

Alfred T. Osmond (Pupil) Bordentown.

Ansd. Feb. 1, 1902. (In Clara Barton's handwriting.)

Alfred T. Osmond,  
Stamps, Stencils, Inks, Brushes,  
Awnings & Window Shades,  
213 N. Broad St., Trenton, N.J.

Trenton, N.J., Jan. 17, 1902.

Miss Clara Barton

For years I have desired to write you and if possible receive a letter from you. Indeed I was about to <sup>do so</sup> at the breaking out of the Spanish War. I deferred, but now feel the desire pressing upon me. About the year 1854 I attended your school at the intersection of Crosswicks and Burlington Sts., Bordentown, and at the finishing of the larger school attended that, but not in your department, being placed under your direction in the principals room on the lower floor. Time has rolled rapidly away, almost half a century since then, still many of us are left, no doubt, but scattered, we know not where. I myself, ere the end of this month, the 30th, will be three score years of age. I am strong and well, always been very active, am a strong temperance advocate, a member of the Christian Church and living for the next life. I have had a dear little family, wife, son, daughter. Death claimed my wife in April 1886, my daughter in March 1901 leaving me a grandson, whom my son has taken. I have always tried to not lose sight of those past days, and have with pride pointed to the fact that I was one of your scholars. May God continue to protect and bless you.

You have been a noble woman, how I ~~would~~ would love to meet you and take your hand.

Should you receive this please answer if with only a line.

Respectfully yours,

Alfred T. Osmond,

Formerly of Bordentown, N.J.

In reciting the story of how Clara Barton happened to be the founder of the first successful public school in New Jersey, at Bordentown, I have drawn from diaries, letters and other memoranda, which I have found in my work of examining the vast accumulation of her literary relics, for the purpose of procuring material for the final biography of Clara Barton. I have so arranged the matter that it may appear largely as though written by herself, in fact, the most of my paper is in the form of quotations from her writings.

While Miss Barton was a student at Clinton Institute, Oneida County, N.Y., she became acquainted with Miss Mary Norton. "She had been much with me," Miss Barton writes, "and almost unconsciously to myself, my teacher instincts had doubtless made her school life easy. Her letters home had called from the parents a most urgent request for me to promise them a visit in the future. This was of so genuine, hearty and at the same time delicate a nature that I could not find it in my heart to utterly decline. This was the home of the Veteran Quaker, Richard Norton, of Hightstown, N.J.

Early in the autumn of 1851 Miss Barton made the promised visit.

"As the October leaves commenced to fall," she continues, "I ventured some remarks concerning home, but these were met by a protest so general and vigorous as to unbalance my decision and lead me to consider. "My suggestion that I ought not pass so much time in mere idleness, and that there was nothing there to occupy me, drew from Uncle Richard the rejoinder, "If thee could teach our winter school, Miss Clara, thee could find plenty to do. But thee could not keep a school could thee?" I thought "perhaps I might." "I know thee could teach them Miss Clara, but these farmer boys that go to our school in the winter are men grown, and sometimes rough. Thee would not dare to undertake them?" "I thought I 'might be able to manage them', and it was decided that I attempt the winter school, consisting of about forty pupils, a venture never before essayed by a woman; "Graded School?" Ah no! not even a free school. Public schools were merely a