



Humanitarian Aid

Humanitarian aid is material or logistical assistance provided for humanitarian purposes, typically in response to humanitarian crises including natural disasters and man-made disaster. The primary objective of humanitarian aid is to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity.



WW1 Postcard issued in aid of the British Committee of the French Red Cross entitled: One of our Relief Stations with British Voluntary Lady Workers.



Daily Mail Official War Photograph, Postcard Series 5, No 34

RAMC picking up wounded in a captured village

The Early Origins of Humanitarian Aid

The origins of the Red Cross Movement stem from the Battle of Solferino, fought in Italy between Austria and the alliance of France and Sardinia in 1859. Henry Dunant, a young Swiss businessman, was appalled by the suffering of the wounded and dying on both sides. He galvanised local people into tending the wounded, regardless of their nationality. Dunant proposed the formation of relief societies for training volunteers to care for the wounded in wartime based on an international principle. This proposal led to the formation of The Red Cross Movement.



THE RED CROSS AND THE RED CRESCENT

The emblem of the red cross or red crescent on a white background is recognised the world over as a symbol of protection, relief and comfort. It is the badge of an international, voluntary, humanitarian organisation: The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, who provide humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable people worldwide.

Jean Henry Dunant

(8 May 1828 - 30 October 1910)

Nobel Peace Prize 1901 awarded jointly with Frédéric Passy

Jean Henry Dunant's life is a study in contrasts. He was born into a wealthy home but died in a hospice; in middle age he juxtaposed great fame with total obscurity and success in business with bankruptcy; in old age he was virtually exiled from the Genevan society of which he had once been an ornament and died in a lonely room, leaving a bitter testament. His passionate humanitarianism was the one constant in his life, and the Red Cross his living monument.



In 1861 he wrote about the battle, holding nothing back, hence his descriptions are vivid and memorable. The last few pages of his book, entitled "*A Memory of Solferino*", contain the essence of his "dream" - the idea of setting-up societies of volunteers in peacetime to be ready to help the wounded when wars broke out, together with some international principles, conventional and sacred, which once ratified would form the basis for these national societies to help the wounded in different countries in Europe.

The International Committee of the Red Cross

The ICRC administers a number of funds established over the past century by special donations from individuals or organisations. They are: The Empress Shôken Fund; The Florence Nightingale medal; The French Fund Maurice de Madre and The Paul Reuter Fund. These have various aims: to help promote and develop the activities of the Red Cross/Red Crescent and international humanitarian law; to recognise the merits of individuals who have made particular contributions to its work; or to provide support to staff in difficulties because of their work in crises.



Freepost and undated letter with violet cachet from the Depot de St Yrieix with ESFA enquiry label No ZC29. ESFA = Enquete Speciale Fichier Allemand. This particular item relates to German Prisoners of War. St Yrieix-sous-Aixe is located in the department of Haute-Vienne (87) in the Limousin region.

The Empress Shōken Fund

The Empress Shōken Fund was initiated in 1912 by the Empress of Japan to promote "relief work in time of peace". Each year it decides on the attribution of grants to national Red Cross or Red Crescent societies for projects including disaster preparedness, health, blood, youth and first aid.



Empress Shōken

(昭憲皇后 Shōken-kōgō)

9 May 1849 - 9 April 1914

also known as Empress Dowager Shōken

(昭憲皇太后 Shōken-kōtaigō)

wife of Emperor Meiji of Japan.



Known throughout her reign for her support of charity work, and of women's education, during the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), the Empress also worked for the establishment of the Japanese Red Cross Society. Especially concerned about Red Cross activities in peacetime, she created a fund for the International Red Cross, which was later named "The Empress Shōken Fund". She died in 1914 at the Imperial Villa in Numazu, Shizuoka, and was buried in the East Mound of the Fushimi Momoyama Ryo in Fushimi, Kyoto, next to Emperor Meiji. Her soul was enshrined in Meiji Shrine in Tokyo. On 9 May 1914, she received the posthumous name Shōken Kōtaigō.

The French Fund Maurice de Madre

The French Fund Maurice de Madre provides assistance for staff of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, or their families, who are in difficult circumstances as a result of serious injury in the course of their work, illness or death. It was established after a bequest to the ICRC by Count Maurice de Madre in 1970.



Count Maurice de Madre



In the Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere, humanitarian workers risk their lives on a daily basis. It was this self-sacrifice that a generous benefactor, Count Maurice de Madre, sought to reward. From 1975 to 2013, the Maurice de Madre French Fund (FFMM) helped over 2,200 people with grants totalling over 3.7 million Swiss francs. Benefits were handed out on a case-by-case basis and determined according to the degree of seriousness, the needs to be met and the context.

The Paul Reuter Fund

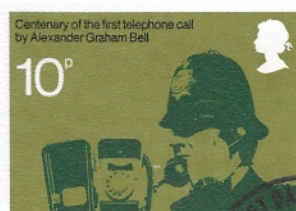
The Paul Reuter Fund encourages the publication of works on international humanitarian law; to that end it awards a prize every two years. The fund was set up in 1983 through a donation made to the ICRC by the late Paul Reuter, Professor Emeritus at the University of Paris and member of the Institut de droit international. Income from the Fund may be allocated to: reward work in the field; assist in implementation of projects promoting humanitarian law; make possible publications; remunerate activities or specific efforts in the sphere of disseminating knowledge of international humanitarian law. Awards include the Paul Reuter Prize of Swiss Fr 2,000, in principle every 3 years, for work on international humanitarian law.



1869 Portrait of Reuter at age 53 by Rudolf Lehmann

Paul Julius Freiherr von Reuter (Baron von Reuter; 21 July 1816 - 25 February 1899) was a German-born, British entrepreneur who was a pioneer of telegraphy and news reporting. He was a reporter and media owner, and the founder of Reuters News Agency, which became part of the Thomson Reuters conglomerate in 2008. Reuter died in 1899 at Villa Reuter in Nice, France. He was buried in West Norwood Cemetery in south London.

Post Office First Day Cover



The Telephone

invented by
Alexander Graham
Bell 1876



Mrs. HANSON.

Designed by Philip Sharland FSIA and printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd.

Telecommunications was an essential element of the Reuters News Agency.



1961 Europa-CEPT. European Postal & Telecommunications 2nd Anniversary Conference.

19 Doves in Flight Symbolizing 19 members of CEPT all going in the same direction. The conference was held in Torquay, on 11th September. Date of Issue: 18th September 1961; Designed by: Michael Goaman and Doves by Theo Kurperschoek (Netherlands); Printed by: Harrison & Sons Ltd of High Wycombe; Print Process: Photogravure.



1963 Opening of 'COMPAC'

COMPAC = COMmonwealth PACific Cable. Date of Issue: 3rd December 1963; Designed by: Peter Gauld; Printed by: Harrison & Sons Ltd; Print Process: Photogravure. The Trans-Pacific Cable (COMPAC) was the first telephone cable to be laid across the Pacific Ocean. It links Canada with Australia and New Zealand by way of Hawaii and Fiji.



1965 International Telecommunication Union Centenary

Date of Issue 15th November 1965; Designed by J. Andrew Restall; Printed by: Harrison's; Print Process: Photogravure. The aims of the Union created in 1865, then known as the International Telegraph Union, are to promote, maintain and extend international co-operation in telecommunication.



Nobel Peace Prize 1999

Lasker-Bloomberg Public Service Award 2015

Médecins sans frontières is an international humanitarian medical non-governmental organisation (NGO) that was founded in 1971, in the aftermath of the Biafra secession, by a small group of French doctors and journalists who sought to expand accessibility to medical care across national boundaries and irrespective of race, religion, creed or political affiliation. To that end, the organisation emphasises "independence and impartiality", and explicitly precludes political, economic, or religious factors in its decision making. For these reasons, it limits the amount of funding received from governments or intergovernmental organisation. These principles have allowed MSF to speak freely with respect to acts of war, corruption, or other hindrances to medical care or human well-being. Only once in its history, during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, has the organisation called for military intervention.



American Red Cross



Formed in 1881, the American Red Cross (ARC), also known as The American National Red Cross, is a humanitarian organization that provides emergency assistance, disaster relief, and disaster preparedness education in the United States. It is the designated US affiliate of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the United States movement to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.



Nationalité : Américaine **Date d'expédition de cette carte** 31.10.44 **275 b14**
FRANC DE PORT
 (à remplir par le demandeur)

INTER ARMA CARITAS

Pour toute recherche de MILITAIRE DISPARU, veuillez utiliser le questionnaire ci-contre.

Nous vous prions instamment de remplir ce questionnaire très lisiblement et sans adjonction.

Ainsi notre travail sera considérablement simplifié, du temps sera gagné et l'examen de votre demande s'en trouvera accéléré.

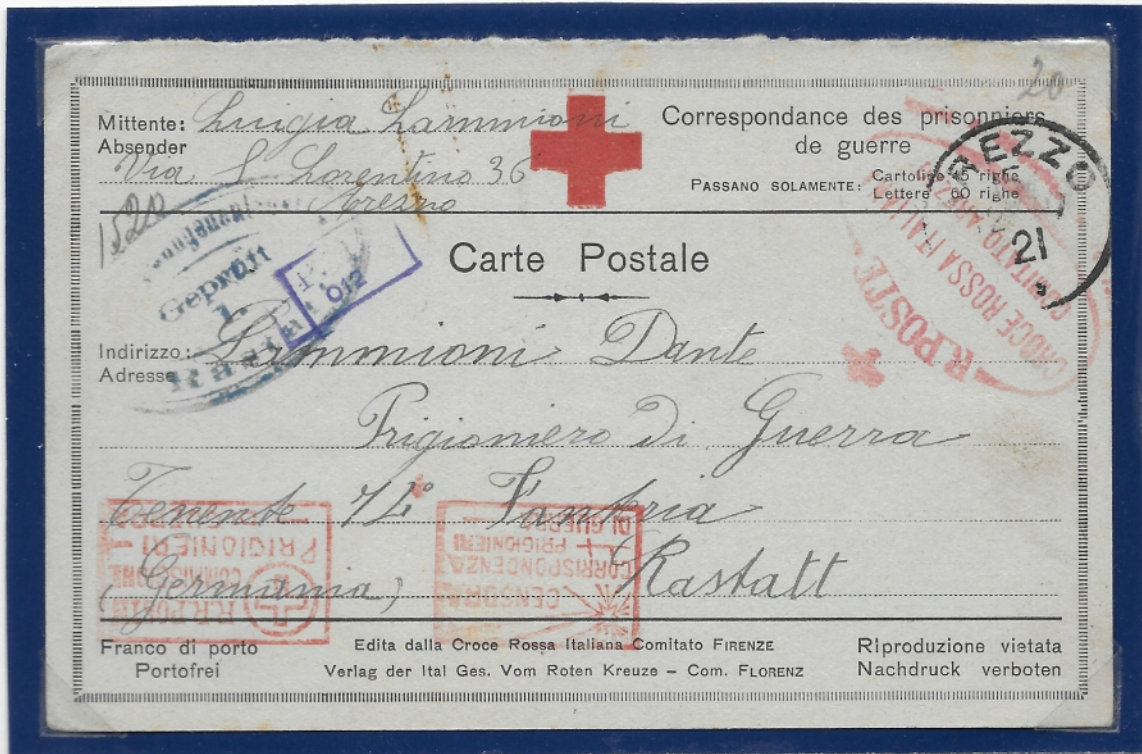
Au
Comité International de la Croix-Rouge
 Agence centrale des Prisonniers de Guerre
 Palais du Conseil général
GENÈVE
 (Suisse)
 8 NOV. 1944

Pays : Amérique 57240
 Nom et prénoms : STEPHENS Herman E., Incl. Tieurl.
 No. 0669803
 Adresse : _____
 Renseignements : Prigioniero in Germania
10.XI.44. selon + Stalag Luft I no 1575.
 Requérant : Ap. Del. Washington 0062073912 N° 77
 Service de guerre : Mission catholique suisse et
Assoc. cath. internat. des Œuvres de la protection de la jeune fille.
 Fribourg (Suisse), le 31.10.44

The American Red Cross has long been active in Italy, working in cooperation with the Italian Red Cross. Ernest Hemingway worked for the American Red Cross in Italy in 1918.



1917 card from Alba Laiolo, Alexandria to Menente Cesare Robbiano in Block 1 at the Lager Prisoner of War Camp, Rastatt, near Baden. The response section is not attached.



1921 card from Luigia Lammioni, Prezzo to Dante Lammioni Lager Prisoner of War Camp, Rastatt, near Baden. The response section is not attached.

The Belgian Red Cross is a humanitarian organization that aids in providing emergency and disaster related services and relief as well as providing education for disaster awareness within the population of Belgium. It is a member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent.



1969 Air Mail from Belgian Red Cross to Magen David Adom, Israel

The mission of the Belgian Red Cross follows the same guidelines and principles of all International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement organizations: to prevent medical, psychological, and sociological problems and crisis. The Belgian Red Cross aims to aid in resolving such problems and issues through the implementation of trainings, educational development, and through the overall assistance and presence of Red Cross members in times of turmoil. The members of this organization believe in the strength of social bonds amongst individuals as being the greatest preventative measure against isolation and marginalization.

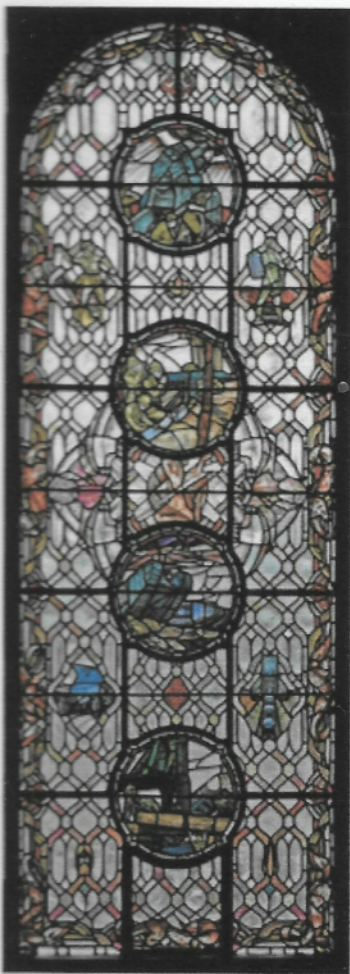
The British Red Cross Society is the United Kingdom body of the worldwide neutral and impartial humanitarian network the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The society was formed in 1870, and is a registered charity with more than 32,500 volunteers and 3,500 staff. At the heart of their work is providing help to people in crisis, both in the UK and overseas. The Red Cross is committed to helping people without discrimination, regardless of their ethnic origin, nationality, political beliefs or religion.



The mission of the British Red Cross is to mobilise the power of humanity so that individuals and communities can prepare for, deal with and recover from a crisis, summed up by the strapline 'refusing to ignore people in crisis'. In fulfilling this mission, all volunteers and staff must abide by the seven fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which are: Humanity; Impartiality; Neutrality; Independence; Voluntary Service; Unity and Universality. The British Red Cross also has four values which guide the way they work. These are: Compassionate; Inclusive; Dynamic and Courageous.

British Red Cross Society - Scottish Branch

The Scottish Branch of the British Red Cross Society worked independently from the parent body in London and, unlike other UK branches, Scotland enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. At the outbreak of WWII the Scottish Branch established a war executive committee under the Chairmanship of Sir George T Beatson, KCB. Immediately, the committee set about increasing voluntary staff, establishing suitable stores accommodation, and organising medical and surgical supplies for the front. The goal of the committee was to supply comforts for the troops without wasting money, materials or the efforts of the paid and voluntary personnel. The unspoken mantra of the Scottish Branch was efficiency, economy and endeavour. A report into the activities of the Scottish Branch during the early months of the war claimed, 'it was the ungrudging personal effort' of the Scottish people that was at the heart of effective humanitarian aid.



The Machinery of War window in the Scottish National War Memorial, Edinburgh Castle.

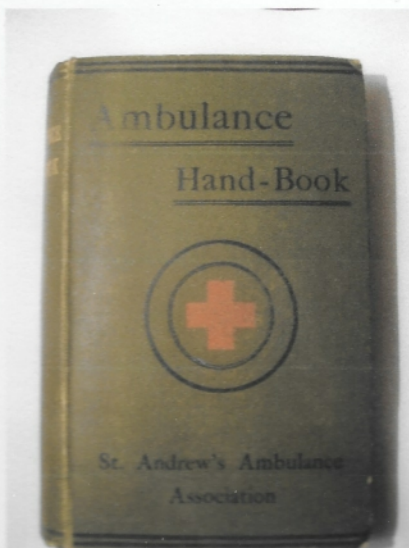




St Andrew's First Aid is a charity based in Scotland. Founded in 1882, St Andrew's Ambulance Association was Scotland's first ambulance service. From 1967 the St. Andrew's Scottish Ambulance Service was the sole contractor for the provision of the ambulance service, until 1974 when the National Health Service was reorganised and St Andrew's ambulance role was absorbed into the Scottish Ambulance Service. The St Andrew's association continued as a provider of first aid services and training, changing their trading name.



St Andrew's Ambulance Association mobile first aid post



St Andrew's, St John Ambulance and the British Red Cross Society collectively form the Voluntary Aid Societies. Together, the organisations produce the official First Aid Manual in the United Kingdom. Following an agreement in 1908, St John Ambulance ceased to operate in Scotland and St Andrew's ceased to operate in England. St Andrew's enjoys good relations with the British Red Cross, and they often work in partnership at larger duties



The Croix-Rouge Française was established on 7 August 1940 with the merger of three associations:

- Société de Secours aux Blessés Militaires (SSBM), established on 22 May 1864 and recognized on the same day as the French National Committee of the Red Cross - renamed in 1870 Société de Secours aux Blessés Militaires des Armées de Terre et de Mer;
- Association des Dames Françaises (ADF), founded in 1879 by Auguste Duchaussoy (1827-1918), as a splinter of SSBM;
- Union des Femmes de France (UFF), established in 1881 by Emma Koechlin-Schwartz (1838-1911), as a splinter of UFF.



The French Red Cross, founded in 1864, is an independent charity working alongside governments and public authorities. As a key player in society, the French Red Cross provide humanitarian, health, social, welfare and training services. To help carry out their assignments they have a strong team of 18,000 employees and 56,000 volunteers, who on a daily basis, pursue consistent and unwavering charitable principles to provide local support and deliver tangible results and long-term solutions.