



CATALOG

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Trailblazing Women

The National Archives is the home of the [19th Amendment](#), the Constitutional amendment that prohibited the states from denying the vote on the basis of sex. In 2020, the Archives commemorated the centennial of this landmark document.



We invite you to continue exploring records that help tell the story of [women's rights and history](#), including the fight for the vote, and recognize the great contributions women have made to our nation throughout history.

This month we are highlighting a selection of the many trailblazing women throughout history whose stories can be found within the holdings of the National Archives.

A contingent of nurses arrive in the southwest Pacific area, received their first batch of home mail at 268th Station Hospital, Australia, 11/29/1943. [National Archives Identifier 531410](#)

Mae Jemison

Mae Carol Jemison became the first African American woman accepted into

NASA's space training program on June 4, 1987. Five years later, on September 12, 1992, she became the first black woman to travel into space when she served as a mission specialist aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavor.

Learn more on the Pieces of History blog: [Mae Jemison: First Black Woman in Space](#).



Mission Photographs Taken During the Space Shuttle Program , 4/12/1981 - 7/21/2011. STS-47, Mission Specialist Mae Jemison, 11/19/1998. [National Archives Identifier 22725970](#)

Ida Bell Wells-Barnett

Born enslaved in Mississippi in 1862, Ida Bell Wells-Barnett dedicated her life to fighting for racial and gender equality. She was a journalist, suffragist, advocate of racial justice, and anti-lynching activist.

In this letter to Republican Senator Henry Dawes of Massachusetts, Ida B. Wells appeals for justice in the [lynching of Postmaster Frazier B. Baker](#) and his two-year-old daughter, Julia, in South Carolina, in 1898. Learn more on the Rediscovering Black History blog post, [The Honorable Agitator](#).

1630-10th St. N. W.
Wednesday 3 P.M.

Dear Mr Dawes:-
I neglected, I fear, to make
clear to you ~~that~~ the special reason I
wished the President to peruse the
manuscript I left with you, is the
hope that he will make recommend-
ation to Congress similar to the cases
cited. Mrs Baker and her children
lay from Monday night after the as-
sault was made, (which killed her
husband and baby and wounded her
self and three remaining children),
until the following Saturday morning
without any medical attention what-
ever. They are now in the colored
hospital in Charleston S. C. and
when they recover sufficiently, to be dis-
charged, have not a dollar with
which to buy food, shelter or raiment.
Sincerely trusting that I have not

trespassed too largely on your time
and patience in humanity's
name, I am
Respectfully yours
Ida B. Wells-Barnett.

Letter from Ida B. Wells-Barnett to Mr. Dawes, 1898. [National Archives Identifier 24746870](#)

Jeannette Rankin

After helping to secure women the right to vote in Montana in 1914, Jeanette Rankin was the first woman to be sworn into Congress in April 1917. She served as a Representative from Montana's at-large district, from March 4, 1917 until March 3, 1919 and again as Representative from Montana's 1st district from January 3, 1941 until January 3, 1943.

Learn more on the Pieces of History blog: [Women can't vote, but they can run for Congress](#)



Still image from Motion Picture Newsreel Films Used for a Documentary Series on World War I, [National Archives Identifier 89241](#)

Shirley Chisholm

In 1969, Shirley Chisholm became the first African American woman to serve in Congress, representing New York's 12th Congressional District. She was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus in 1971 and the Congressional Women's Caucus in 1977. Chisholm was also the first woman and the first African American to seek the Democratic Presidential nomination in 1972.

Learn more on the National Archives Featured Document Display: [Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm: “Unbought and Unbossed”](#)



Photograph of the Rules Committee, 95th Congress, ca. 1977. National Archives, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives

Geraldine Ferraro

In 1984, Democratic Presidential nominee Walter Mondale announced that Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro of New York would be his running mate. Ferraro would make history as the first female Vice Presidential nominee for a major party.



Jimmy Carter with Congresswomen, Geraldine Ferraro, 9/21/1978. [National Archives Identifier 181476](#)

Mary McLeod Bethune

As a presidential advisor of African American Affairs during the Roosevelt administration, Mary McLeod Bethune formed the Federal Council of Negro Affairs, which would become known as the Black Cabinet. The Black Cabinet was instrumental in creating jobs for African Americans in federal executive departments and New Deal agencies.



Bethune's influence within the Roosevelt administration also allowed her to direct funds created by the New Deal program to Black people. Programs such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and National Youth Administration (NYA) were successful in employing over 300,000 African Americans during the Great Depression.

Mary McLeod Bethune, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and others at the opening of Midway Hall, 5/1943. [National Archives Identifier 533032](#)

Mary McLeod Bethune also currently has the honor of the only Official Personnel Folder digitized in the National Archives Catalog: [Official Personnel Folder for Mary](#)

[McLeod Bethune, National Archives](#)

[Identifier 158329664](#)

FEDERAL CIVIL DEFENSE ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D. C. SEARCHED 3 111
INV. DIVISION
No. 67 of 3 51

STANDARD FORM NO. 64 REV. 1-15-54
ISSUED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
U. S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, WASH., D. C.

NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION

1. NAME (LAST-FIRST-MIDDLE-ONE-ONLY NAME, INITIALS, AND NUMBER) Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune 330
2. DATE OF BIRTH 7-10-75
3. JOURNAL OR ACTION NO. 6-15-51

This is to notify you of the following action affecting your employment.

4. EFFECTIVE DATE 5-5-51
5. NATURE OF ACTION AND STANDARD TERMINOLOGY Presidential Appointment (NYC 1-12-54)
6. POSITION TITLE Member of Civil Defense Advisory Council
7. CIVIL SERVICE OR OTHER LEGAL AUTHORITY Title I, Section 102(a), Public Law 502, 81st Congress

8. SERVICE SERIES (GRADE SYMBOL) \$50.00 per diem (When Actually Employed)
9. ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGNATIONS Civil Defense Advisory Council
10. HEADQUARTERS Tampa, Florida

11. FIELD DEPARTMENTAL

12. VETERAN'S PREFERENCE NONE 10% 15% 20% 30% 40% 50% OTHER

13. POSITION CLASSIFICATION ACTION NY 1 NY 1, A, 1, 100

14. SUBJECT TO C. S. REGULATORY ACT (YES-NO) No
15. DATE OF APPOINTMENT (CALCULATE DATE) 5-5-51
16. LEGAL RESIDENCE (CLAIMED) (PROVED) Florida

17. APPROPRIATION NY 3-1110096 Allet to PCMA 1021

18. REQUIRED: THIS ACTION IS SUBJECT TO ALL APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO INVESTIGATION AND APPROVAL BY THE UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION. THE ACTION MAY BE CANCELLED IF NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS.

Appointed by the President of the United States on May 5, 1951, in accordance with the provisions of Title I, Section 102(a) of the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950.

Standard Form 61(a) has been executed.

Appointment expires close of business 1-12-54.

Cecil E. Hoode
Acting Director of Public Administration

ENTRANCE EFFICIENCY RATING: _____

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION'S COPY © U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1951-80200

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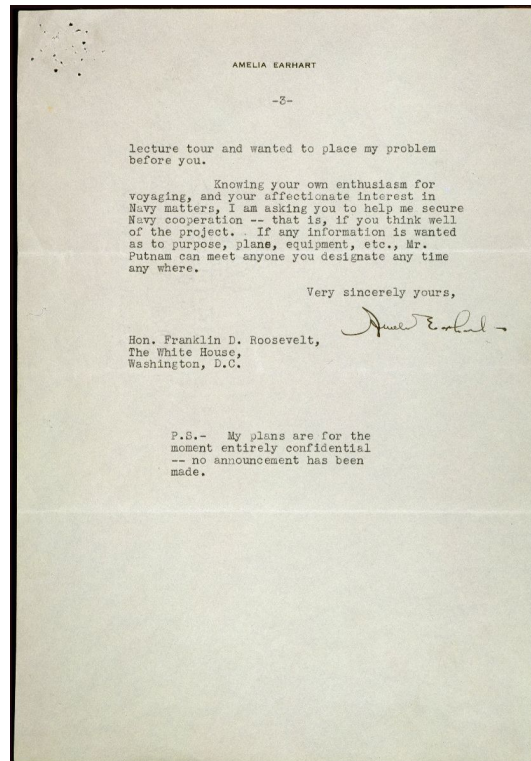
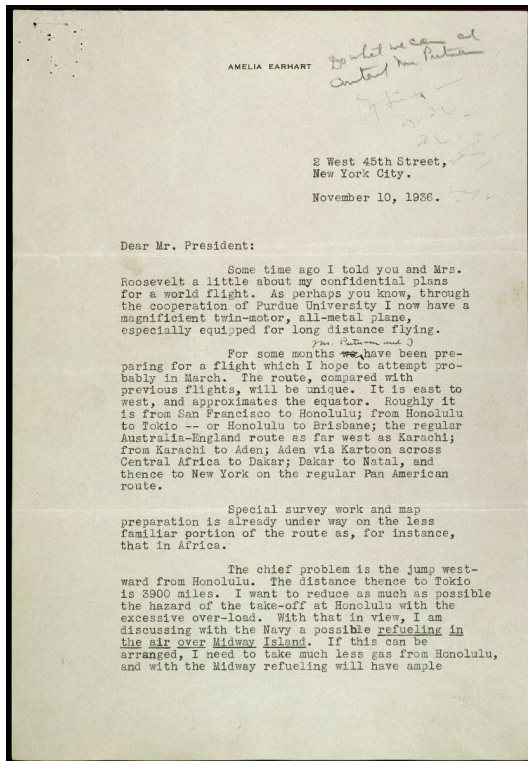
Amelia Earhart



In 1922, Amelia Earhart set a record for reaching the highest altitude for a woman pilot, flying to 14,000 feet. Six years later, Earhart became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. In the following 10 years, Earhart continued to set aviation records for speed and distance. She also helped create a women's aviation club, the Ninety-Nines, and was elected the first president. The organization still exists today and works to promote female pilots.

Amelia Earhart, 7/30/1936. [National Archives Identifier 6708609](#)

Learn more on the Pieces of History blog, [Amelia Earhart: Showing What Women Can Do – Pieces of History](#) and explore more [records relating to Amelia Earhart](#) on our website.



Letter from Amelia Earhart to President Roosevelt Regarding her World Flight, 11/10/1936. [National Archives Identifier 6705943](#)

Start your research on History Hub

Have a question? [Find your answer on History Hub!](#)

For those looking to conduct research or learn more about Women's History records and resources, we encourage you to browse recent posts and questions on the [Women's Rights and Suffrage](#) space on History Hub. Recent posts include:

- [Looking for primary sources on early women's voting rights before the 19th Amendment?](#)
- [How to find records for when women were finally allowed to vote?](#)
- [Could women vote anywhere before the 19th Amendment?](#)
- [How many women voted in the 1920 Presidential Election?](#)

- [Seeking records of Jennette Rankin, first woman elected to Congress](#)

History Hub is our support community for researchers, genealogists, history enthusiasts, and citizen archivists. Ask questions, share information, work together, and find help based on experience and interests. Researchers can ask—or answer—questions on [History Hub](#), or search to see if a question has been asked before.



Records of the War Manpower Commission, 1936 - 1951. Student Welders Having Lunch. [National Archives Identifier 192810599](#)

These are just a few of the many stories of trailblazing women that can be found within the holdings of the National Archives. We invite you to explore more! Learn more through our online resources:

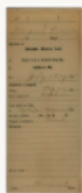
- Explore primary sources and resources for teaching about women's rights on [DocsTeach](#)
- [Before Kamala: Black Women in Presidential Administrations](#), on the Rediscovering Black History blog
- [The War Womanpower Commission](#) exhibit from the US National Archives on Google Arts & Culture
- [Records of Rights Exhibit](#)
- [Celebrating Women's History Month: Pathbreaking Women in Politics](#)

- [19th Amendment Centennial on Social Media](#)



Eleanor Roosevelt and Marian Anderson in Japan, 5/22/1953. [National Archives Identifier 195989](#)

New Transcription Mission!



Carded Service Records of Hospital Attendants, Matrons and Nurses, 1861 - 1865

Help us transcribe records relating to the service of hospital attendants, matrons and nurses. They list the name, hospital muster roll and date of original record, when attached, capacity in which employed, by whom and to what date last paid, whether present or absent, and remarks. Copy our template of the form to speed up your transcription work: history.gov/message/31205

[Carded Service Records of Hospital Attendants, Matrons and Nurses, 1861 - 1865.](#)

Help us transcribe records relating to the service of hospital attendants, matrons and nurses.

Would you like to transcribe these records more efficiently? Try using our [template for transcription](#)! These records consist of a standard typewritten form with handwritten

details. We've created a template for the standard typewritten form found on each card, so you can simply copy and paste the template in the transcription field, and then type in the remaining details.

[Find the template and learn more on History Hub.](#)

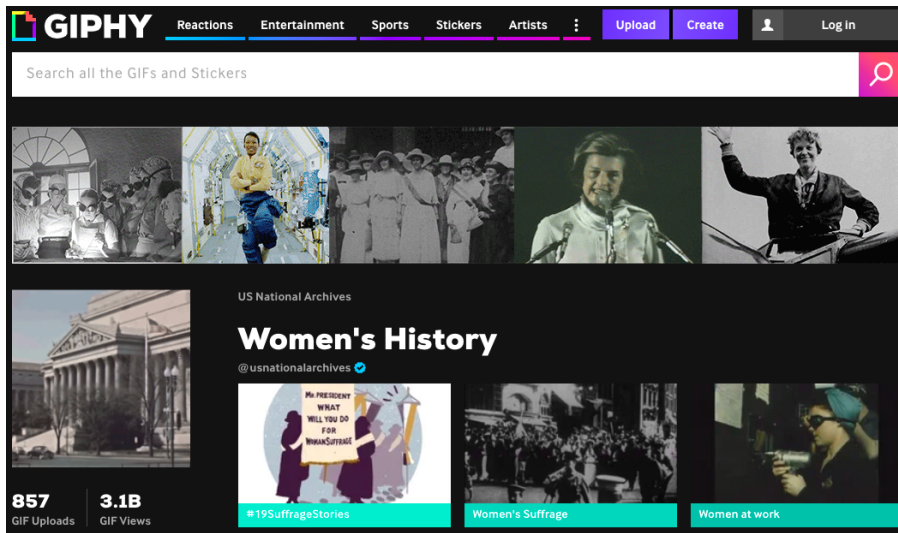
Women's History Collection on GIPHY

Have you seen our [Women's History collection on GIPHY](#)? Find historic footage of Suffrage Marchers, Pioneering Women, and more!

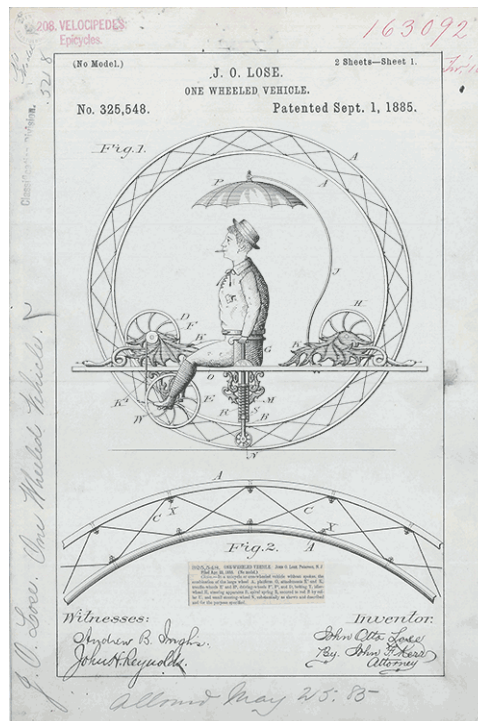


[*Suffrage marchers, protesting by their prison train*](#)

It's just one of several new GIF collections in the [National Archives' GIPHY channel](#), which just surpassed 3 Billion total cumulative views!



The channel features hundreds of vintage animated GIFs featuring everything from [fun retro patents](#) to [famous prominent Americans](#).



[One-Wheeled Velocipede Patent](#)



[*Aviation pioneer Amelia Earhart*](#)

COVID-19 Update

The National Archives is committed to the health and safety of our visitors and staff. We are closely monitoring the situation regarding COVID-19, and we are working with public health officials and our counterpart agencies to monitor and respond to the evolving conditions and following CDC guidelines.

For more information, visit <https://www.archives.gov/coronavirus>

Questions or comments? Email us at catalog@nara.gov.



