

Susannah Clark

Jonesboro, Grant County

January 15, 1836 – January 3, 1920

In the past few years, many historians have sought to correct the record regarding the participation of women in the major events that have shaped US history. More has come to light about women donning military uniforms and taking arms in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. We also have come to recognize the critical role that women played in nursing the wounded in areas often under enemy fire often without mention or reward.

Susannah Clark of Jonesboro, Indiana, was a Civil War nurse who may have been the first woman recognized and rewarded for heroic effort on behalf of the Union Army wounded. A Civil War records search revealed that Mrs. Clark was, in 1890, awarded a Federal pension for her service as a US Army Nurse during the Civil War. An article published in the Philadelphia Enquirer in 1899 recounts her record during that war. She had volunteered to make regimental flags for the departing units from her hometown of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Graduating from that task to feeding wounded soldiers returning from the front, Clark was pressed into service as a nurse when the wounded came pouring in from Bull Run. As Mrs. Clark's reputation spread, doctors requested her services for the duration of the war.

After the war, Nurse Clark moved to Jonesboro, Indiana to be near her only surviving relatives, her grandsons Darr and Dan Dailey. Later, in 1898, the sixty-three year old widow went to Lexington, Kentucky where her grandsons, who had joined the 160th Volunteer Infantry during Spanish-American War, were ill. She lived at the hospital for days managing the care of her grandsons and soon the care of the soldiers of the entire hospital. Secretary of War Alger recognized her service.

Susannah Clark remained active for most of her remaining years. She was president of the Indiana Nurses Association and an officer of the Marion Hospital Association. She is buried in an unmarked grave in Riverside Cemetery, Gas City, Indiana.

Susannah Clark's profile was provided to ICW by William Munn, Grant County Historian

For more information about Susannah Clark, go to:

http://grantcountyhistory.blogspot.com/2015/03/susannah-clark-first-army-nurse_16.html

References will be published at the end of Women's History Month.



Photo Courtesy: William Munn, Grant County Historian

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