



The First Fifty Women on United States Stamps



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THE FIRST FIFTY WOMEN ON UNITED STATES STAMPS

Between 1998 and 2008 — the most recent decade for which we have records — the U.S. Postal Service issued 155 adhesive stamps that pictured or honored women and their accomplishments. But it was not ever thus.

In the 80 years between 1873 and 1953, the United States Post Office Department included or alluded to women on the three postal cards and 52 stamps pictured on the pages that follow.

Fully 23 of these are goddesses or allegories, including the 11 designs used on seldom-seen newspaper and periodical stamps of 1875 and 1895, four personifications of Liberty, and three representations of the magnificent 15,000-pound bronze Statue of Freedom that crowns the Capitol Dome in Washington, D.C.

Six stamps — more than 10 percent of the total, including the only U.S. dollar denominations ever to depict a flesh-and-blood female — portray a Spanish monarch, Queen Isabella I of Castile, patron of Columbus. The 1893 \$4 value on which her cameo and that of the explorer appear is the key stamp in the first U.S. commemorative set, the finest examples of which have sold for as much as \$20,000.

Of the rest, 15 pay tribute to historically noteworthy women: Martha Washington (three times), Pocahontas, Molly Pitcher (by overprint alone), the tragic Virginia Dare and her mother Eleanor, Susan B. Anthony, Louisa May Alcott, Frances E. Willard, Jane Addams, Clara Barton, Betsy Ross, Moina Mitchell, Juliette Gordon Low, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Carrie Catt.

The remainder are stamps I collectively characterize as “She, the People.” Little-known or unnamed, they huddle with their spouse and child as the Pilgrims land at Plymouth Rock, await rescue by the National Guard, or help their brother plant a tree on Arbor Day. One is a working woman marching proudly with the men for the National Recovery Act in 1933, elder sister of the Women in the Armed Services of 1952. Many are generic, but some are remarkably moving. Among them are the mother and daughter looking on in terror as the fallen horse that drew their covered wagon is put out of its misery on the 1898 10¢ Hardships of Emigration stamp. For any woman, this would surely be the most dramatic and depressing American commemorative of this eight-decade era were it not for one other: the Gold Star Mothers issue of 1948.

Some stamps that might be here are not. The backs of at least two onlookers in the 1939 Baseball Centennial issue may be girls, but I excluded them as androgynous window dressing. Similarly, that *may* be the silhouette of a woman in a bonnet in the wagon on the 1947 Utah Centenary issue — or it may be a bent shovel. There is a woman, with a bonnet, and a swaddled infant pressed firmly to her bosom, on the 1948 Fort Kearny issue. However, the four men on the stamp have faces, the two oxen have faces, the horse has a face, the bird has a face, and even the herd dog has a face. But neither the woman nor her offspring have faces — apparently the engraver couldn’t find the time — so I didn’t include them, either. These stamps don’t honor women.

I deliberately depicted the modern reissues of the Columbian and Trans-Mississippi stamps on these pages because their bright white paper makes the designs easier to see. And the 19th-century essays depicted on the cover appear through the generous courtesy of Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries of New York.

I hope that reflecting on the selection of images here will stimulate your thinking and your imagination as it did my own. For a different, more wide-ranging appreciation of women on U.S. stamps, visit the Smithsonian National Postal Museum’s Arago project’s “Women on Stamps, Part I” at <http://tinyurl.com/c2tjm6>

— Fred Baumann
American Philatelic Society

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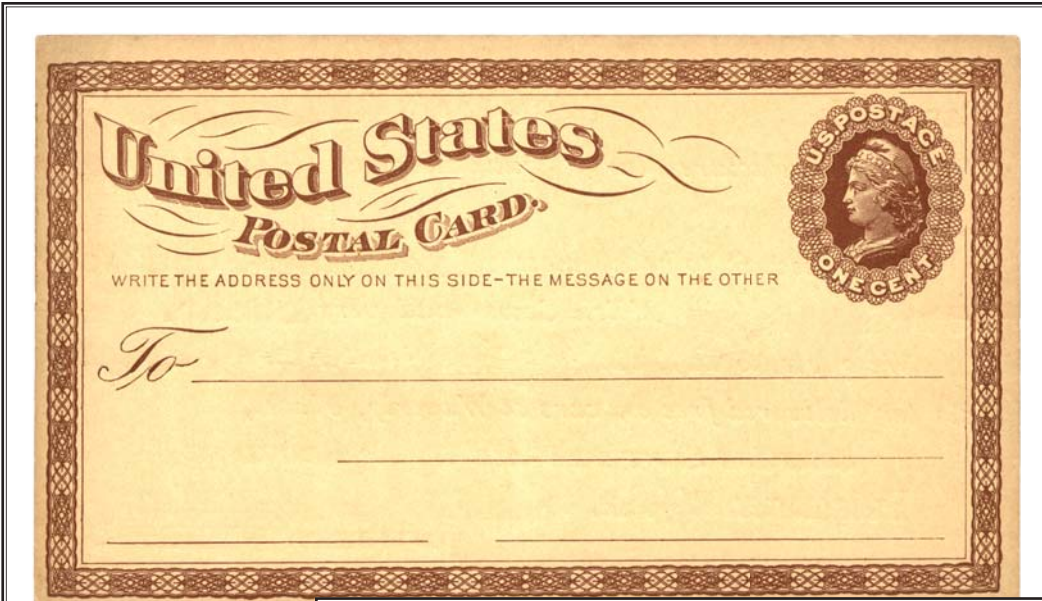
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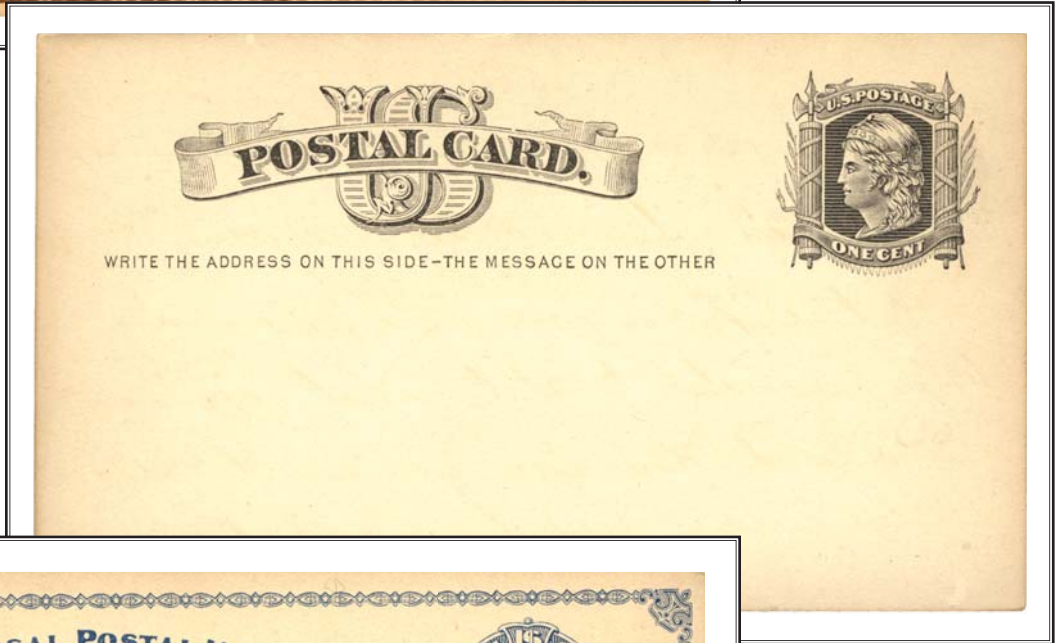


U.S. "LIBERTY" POSTAL CARDS — 1873-1879

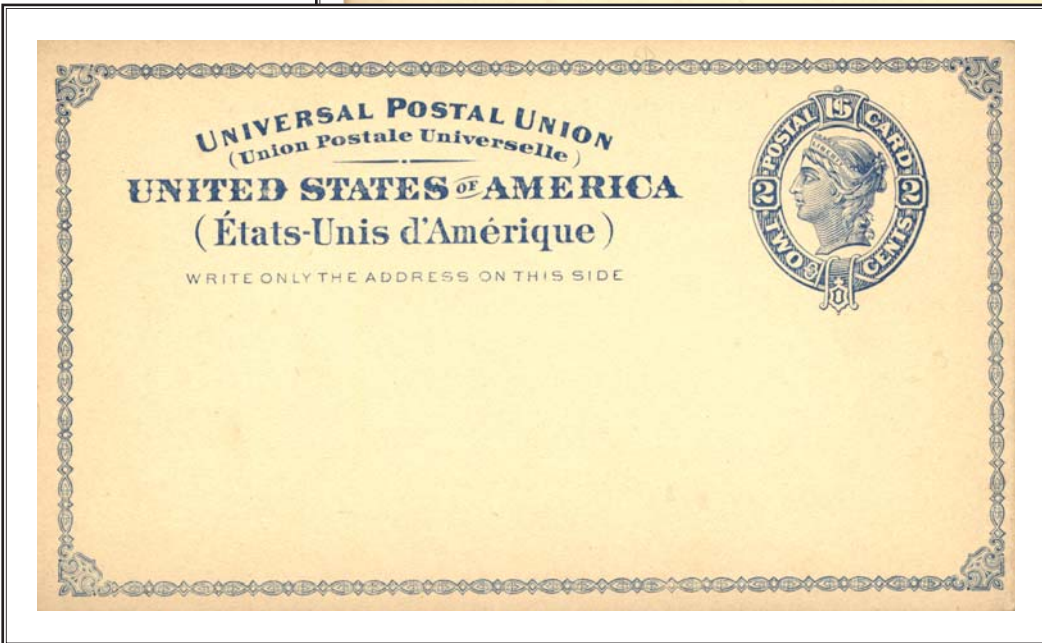
1873 1¢ brown
Liberty postal card
(Scott UX3)



1875 1¢ black
Liberty postal card
(Scott UX4)



1879 1¢ blue
Liberty postal card
(Scott UX6)





1875 NEWSPAPER & PERIODICAL STAMPS



1875 3c
Statue of Freedom
(Scott PR10)



1875 \$3
Victory
(Scott PR25)



1875 \$6
Clio
(Scott PR26)



1875 \$9
Minerva
(Scott PR27)



1875 \$60
Indian Maiden
(Scott PR32)



1875 \$48
Hebe
(Scott PR31)



1875 \$1.92
Ceres
(Scott PR24)



1875 12c
Justice
(Scott PR16)



1875 \$12
Vesta
(Scott PR28)



1875 \$24
Peace
(Scott PR29)



1875 \$36
Commerce
(Scott PR30)

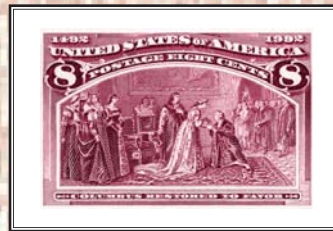




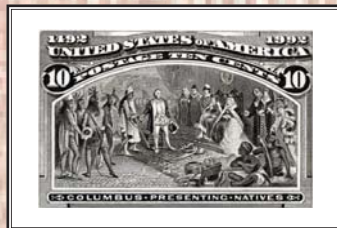
THE UNDISPUTED QUEEN OF U.S. STAMPS



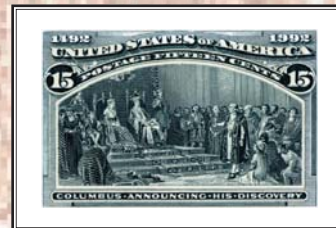
1893/1992 5¢ Columbus Soliciting Aid of Isabella (Scott 234 / 2626a)



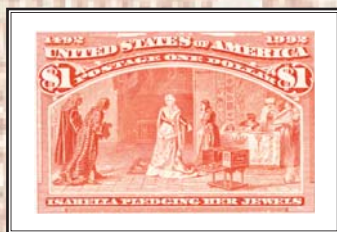
1893/1992 8¢ Columbus Restored to Favor (Scott 238 / 2627b)



1893/1992 10¢ Columbus Presenting Natives (Scott 238 / 2628a)



1893/1992 15¢ Columbus Announcing His Discovery (Scott 238 / 2628b)



1893/1992 \$1 Isabella Pledging Her Jewels (Scott 241 / 2624c)



1893/1992 \$4 Columbus and Isabella (Scott 244 / 2625c)

TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS ON THE TRAIL



1898/1998 10¢ Hardships of Emigration (Scott 290 / 3209f)



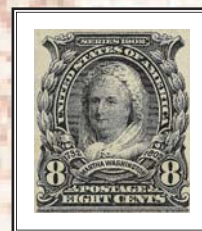
LADY WASHINGTON: THE FIRST "FIRST LADY"



1938 1½¢ Martha Washington (Scott 805)



1923 4¢ Martha Washington (Scott 556)



1902 8¢ Martha Washington (Scott 306)





WOMEN ON AMERICAN STAMPS — 1907-1932



1907 5¢
Pocahontas
(Scott 330)



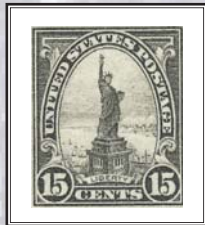
1920 2¢
Landing of the Pilgrims
(Scott 549)



1924 2¢ Walloons Landing
at Fort Orange (Scott 615)



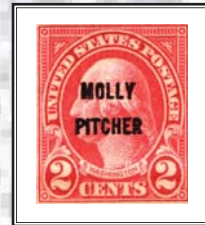
1920 5¢
Signing of the Compact
(Scott 550)



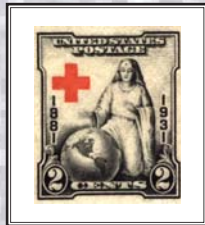
1923 15¢
Statue of Liberty
(Scott 566)



1923 \$5 "America"
[Head of Freedom Statue]
(Scott 573)



1928 2¢
"MOLLY PITCHER"
(Scott 646)



1931 2¢
Red Cross
(Scott 702)



1932 2¢
Arbor Day
(Scott 717)

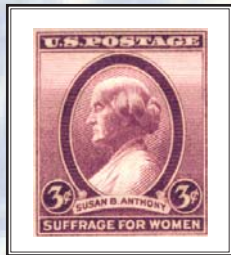


1950 3¢
Statue of Freedom
(Scott 989)





WOMEN ON AMERICAN STAMPS — 1933-1940



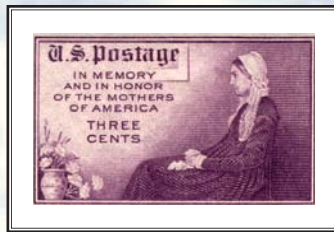
1936 3¢
Susan B. Anthony
(Scott 784)



1933 3¢ National
Recovery Act
(Scott 732)



1937 5¢
Virginia Dare
350th Birthday (Scott 796)



1934 3¢
Mothers of America
(Scott 737)



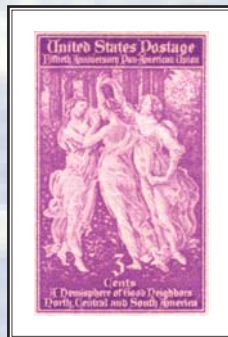
1940 5¢
Louisa May Alcott
American Author
(Scott 862)



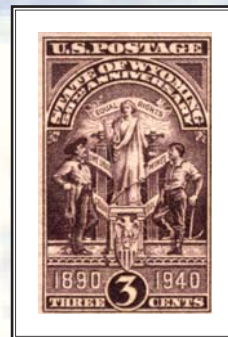
1940 5¢
Frances E. Willard
American Educator
(Scott 872)



1940 10¢
Jane Addams
American Scientist
(Scott 878)



1940 3¢ Pan-American Union
[Botticelli's *Three Graces*]
(Scott 895)



1940 3¢ Wyoming
Statehood 50th Anniversary
(Scott 897)





WOMEN ON AMERICAN STAMPS — 1943-1953



1943 5¢
Overrun Nations – Poland
(Scott 909)



1948 3¢
Clara Barton
(Scott 967)



1948 3¢
Moina Michael
(Scott 977)



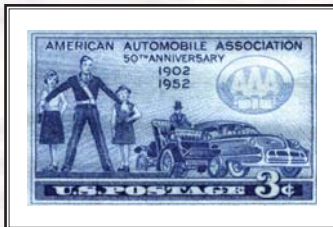
1948 3¢ Gold Star Mothers
(Scott 969)



1948 3¢
Juliette Gordon Low
(Scott 974)



1948 3¢
Progress of Women
(Scott 959)



1952 3¢
American Automobile Association
(Scott 1007)



1952 3¢
Betsy Ross
(Scott 1004)



1952 3¢
The 4-H Clubs
(Scott 1005)



1953 3¢
Washington Territory
(Scott 1019)



1952 3¢ Women in
Our Armed Services
(Scott 1013)



1953 3¢
National Guard
(Scott 1017)





WOMEN ON U.S. STAMPS

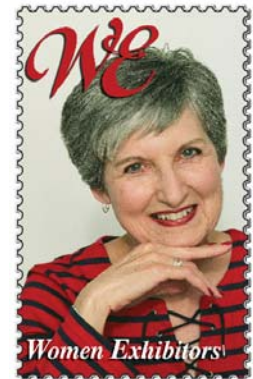




THE FESTIVAL FOR PHILATELIC WOMEN

MAY 28-31, 2009 — BELLEFONTE, PENNSYLVANIA

Make new friends and learn new skills at the Festival for Philatelic Women May 28-31 at the American Philatelic Center in Bellefonte. The four-day event will offer 22 seminars, “how-to” demonstrations, workshops, and practical programs to help women get the most from the stamp hobby. Both men and women are cordially welcome, but the emphasis will be on exploring philately from a woman’s point of view. It’s your chance to expand your horizons — to take the first steps to mastering important new skills that will bring the world of stamps and historic mail to vivid life for you. The Festival for Philatelic Women is a Women Exhibitors (WE) event, co-sponsored by the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors and hosted by the APS and APRL at the American Philatelic Center. Get on the mailing list for the Festival of Philatelic Women today by sending an e-mail with “Festival Information” in the subject line to WEfestival@comcast.net Or use this form to pre-register: <http://www.aape.org/docs/WERegistration.pdf>



WOMEN EXHIBITORS (WE)

Women Exhibitors (WE) — Affiliate No. 260 of the APS — was organized in 2007 to provide a vehicle through which women exhibitors can encourage each other, sharing information, ideas, experience, advice, problems, and solutions. The group does so through seminars, its quarterly online newsletter *WE think*, its monthly newsletter *WE Expressions*, and through one-on-one mentoring of exhibitors. WE meets twice yearly at APS StampShow and AmeriStamp Expo, and satellite meetings are held at national, regional, and local shows. Annual dues are just \$5. Both the WE website and its online newsletters are hosted on the Internet at <http://www.aape.org/Weweb.asp>

APS STAMPSHOW 2009

AUGUST 6-9 — PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA



Admission is free to APS STAMPSHOW 2009 — the largest philatelic event in the U.S. this year — August 6-9 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, 1000 Fort Duquesne Boulevard, in the heart of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The show is co-sponsored by the United States Postal Service and the American Stamp Dealers Association, and supported by the National Stamp Dealers Association. The four-day show will feature 150 dealers, two major auctions, thousands of pages of exhibits, and fun for the whole family. On Thursday, August 6, the U.S. Postal Service will release 10 new 44¢ stamps in its Flags of Our Nation series. Show hours are Friday and Saturday 10 to 6, and Sunday from 10 to 4.

To learn more, visit <http://www.stamps.org/Stampshow>

