

Born the one-room school taught by her parents

[Education](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Born and raised on a farm in New York, Mary (1), despite many's disapproval, studied vigorously to become a doctor in order to assist the wounded any way she could, earning several people's admiration along the way.

Alva and Vesta Walker bore a daughter on November 26, 1832 in the small town of Oswego, New York (1). Growing up on the family farm, Mary's father forbade her to wear any tight-fitting clothing, stating they impeded the circulation of her blood, which would later contribute to her views on women's dress (3). In her spare time, she would read her father's medical books in the family's farm house (3). After learning the necessary essentials in the one-room school taught by her parents and older siblings, Mary moved on to an early education at the Falley Seminary in Fulton (1; 3).

In 1852, Mary obtained a job as teacher in a Minetto school (3). Following her short employment, Mary enrolled in Syracuse Medical College and proceeded to graduate with a Doctor of Medicine degree in 1855 as the only female student (1). Eager to begin a private practice, Mary relocated to Columbus Ohio, only to be met with rejection and scorn from people who deemed female physicians as untrustworthy quacks (2; 3). Returning to her hometown, Mary promptly fell in love and married Albert Miller, starting a joint-practice (2; 3). Sadly, this endeavor ended quickly, as people have not yet begun to accept female physicians (2).

Mary enrolled in Bowen Collegiate Institute in Hopkin, Iowa, in 1860, joining an all-male debate society (2). The institution did not agree with Mary's actions and warned her to leave club (2). Mary did not heed their warning and later received a suspension from the school (2). Unwavering and

devoted, Mary instigated a job as a nurse at the Patent Office Hospital in Washington, D. C.

(1). Sleeping in hospital alcoves and sneaking cornbread from the table to wounded soldiers, Mary made sure all the patients had proper care (3). Noticing the absence of income, one of Mary's superiors generously suggested he provide her with a share of his salary, but she refused (3).