

Susie King Taylor: Teacher, Nurse, Author



Susie King Taylor, c. 1902
Courtesy East Carolina University

“It seems strange how our aversion to seeing suffering is overcome in war ... and instead of turning away, how we hurry to assist in alleviating their pain, bind up their wounds, and press cool water to their parched lips, with feelings only of sympathy and pity.”

Born: 1848

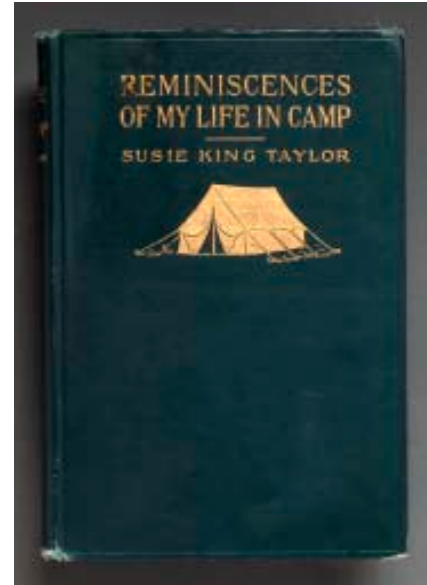
Died: 1912

Profession: Nurse

Born into Slavery: Susie King Taylor was born into slavery. At age seven, her owner allowed her to live with her grandmother in Savannah, Georgia. She went to two secret schools to learn to read and write. Her teachers were other African American women.

Nurse and Teacher: During the Civil War, Taylor worked as a nurse and teacher. Like most Civil War nurses, she did not go to school to learn to be a nurse. She learned on the job. She was also one of the few blacks who could read and write, so she taught free blacks and former slaves. She served the 33rd Regiment of the United States Colored Troops for more than three years, alongside her husband, Edward King, a sergeant in the regiment. Like many African American nurses, Taylor was never paid for her work as a nurse during the Civil War.

Author: Susie King Taylor wrote a book about her life. Her book tells her experiences as an African American nurse during the American Civil War. The book is the only one, ever written, that tells what it was like to be an African American nurse during the Civil War! The title of the book is *Reminiscences of My Life in Camp*.



Reminiscences of My Life in Camp with the 33rd United States Colored Troops Late 1st S.C. Volunteers, Susie King Taylor, 1902
Courtesy East Carolina University