

Circular date stamp (10 May 1897) & target cancellations

Village of Red Cross, Lawrence County Indiana

Post Office existed 1893 - 1913



The village takes its name from a 782 acre Bedford farm parcel owned by Dr. Joseph Gardner, a Civil War surgeon. Gardner's wife Enola was Clara Barton's personal assistant / secretary. Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross (ARC) in 1881.

In March 1893 Gardner deeded his farm to the ARC as a central place for the Red Cross to produce and store materials for sudden emergencies and great calamities. The parcel had access to both river and railroads. While its business headquarters remained in Washington DC, the property would also serve as a volunteer retreat for the organization.

It became known as the Red Cross Farm when Barton accepted the acreage, which according to her letter:

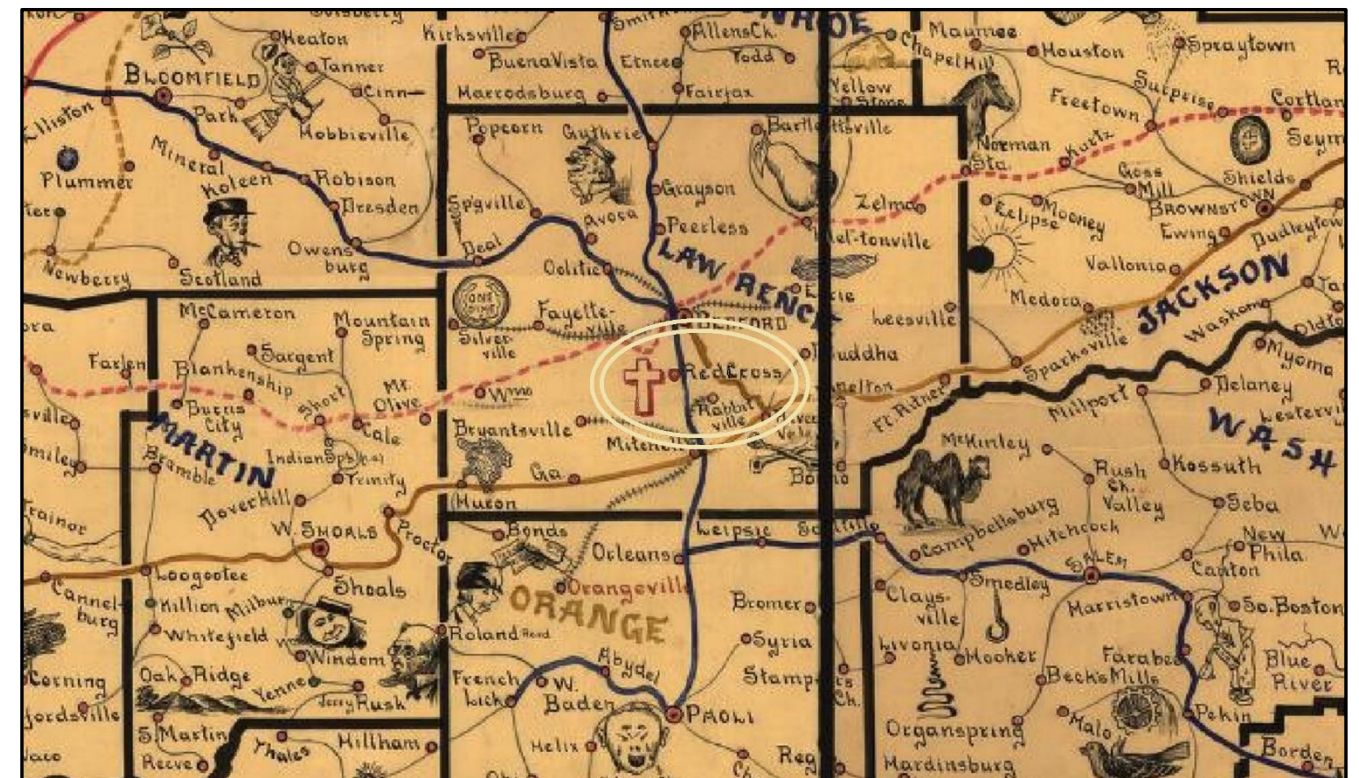
This land, as property of the ARC, will be the one piece of neutral ground on the Western Hemisphere protected by international treaty against the tread of hostile feet. It is a perpetual sanctuary against invading armies and will be so respected and held sacred by the military powers of the world.

I will direct that monuments be erected defining the boundaries of this domain, dedicated to eternal peace and humanity, upon which shall be inscribed the Red Cross insignia of the treaty of Geneva, which all nations of the earth are bound by solemn covenant to respect.

Financial mismanagement of the Red Cross Farm by an outside caretaker caused the eventual disposal of the property at a 1899 tax sale. This was one of many criticisms of Clara's management style that lead to her resignation from the ARC in 1904.

Dr. & Mrs. Gardner often hosted Miss Barton at the farm and became founding members of the American Red Cross.

The farm included a cemetery formerly known as GAINES Cemetery. Today it exists as the Red Cross Cemetery. Note: Envelope is sent from William G Gaines.



1897 Galbraith's Railway Mail Service Map
(Annotated & Illustrated to help Railway Mail Clerks locate POs)