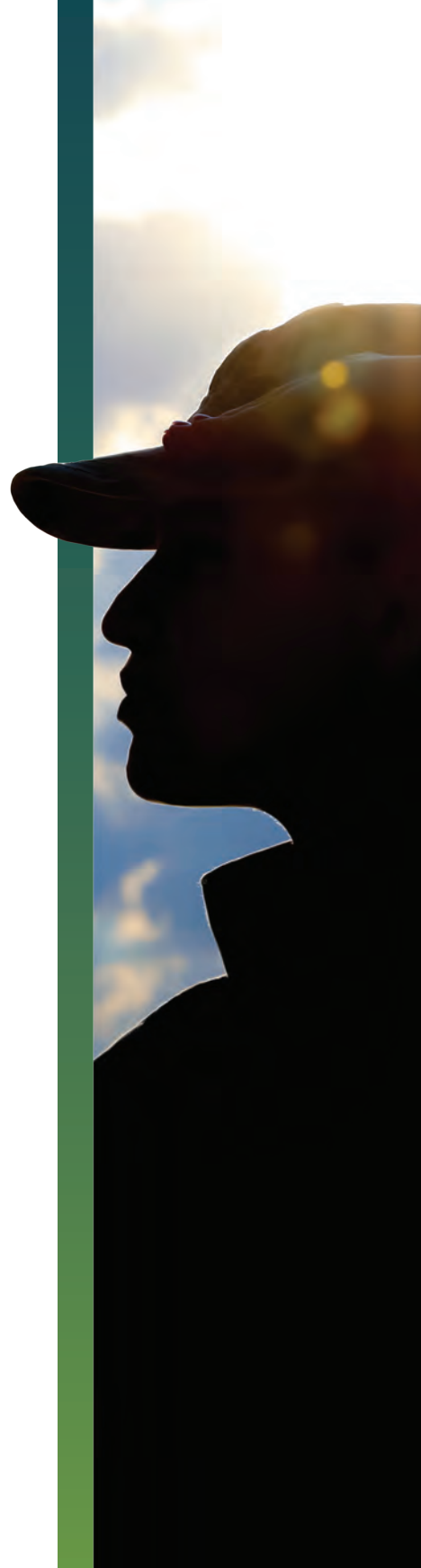


TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	
Women and War.....	4
CHAPTER 2	
The Army.....	10
CHAPTER 3	
The Navy	14
CHAPTER 4	
The Marine Corps.....	18
CHAPTER 5	
The Air Force.....	24
CHAPTER 6	
The Coast Guard.....	30
CHAPTER 7	
The National Guard.....	36
CHAPTER 8	
Medics.....	40
CHAPTER 9	
Prisoners of War	44
CHAPTER 10	
Researchers.....	50
GLOSSARY	56



CHAPTER 1

WOMEN AND WAR

Major Mary Jennings Hegar flew her helicopter low. Beads of sweat formed on her brow. She was in the Afghan desert. It was over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Three American soldiers had been injured. The chopper was going to pick them up.

Shots rang out. Enemy fire flashed all around. Hegar wondered where it was coming from. Her arm was hit. Blood splattered. Another bullet hit her leg. The helicopter was leaking fuel. They were going down.

A few other U.S. helicopters arrived. They had to clear a space to land safely. Bullets rained down. The enemy soldiers moved back.



The helicopters landed in enemy space. Under heavy fire, U.S. soldiers rushed to move the injured. Hegar limped to one of the other choppers. It rose into the air quickly. With one hand, she grabbed the **skids**. Then the soldier spotted enemy troops coming close. She fired back with her other hand. Major Hegar and others got the injured soldiers to safety.

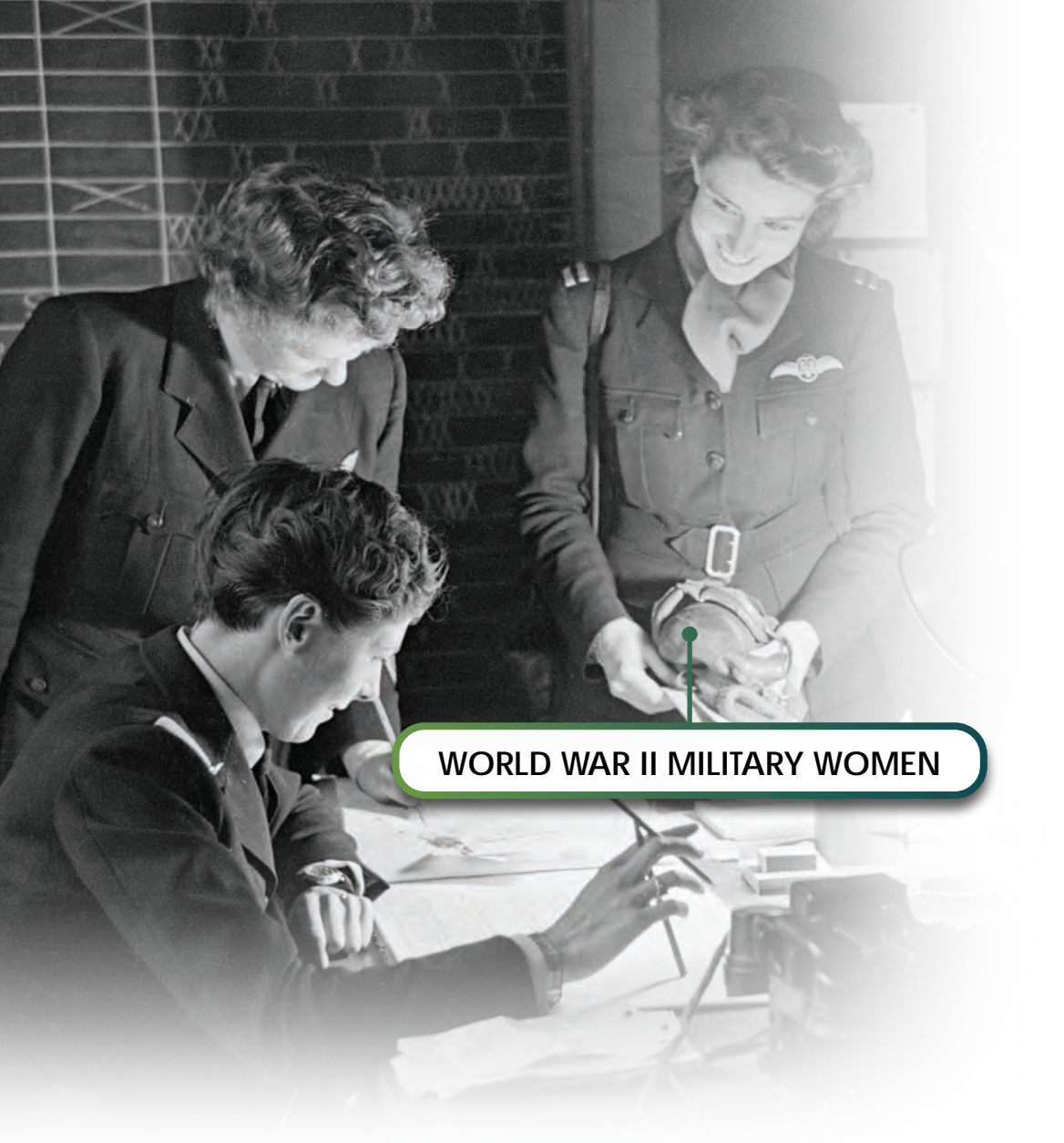


WOMAN IN THE CIVIL WAR, 1862



Women have always supported the U.S. military. They weren't always allowed to fight. At first, only a few jobs were offered. Some cooked for troops. Others made uniforms.

Many wanted to do more. Several women dressed as men during early American wars. This way they could fight. Others were spies. People didn't **suspect** them. Enemies were on the lookout for men.



WORLD WAR II MILITARY WOMEN

During World Wars I and II, women could join the military. They held office jobs. A few flew planes. Female soldiers still couldn't fight directly. By the 1970s, more women were leaders. Some led non-combat groups. Men and women began training together.

Times had changed, but some rules stayed the same. Men remained the only ones allowed to fight. However, the military needed more people. In 2013, Congress changed the laws. All military jobs opened to women three years later. As of 2018, women made up about 15 percent of troops.

WOMEN'S GEAR

In the 1970s, many new jobs opened for women in the military. There was a problem, however. The clothes didn't fit. Often, only men's uniforms were available. Packs were too big and overly heavy as well. Gear had to be adapted. Female troops had to wear their hair up which made helmets fit wrong. This was dangerous.

Small changes started to happen. Uniforms were made in different sizes. Armor was designed fit women better and protect them correctly. More improvements were made in the 2010s. Packs were made smaller. New technology made them lighter. This helped women on the battlefield.



CHAPTER 2

THE ARMY

Leigh Ann Hester had always wanted to join the Army. In 2001, she started training. Then the soldier served in Iraq.

It was 2005. Sergeant Hester's squad was following a **convoy**. Trucks were attacked. She led a **counterattack**. Enemy soldiers were trying to capture Americans. Hester fought them off. The woman's actions saved many lives.

The military gave Hester a Silver Star. A woman hadn't earned one since World War II. Hester was the first woman to receive it for combat.



LEIGH ANN HESTER

GLOSSARY

ADVENTUROUS

unafraid of doing new or exciting things

AMBUSH

to attack by surprise

ASSAULT

a military attack

AVIATOR

someone who is trained to fly planes or other aircraft

BRAVERY

bold or fearless actions

CAMPAIGN

a series of battles in the military

CIVILIAN

a person not in the military

COUNTERATTACK

an attack of violence in response to violence from an enemy

CONVOY

a group of vehicles traveling together

DIPLOMAT

a person who represents his or her country's government in another country