

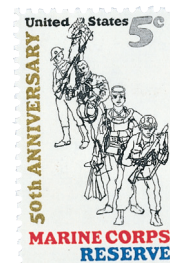
## This Day in History... August 29, 1916

### Founding of the Marine Corps Reserves

On August 29, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Naval Appropriations Act of 1916, establishing the Marine Corps Reserve.

Since the time of the Civil War, American military leaders recognized the need for a naval reserve that should include Marine detachments. This force would be critical – quickly activating if America suddenly went to war. Several states attempted to make their own naval militias to this end, but without a national force, they were unsuccessful and unorganized.

That changed in the early 1900s. As World War I raged in Europe, it became more evident the US would soon be forced into action. The nation's armed forces were not large enough to handle a full-scale war. President Woodrow Wilson recognized this need and signed the naval Appropriations Act of 1916 on August 29, 1916. The act not only increased the size of the Navy's fleet, it also formed the Marine Corps Reserve.



*Issued on the 50th anniversary of the Marine Corps Reserves.*



*This image was based on a drawing of US troops at the Second Battle of the Marne.*

The reserves reinforced the full-time military and increased American military readiness. In the event of war, the Marine reservists could be called into active duty. Two groups were established, the Ready and the Standby Reserves. Marines in the Ready Reserves served six years and committed to one weekend each month and two weeks each year of active duty. Marines who completed active duty could remain in the Standby Reserves. During World War I, 7,500 Marines were reservists, about 300 of which were women. Reserve Marines joined ground and aviation units and fought in several significant battles including Belleau Wood, Soissons, St. Mihiel, and Meuse-Argonne.

The Marines were demobilized after the war and 90 percent of the reserves were discharged. However, General John A. Lejune argued that America needed a substantial reserve ready in case of another war. So in 1925 Congress passed a new act creating 18 battalions and aviation squadrons. By 1930 there were more than 10,000 Reserve Marines.

Reserve Marines would go on to comprise about 70 percent of the 589,852 Marines that fought in World War II. And 44 of the 82 Marine Medals of Honor went to reservists.



*This stamp image was based on a 1950 photo of US troops retreating from Chosin Reservoir.*



*Stamp picturing reservists from the Marines, Coast Guard, Army, Navy, and Air Force.*

After the war, the reserves reached an all-time high peacetime strength of 128,962. The Marine Reserves would go on to comprise about half the Marine force in Korea, with over 130,000 reservists activated.

Today there are about 40,000 Reserve Marines and 184 Reserve Training Centers around the country.

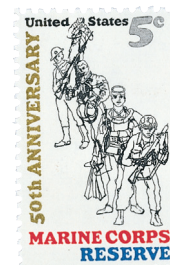
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