

Impact Statement

Mekel Green, Grade 12

***The nurse of the battlefield*, 2024.**

Pen on paper, 15 x 12 inches.

Salem High School, Conyers, GA

Unsung Hero: Mary Bickerdyk

Mother Mary Ann Bickerdyke was a one-of-a-kind woman in the era she lived. A Gift to the premodern world of medicine and the epitome of a sword and shield for injured soldiers on the field. I find her striving for a clean and sanitary environment on the battlefield and the vigor she put forth to ensure the assembly of medical facilities all inspiring as someone who also wishes to go in the medical field in the future. Bickerdyk's pioneering efforts to attend to the wounded soldiers and dedication to her field of nursing is something I also wish to uphold when I enter the healthcare field later. The way I chose to draw my artwork, I believe, conveys just that. In blue pen a drawing of her in her younger days to show the vitality Mother Bickerdyke had within her when she sought out to provide aid to both injured and sick and a 2nd drawing of her when she was older in red pen to impart Bickerdyke's never ending contribution to the world of medicine. Even after the war she was still doing wonders whether it was giving back to the Salvation army or using alternative medicines to contribute to the world of herbal medicine. This fact about her I find the most inspiring as one day I wish to go into the pharmacy field and research how herbs can be used to create medicine. In the middle of the artwork is a drawing of a caduceus which is the insignia of not only the United States Medical corps but the symbol of medicine and modern-day healthcare. I drew this symbol in the middle of both portraits to emphasize the fact that Mother Bickerdyke was not just a typical nurse, but one of the battlefields. I believe red and blue ink gives a lot more feeling and detail to an artwork than regular graphite pencil. Ergo, the reason I chose this medium. I wanted to show what Mary looked like when she was in her prime but also a picture of what everyone knows her to look like. Through creating this artwork, I have developed an appreciation for the process of aging.

Drawing Mother Bickerdyke, both young and old, gave me an understanding of where aging on our faces takes place. Despite Bickerdyke wrinkles in her later life, her eyes, lips, and nose remained the same; A concept of her facial features I noticed and had fun expressing. I love drawing portraits and I feel as though I should share that enthusiasm with those around me. There is a lot that goes into the human facial anatomy and through my art I would like to convey not only an understanding of it, but an appreciation for it as well. You don't often see a young artist drawing with pen, as many prefer to stick to traditional material such as graphite. As I enter college and continue to surround myself with other art enthusiasts, I wish to break such a tradition and help others

explore the world of ink drawing and discover its diversity in shading that give value and depth to an artwork.