



Guide to the Clara Barton papers, 1861-1916

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Summary

Collection Title:

Clara Barton papers, 1861-1916

Creator:

Barton, Clara, 1821-1912; Hubbell, Julian B. (Julian Bertine), 1847-1929; Sears, W. H. (William Henry), 1858-1933

Source:

Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture; Josiah Charles Trent History of Medicine Collections (Duke University)

Abstract:

Clara Barton (1821-1912) was a nurse and founder of the American Red Cross. Collection includes a diary and calling cards, a military pass, letters, newspaper clippings, a petition, a resolution, and a volume.

Extent:

1.2 Linear Feet (11 items)

Language:

Materials in English.

Collection ID:

RL.12017

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m11m96>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Clara Barton papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

Collection includes a diary and calling cards, a military pass, letters, newspaper clippings, a petition, a resolution, and a volume. The diary and calling cards relate to Clara Barton's travels in Europe in 1869, primarily to Geneva,

Switzerland, and Corsica, and to expenses and living conditions there. Includes references to Sir Edwin Arnold, editor of the London Daily Telegraph; Thomasina M.A.E. Campbell, an author on Corsica; and Charles Horace Upton, United States Consul in Geneva.

The military pass (1861 May 18) was issued to Barton "and Friends" for a visit Camp Monmouth, Meridian Hill, Washington, D.C., and is signed by Colonel Matthew Miller. A letter (1867 February 21) from Edward Shaw, a friend of Barton, jokingly urges her to return to Washington, D.C., for the vote on the Reconstruction Act. A 4-page letter (1882 May 15) by Barton is addressed to a "Miss Phelps" concerns aid provided to victims of Mississippi floods of that spring. The assistance was symbolic of Barton's program to broaden the work of the American Association of the Red Cross from war service to supplying aid during peacetime natural disasters as well. There are two newspaper clippings regarding Barton, dated 1883.

There is a letter with a related petition and resolution, all dated from 1869. The letter is a one of introduction for Barton (undated, late March or early April) to President Grant, written by Senators Carl Schurz and James W. Grimes, and requesting that Grant give attention to her plan for the employment of Black people in Washington, D.C. The petition by Barton (March 1869) outlines her plan to Congress, requesting use of government property in the city to assist in training Black people in skilled labor for better employment opportunities; it is clipped to her copy of the Congressional resolution in support of her plan.

A copy of a letter (1916) contains charges made against Barton by Mabel Boardman to explain why Congress should not appropriate funds to create a plaque in Barton's honor for the new American National Red Cross headquarters, under construction between 1915-1917. An accompanying volume (201 leaves), dated 1916 November 27, attempts to refute these charges with detailed documents, including mimeographs and copy letter typescripts, with many corrections in pen and pencil throughout. Documents draw from Civil War letters, Barton's Civil War diaries, testimonials from Grand Army of the Republic organizers, American National Red Cross supporters, nurses, legislators, and others outlining Barton's long career and efforts. The volume is signed by its compilers, W. H. Sears and Julian Hubbell, who were secretaries to Barton, and a notary public, with a seal. The volume contains Sears' ownership mark.

Biographical/Historical

Clara Barton (1821-1912) became known for her nursing work during the American Civil War. After her exposure to the International Committee of the Red Cross during her postwar visits to Europe, she launched an extensive campaign upon returning to the United States to win American adherence to the Geneva Treaty of 1864, which gave official status to the organization, including visits with presidents Hayes and Arthur and members of the Senate.

In 1881 she established the American Association of the Red Cross, and in 1882, the United States ratified the Geneva Treaty.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the Rubenstein Library's Citations, Permissions, and Copyright guide.

Acquisition Information

The Clara Barton papers were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a purchase in 1967 and 2022.

Processing Information

Processed by Alice Poffinberger, June, 2022

Accessions described in this collection guide: 1967, 2022-0024, 2022-0025, 2022-0082

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Names and Subjects

- African Americans -- Washington (D.C.)
- Corsica (France) -- Description and travel
- Geneva (Switzerland) -- Description and travel
- Washington (D.C.) -- History
- Barton, Clara, 1821-1912
- Arnold, Edwin, Sir, 1832-1904
- Campbell, Thomasina M. A. E. (Thomasina Mary Ann Eliza), 1804-1888
- Upton, Charles Horace, 1812-1877
- Boardman, Mabel Thorp, 1860-1946
- American Association of the Red Cross
- American National Red Cross
- American Red Cross -- History
- Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture
- Josiah Charles Trent History of Medicine Collections (Duke University)

Collection Inventory

Letters, clippings, 1861-1883	Box 1
Diary, 1869	Box 1
Letter and resolutions regarding training of Blacks in Washington, D.C., 1869	Box 1
Letter with charges of Mabel Boardman, 1916	Box 2
Volume refuting Boardman's charges, 1916	Box 2