

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE RED CROSS

HENRY DUNANT THE FOUNDER OF THE RED CROSS

His compassion has saved millions

This richly illustrated 65-page book¹ tells the story of Henry Dunant's life and work.

In the first few pages the author describes Dunant's childhood in Geneva and his visit to Algeria, before turning to the battle of Solferino which was to influence the rest of Dunant's life. Strongly affected by the veritable slaughter that he witnessed there and impressed by the solidarity of the local population towards the wounded whom he was trying to assist, Dunant began to dream of a better world. His book "A Memory of Solferino" which, in Pam Brown's words, was going to change the world, directly inspired the founding of the Red Cross by the Committee of Five. Henry Dunant fell into disgrace not long after, but the Red Cross continued to grow, especially during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870.

The author comes back to Henry Dunant again, describing the last years of his life spent in Heiden, and the recognition of his work which finally came with the award of the first Nobel Peace Prize in 1901. The narrative ends with the description of the development and activities of the Red Cross movement which is seen as Henry Dunant's legacy.

The book also contains a chronological table of the most important dates in the history of the Red Cross from the birth of Henry Dunant to the present day, a glossary of the main terms used in the text and an alphabetical index.

Françoise Perret

¹ Brown, Pam, *Henry Dunant: The founder of the Red Cross—his compassion has saved millions*, Exley Publications Ltd., Watford, 1988 (People who have helped the world).