

# CLARA BARTON



Founder of the American Red Cross

**Clara Barton** was a nurse during the Civil War. She was known as “The Angel of the Battlefield,” as she helped nurse many soldiers back to health after they had endured sickness and injury. She also founded the American Red Cross.

Clarissa Harlowe Barton was born in Massachusetts in 1821. When she was eleven, her brother took a hard fall and injured himself. She nursed him back to health after teaching herself how to give someone medication. Her family could see that she showed a talent for caring for others.

When she grew up, she became a teacher. After twelve years of teaching, she opened her own school. But when the school hired a man to run it and agreed to pay him twice the amount of money Clara made, she became frustrated and left. She got a job as a clerk in the U.S. Patent Office—the first woman to have the job, and at the same pay rate as her male co-workers.

While she was working at the Patent Office, she began to hear about the terrible conditions for soldiers fighting in the Civil War. The war had just started, and people were scared and confused by the fighting.

Clara felt it was her duty to help soldiers, some of whom were already badly hurt, and who needed clean clothing, bedding and food to eat. She started bringing supplies to a group of soldiers from Massachusetts who were staying in Washington, D.C. She actually knew a few of them from her hometown, and some had even been her students! She saw how badly they needed supplies and care, and began to ask the community for donations. As time went on, she could see that where she was most needed was not at home in D.C., but on the battlefield.

Clara began arriving on battlefields with supplies in 1862. In most cases, the doctors caring for soldiers after the fight had more people to take care of than they could handle, and had very few supplies to work with. They were always so relieved to see her and her team show up in such a time of need that she quickly became known as “The Angel of the Battlefield.” She and her assistants began following the battles, arriving during the fighting so that they could be there to help wounded soldiers as soon as they needed it.

After the war, she visited Europe, where she worked with the Red Cross program, which did not yet exist in America. When she returned home, she worked with the leader of the Red Cross to include America in it. After being rejected by president Hayes, she spoke to president Arthur, who signed the bill that created the American Red Cross in 1881. The American Red Cross became the country’s most well-known disaster relief group and still works to help those in need today.



Clara Barton in 1867

# Number These Events in Order

---

She wants to do more, so she begins going right to the battlefield to help.

Clara becomes a teacher.

Clara goes to Europe to work with the International Red Cross.

She leaves her job at a school to work at the Patent Office.

She fights to start an American chapter of the Red Cross.

She hears about wounded soldiers and decides to help the ones in D.C.

Clara Barton is born in Massachusetts.

She opens a school.

People begin calling her “The Angel of the Battlefield.”