

PORTRAIT OF A PIONEER

In recent months, the doctors and nurses of all descriptions who have been on the frontline of the pandemic have been heroes to many. But there was a time in 1864 when a young trailblazer became a doctor, achieving a different kind of hero status. That's when **Rebecca Lee Crumpler** became the first Black woman in the U.S. to earn her medical degree.



Following the Civil War, she nurtured Black soldiers in Virginia when other physicians refused to help them. Dr. Crumpler's legacy also includes being one of the first Black physicians to write and publish a medical book. Hers focused on women's and children's health. Sadly, she died in 1895 of fibroid tumors.

Her gravesite was unmarked for 125 years. But Dr. Melody McCloud, an OB/GYN at Emory University Hospital and founder and medical director of Atlanta Women's Health, helped right that wrong. Thanks to Dr. McCloud and donors from across the nation, Dr. Crumpler and her husband, a former slave, received granite headstones in 2020.



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