

# Rebecca Lee Crumpler

In 1831, Rebecca Lee Crumpler was born to Absolum Davis and Matilda Webber but was raised by an aunt who is rumored to have influenced her decision to pursue a career in medicine. Crumpler worked as a nurse from 1852 until 1860, when she enrolled in the New England Female Medical College. She was the first African American woman in the United States to earn a Medical degree. After earning her degree, Crumpler moved to Richmond, Virginia and worked with the Freedman's Bureau, providing medical care for former slaves. She returned to Massachusetts years later and published *A Book of Medical Discourses in Two Parts* in 1883. The book was based on journal notes she kept while practicing medicine and was intended as a manual to help women provide medical care of themselves and their children by offering information about nutrition and preventive medicine. Crumpler overcame numerous obstacles, including racial and gender discrimination and prejudice, to become a highly respected medical professional. She helped break barriers to the medical field for women and African Americans.