Under the Red cross flag at home and abroad

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UNDER
THE RED CROSS FLAG
AT HOME AND ABROAD

BY
MABEL T. BOARDMAN
CHAIRMAN NATIONAL RELIEF BOARD, AMERICAN RED CROSS

WITH A FOREWORD BY
WOODROW WILSON, PRESIDENT

SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

PHILADELPHIA AND LONDON
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1915
TO

MY FATHER AND MOTHER
FOREWORD

To meet the duties that war or disaster impose upon the generous impulses of a nation with any degree of success and efficiency, united action is, of course, necessary under the centralized control of experienced and responsible public servants. For this reason, and also to conform to the requirements of the Convention of Geneva, the American Red Cross was created by Act of Congress. I believe that this great organization will more and more enjoy the confidence and receive the support of the people of the United States as its purposes and methods become more widely known and more thoroughly understood. It seems to me very fortunate, therefore, that a book dealing with the history and achievements of the Red Cross should have been written by one so long familiar with its work as Miss Boardman, and I commend this book to the careful perusal of all who are interested in the development of the great work the Red Cross represents.

In common with all Americans who have been observant of the American Red Cross, I am one of its sincere admirers. I admire not only the work done but the people who have done it and the way in which it has been done. I esteem it an honor to be connected with the society. I have had occasion to observe at somewhat short range its work in connection with many distressing conditions resulting both from disaster and from war. I know how admirably its officers responded to these calls, and with what a practiced hand they responded; how clearly the society understood its duties; and what excellent instrumentalities it had through which to act. I therefore feel that direct contact with the Red Cross
justifies me in expressing my admiration for its past accomplishments and my hope for its continued success in the noble labors for the benefit of mankind to which it is devoted.

Nedra Wilson

President of the American Red Cross.
PREFACE

As far as the writer knows, there does not exist in English any historical sketch of the Red Cross in general or of the American Red Cross in particular. Several years ago Miss Clara Barton published a book consisting mainly of addresses and reports, which is now out of print. Though the first efforts to create a permanent society for the aid of the sick and wounded in war under the Treaty of Geneva were made by Dr. Burrows and other prominent members of the Sanitary Commission shortly after the close of the Civil War, no mention is made of this association in this early book, and it is almost impossible to gain from the compiled reports and addresses a clear comprehension of the organization, nature and duties of national associations and their international relationship.

From 1881, when a permanent society was finally created, until 1905, when it was reincorporated by Act of Congress, there was developed neither membership nor organization. Since 1905 the American Red Cross has entered into so many active fields of relief and has so greatly developed, both in organization and efficiency, that a volume devoted to the subject seems due to the people of this country, from whom it receives such liberal and generous support.

To Miss Lavinia L. Dock’s interesting “History of Nursing;” to American and foreign reports, including those of the Sanitary Commission; to our Red Cross Magazine; to members of our personnel both at home and abroad; and to many others, the writer is indebted for material utilized in this present volume. Not within these leaves are registered the names and labors of the thousands who have given time and valiant service to
our American organization. This it was not possible
to do. Not in written records lie their deeds engraved,
but in the hearts of those whose sorrows and whose suf-
ferings they have helped to lessen by their unselfish
efforts.

Whenever war or serious calamity arouses universal
interest in the Red Cross, the requests for information
increase a hundred fold, and at the same time the mem-
ers of its staff are overwhelmed with duties that active
relief measures bring upon them. Notwithstanding the
fact that "Qui s'excuse s'accuse," the writer believes it
not unfair to say that "Under the Red Cross Flag" has
been written at such a time of stress and during long
drawn-out pressure of work, with many attendant prob-
lems and anxieties. No effort has been made to produce
a detailed and complete history of the organization here
or elsewhere. Such would require years of study and
scores of volumes, for which there was neither time nor
ability, and for which the general public has no desire.
By this labor of love the hope has been rather to place
briefly and simply before the American people something
of the story of the Red Cross, its origin, development,
especially in our own country, and its services for
humanity.

September 15, 1915.
Washington, D. C.

MABEL T. BOARDMAN.
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