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Black Heritage Stamp Series: Mary McLeod Bethune

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Issue Date: March 5, 1985

First Day City: Washington, D.C.

Designer: Jerry Pinkney
Croton-on-Hudson, New York

Typographer: Bradbury Thompson

Art Director: Jack Williams

Modeler: Richard C. Sennett

Process: Gravure

Colors: Yellow, red, blue, black, purple
and green

Image Area: .71 x .82 inches or
18.03 x 20.82 millimeters

Plate Numbers: One group of six digits
(preceded by the letter "A")

Stamps per Pane: 50

Selvage: ©U.S. Postal Service 1985
Use Correct ZIP Code®
Mr. ZIP® (running position)

Mary McLeod Bethune Commemorative Stamp

A 22-cent stamp commemorating noted educator and social activist Mary McLeod Bethune, the eighth issue in the Black Heritage Series, was issued March 5 in Washington, D.C.

Mary McLeod Bethune was born in Mayesville, South Carolina, in 1875, the 15th of 17 children born to former slaves. Through the beneficence of a rural school teacher, she was taken out of her family's cotton fields and sent to Scotia Seminary in Concord, North Carolina, to receive an education.

In 1904, with only \$1.50 in her pocket, but great hopes and dreams, she rented a rickety, two-story frame building and, with only five students, opened the Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls. In 1923, the former grade school was merged with Cookman Institute to become Bethune-Cookman College with 600 students, 32 teachers and Mrs. Bethune as president.

In addition to her role as educator, she was appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to head the Negro Division of the National Youth Administration, the highest government job then held by a black woman. In 1935, Mrs. Bethune founded the National Council of Negro Women, forming a coalition of the leading black women's organizations of her day. She died in Daytona Beach, Florida in 1955.



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Rolney Lawrence Hurst Sr. Papers
Thomas G Carpenter Library
Special Collections



AMERICAN COMMEMORATIVES

Mary McLeod Bethune



"I leave you love...hope...a thirst for education...racial dignity...and a desire to live harmoniously with your fellow man."

These were the words of Mary McLeod Bethune, a woman with indomitable spirit and determination, who dedicated her life to thousands of young black children yearning for an education.

Born in 1875 in the small wooden cabin near Mayesville, South Carolina, pictured in the engraving above, Mary Jane McLeod was the 15th of 17 children born to former slaves. Despite poverty and hardships, her strong will and deep faith made her realize that illiteracy was a handicap she could *not* accept—for herself or for others.

In 1895, after graduating from the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, she returned to the South, taught at several mission schools and in 1899 married Albertus L. Bethune, a fellow teacher. In 1904, with only \$1.50, crates and boxes for desks, and charred wood pencils, she founded the Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls in Daytona Beach, Florida. Within five years, Bethune had more than 250 students, and in 1923 merged with the Cookman Institute to form Bethune-Cookman College. She continued as college president for over 20 years.

In 1935, she founded the National Council of Negro Women, and later became director of the Division of Minority Affairs in the National Youth Administration. For nearly 40 years she was a close friend and advisor to five U. S. Presidents, including Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who would often call her personally to seek advice and wisdom.

Like the great oaks that grew from acorns to shade the Bethune-Cookman campus, so did the knowledge and spirit she planted grow into new freedom for thousands of men and women.

Mary McLeod Bethune died in Daytona Beach on May 18, 1955. The stamp commemorating her was designed by Jerry Pinkney of Croton-on-Hudson, New York, and was issued on March 5, 1985, in Washington, D.C.



**Mary McLeod Bethune Stamp
First Day of Issue Ceremony
March 5, 1985
Departmental Auditorium
Washington, D.C.**



Cover photo courtesy of the Bethune Museum Archives, National Historic Site.
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Presiding	John R. Cochran <i>Postmaster Washington, D.C.</i>
Presentation of Colors	The Cardoza ROTC Color Guard
National Anthem	The Cardoza High School Band <i>Vocalist: Annette Poulard</i>
Invocation	Bishop John Hurst Adams <i>Second Episcopal District African Methodist Episcopal Church</i>
Welcome and Introduction of Distinguished Guests	Bettye Collier-Thomas <i>Executive Director Bethune Museum-Archives, Inc. National Historic Site</i>
Remarks	Dorothy I. Height <i>President National Council of Negro Women</i>
Musical Selection	Postal Service Chorale <i>Washington, D.C., Post Office</i>
Address and Presentation of Albums	Mary J. Layton <i>Assistant Postmaster General</i>
Benediction	Bishop John Hurst Adams
Honored Guests	
Albert Bethune, Sr. <i>Son of Mrs. Bethune</i>	<i>Distinguished members of the U.S. Congress</i>
Benjamin Hooks <i>Executive Director NAACP</i>	<i>Honorable Donald P. Hodel Secretary of the Interior</i>
Dr. Oswald P. Bronson, Sr. <i>President Bethune-Cookman College</i>	<i>Myrtle Gray President National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc.</i>
Dr. William Trent <i>Bennett College</i>	<i>Jerry Pinkney Designer of the Stamp</i>



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

When Mary McLeod was born in rural South Carolina on July 10, 1875, her future seemed less than promising. Her parents and 16 brothers and sisters were impoverished and uneducated. At the time, it was impossible for a Southern black child to receive any form of public education. But, Mary was imbued with determination, a strong will and fierce pride. Illiteracy was a handicap she would *not* accept, for herself or for others. Neighbors and relatives considered her unique and had high expectations for her. She did not disappoint them.

In 1895, after graduating from the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Mary returned to the south where she taught at several mission schools for nearly 10 years. In 1899, she married a fellow teacher, Albert L. Bethune.

She dreamed of establishing her own school, one which in her words, "would do the greatest good for the greatest number." Her pursuit of that dream began in 1904, when, with a total of \$1.50, she founded the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute for Girls at Daytona Beach, Florida. Her first class consisted of five girls who paid 50 cents per week for tuition. Within five years the school's enrollment had increased to more than 250 pupils – girls and boys – who yearned for education. In 1923, the school merged with the Cookman Institute to form Bethune-Cookman College. Mrs. Bethune became the school's first president and remained in that position until 1942.

In 1936, in recognition of her leadership, she was appointed the Director of the Division of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration. Under Mrs. Bethune's guidance, the Administration provided educational training for more than 600,000 black children annually.

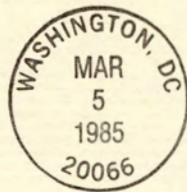
During the years of World War II, she was appointed special assistant to the Secretary of War for the selection of officer candidates for the Women's Army Corps. Mrs. Bethune also served as a special advisor to President Roosevelt on minority affairs.

The Postal Service takes pride in issuing this stamp in honor of one of America's most devoted educators, Mary McLeod Bethune. The stamp, which is being issued during Women's History Week, was designed by Jerry Pinkney of Croton-on-Hudson, New York. Mr. Pinkney has designed all eight of the stamps in the Black Heritage USA Series.

Rodney A. Carrington Papers
Thomas Cookman College
Special Collection



Mary McLeod Bethune
Black Heritage Series



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

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Mary McLeod Bethune

Black Heritage Series

First Day of Issue: *March 5, 1985*

First Day City: *Washington, D.C., where Bethune served as a Presidential adviser*

Stamp Designer: *Jerry Pinkney
Croton-on-Hudson, New York*

This U.S. stamp pays tribute to Mary McLeod Bethune (1875-1955), the daughter of slaves who became a prominent educator and adviser to Presidents. The focus of her life was to improve educational, economic, and social opportunities for her fellow black Americans.

Mary Bethune grew up in the South, where she was trained as a teacher. She began her career as an educator in church-run schools for blacks in South Carolina and Georgia. Then, in 1904, she established the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute in Daytona Beach, Florida, which began with an enrollment of six students. The school grew steadily, and eventually offered both elementary and high school

courses. Much of the curriculum was job-oriented and geared to black females, who had few educational opportunities. Twenty-five years after its founding, the school merged with an all-male institute to become Bethune-Cookman College. Mary Bethune served as president until 1942.

A woman of enormous energy, Bethune served on various commissions under Presidents Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, and Franklin Roosevelt. In 1939, she was named Director, Division of Negro Affairs, of the National Youth Administration. Her influence greatly increased black participation in NYA programs.

Mary Bethune also founded the National Council of Negro Women and served as an officer of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Urban League. She organized the Federal Council on Negro Affairs, which worked to secure increased benefits for blacks from the federal government.