



# The Linden Times

A bi-weekly newsletter for the members & friends of the Calvert County Historical Society – April 16, 2020

**In recognition** of the selfless work and lifesaving efforts of ALL medical personnel and the American Red Cross during this COVID-19 national tragedy we present Clara Barton as this week's featured heroin.

**Clarissa Harlowe Barton** was born on December 25, 1821, in North Oxford, Massachusetts. When Barton was ten years old, she assigned herself the task of nursing her brother David back to health after he fell from the roof of a barn and received a severe head injury. She learned how to distribute the prescribed medication to her brother to care for David long after doctors had given up. He made a full recovery. After years of being a school teacher, she moved to Washington D.C. and began work as a clerk in the US Patent Office. This was the first time a woman had received a substantial clerkship in the federal government only to be fired because of her, "Black Republicanism".



During the Civil War she worked with the Ladies' Aid societies which helped in sending bandages, food, and clothing that would later be distributed during the Civil War. In August 1862, Barton finally gained permission from Quartermaster Daniel Rucker to work on the front lines. She worked to distribute supplies, clean field hospitals, apply dressings, and serve food to wounded soldiers in close proximity to several battles, including Cedar Mountain, Second Bull Run, Antietam, and Fredericksburg. Barton helped both Union and Confederate soldiers. She was known as the "Florence

Nightingale of America" and as the "Angel of the Battlefield".

After the war, she ran the Office of Missing Soldiers, at 437 ½ Seventh Street, Northwest, Washington, D.C. in the Gallery Place neighborhood. The purpose of the office was to find or identify soldiers killed or missing in action. Barton and her assistants wrote 41,855 replies to inquiries and helped locate more than twenty-two thousand missing men.

She inaugurated a movement to gain recognition for the International Committee of the Red Cross by the United States government. In 1873, she began work on this project. In 1878, she met with President Rutherford B. Hayes, and finally succeeded during the administration of President Chester Arthur. She used the argument that the new American Red Cross could respond to crises other than war such as natural disasters, earthquakes, forest fires, and hurricanes. Barton became President of the American *cont. on page 2*

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**FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1912.**

## CLARA BARTON PASSES AWAY

**She Was the Florence Nightingale of America, and Her Noble Life-work Was Recognized Throughout the World.**

Washington.—Clara Barton, head of the American Red Cross, died at her home in Glen Echo, Md.

She had been ill for some time and was 91 years old. Last fall her condition was despaired of, but she rallied.

Miss Barton, whose international reputation as a wartime nurse, philanthropist and charity worker has placed her name among those of the greatest women of modern times, was born in Oxford, Mass., in 1821.



**MISS CLARA BARTON,**  
 Founder and First President of the  
 American National Red Cross  
 Society.

Miss Barton was first elected president of the American Red Cross in 1881, later organizing an American branch in the Red Cross to supply relief in all disasters, attending peace-conferences as representative from the United States and taking active interest in relief work in every great disaster of recent years, including the Johnstown flood, Galveston flood, Spanish-American War, Russian famine in 1892, the Sea Islands (S. C.) disaster in 1893, the Armenian massacre in 1896 and others. She retired as president of the Red Cross in 1904.

Miss Barton has been president of the National First Aid Association since 1905, and holds diplomas and decorations from Germany, Baden, Austria, Servia, Turkey, Armenia, Switzerland, Spain, Russia, Belgium; also a vote of thanks from the citizens of Johnstown, Pa., and the Texas legislature. She is the only woman for whom a G. A. R. post has been named.

Miss Barton is the author of *The History of the Red Cross, America's Relief Expedition to Asia Minor, History of the Red Cross in Peace and War. A Story of the Red Cross, Story of My Childhood*, together with many pamphlets, reports, etc.

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branch of the society, which held its first official meeting at her apartment in Washington, DC, May 21, 1881 and following that, the National First Aid Society was founded.

In 1897 she moved to her Glen Echo, Maryland home which also served as the Red Cross Headquarters. Barton published her autobiography in 1907, titled *The Story of My Childhood*.



Junior Red Cross nurses circa 1900

On April 12, 1912 at the age of 90, she died in her home. The cause of death was pneumonia.

In 1975, the Clara Barton National Historic Site, located at 5801 Oxford Road, Glen Echo, Maryland, was established as a unit of the National Park Service at Barton's home, where she spent the last 15 years of her



life. As the first National Historic Site dedicated to the accomplishments of a woman, it preserves the early history of the American Red Cross, since the home also served as an early headquarters of the organization. The National Park Service has restored eleven rooms, including the Red Cross offices, the parlors, and Barton's bedroom. Visitors to the Clara Barton National Historic Site can gain a sense of how Barton lived and worked. Guides lead tourists through the three levels, emphasizing Barton's use of her unusual home. This historic site is a

wonderful place to visit after the social distancing requirements are lifted. Their site: <https://www.nps.gov/clba/planyourvisit/hours.htm>

*"We cannot all do great things. But we can do small things with great love." ~ Mother Teresa.*