

The State of Delaware on Stamps

As the nation's second-smallest state, Delaware has fewer stamps directly related to it than most of the others. They are presented here chronologically as issued.



The first stamp issued with a Delaware connection was the 24¢ value of the 1869 definitive series. It has for its vignette Trumbull's painting, *The Declaration of Independence*. This painting shows 3 Delaware signers, George Read, John Dickinson and Thomas McKean at the right behind John Hancock at the desk. (Scott # 120)



Next was a 3¢ stamp honoring William Penn. Penn landed at New Castle, Delaware in 1638 and founded Pennsylvania. Originally, Delaware consisted of the three lower counties of Pennsylvania, but had its own legislature beginning in 1704 with Penn's approval. Delaware became a separate entity on June 15, 1776, declaring independence from both Great Britain and Pennsylvania. The issue is unusual in that it had 3 first-day cities; New Castle, Delaware and Chester and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania (Scott # 724)



Commodore, later Admiral, Thomas MacDonough of Delaware was a hero of the Siege of Tripoli, being a volunteer who helped burn the ship *USS Philadelphia* while serving under Stephen Decatur after its capture by pirates, and was in command of a squadron at the decisive battles of Plattsburg and Lake Champlain in the War of 1812. (Scott # 791)



In 1937, an issue commemorating the Constitutional Convention pictures the 39 delegates of the states as they prepared to sign the Constitution at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. The painting *Statesmanship*, by Junius Brutus Stearns shows George Washington addressing the delegates. John Dickinson from Delaware is seated at the center of the table in the middle of the stamp. (Scott # 798)



The proposed Constitution had to be ratified by two thirds of the states before becoming effective. Delaware's nickname, "The First State", derives from the fact that it was first to ratify, on December 7, 1787, still celebrated as "Delaware Day". The day of issue chosen is the anniversary of New Hampshire's ratification, as it was the 9th state to do so and thus put it into effect. It was not until May, 1790 that Rhode Island made it unanimous. (Scott # 835)



The 300th anniversary of the landing of Swedish and Finnish colonists at what became Wilmington saw a stamp issued in 1938 showing a painting by Stanley Arthurs of the colonists meeting the natives. The painting now hangs at the University of Delaware. Sweden and Finland issued stamps for the occasion, but of differing design. (Scott # 836)



Peter Stuyvesant was the governor of the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam (New York) and came south and conquered the Swedish colony. He then established Fort Casimir at what is now New Castle. He formed the first volunteer fire brigade in 1653 and is honored on a stamp issued at Dover, Delaware in 1948. (Scott # 971)



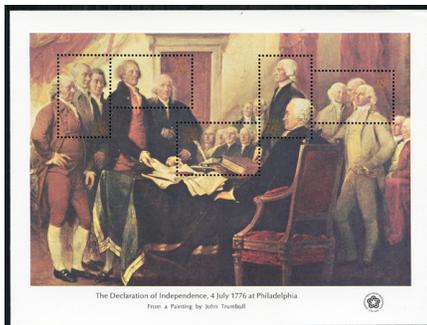
The American Holly is the state tree of Delaware and is commonly seen throughout the state. A sprig appears as one of the designs of the 1964 Christmas block of four stamps. This is the first United States se-tenant stamp to be issued. (Scott 1254)



In 1966 the Prominent Americans definitive series started, and its highest denomination, five dollars, featured John Bassett Moore of Smyrna, Delaware. He rose to become a judge on the International Court of Justice at the Hague in the Netherlands. A point of interest is that the denomination is printed in words, not numerals, contrary to U.P.U. rules. (Scott # 1295)



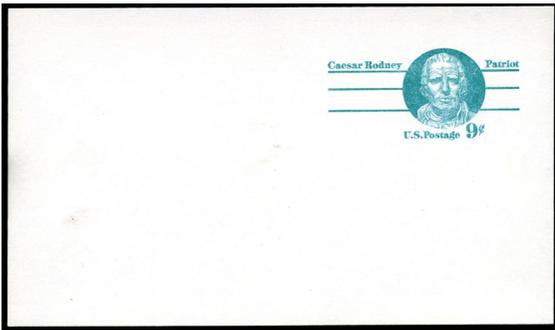
This stamp showing is part of a pane of fifty stamps which show all the state flags in their order of admission to the Union. The first of these was for Delaware, as the first state to ratify the Constitution. This was the first U.S. issue with fifty different stamps. It is part of the U.S. bicentennial celebration in 1976. (Scott # 1633)



A set of four souvenir sheets was issued at Interphil in 1976. One shows the detail of the right half of Trumbull's *Declaration of Independence* painting shown below, with the three Delaware delegates clearly seen next to the desk where John Hancock is seated. (Scott # 1687)



This strip of stamps shows the entire width of the *Declaration of Independence* painting. To show it in perspective, it was printed across four stamps without interruption. (Scott # 1691-1694)



As part of a series of postcards honoring Revolutionary patriots, a portrait of Caesar Rodney of Dover appears on this 9¢ card. He rode on horseback at high speed from Dover to Philadelphia to break the Delaware delegation's deadlock on whether to vote for independence, despite suffering from severe facial cancer. The card was issued as both single and reply cards. (Scott # UX70 & UY27)



Harriet Tubman was one of the driving forces behind the Underground Railroad during the Civil War. A former slave herself, she used several "stations" in Delaware, primarily in Sussex County and Wilmington to help over 300 slaves to escape to freedom. She is locally honored along with Quaker abolitionist Thomas Garrett at the Garrett-Tubman Park in Wilmington. (Scott # 1744)



Benjamin Franklin and King Louis XVI of France are shown on a porcelain figurine which commemorates the colonies' alliance with France, which enabled France to aid them in their fight for independence. Franklin is shown handing the king a copy of the treaty. The original figurine is on display at the Winterthur Museum north of Wilmington. (Scott # 1753)



Emily Bissell is best known for the invention of Christmas Seals. In her efforts to raise funds for the Delaware Chapter of the American Red Cross in its fight against tuberculosis she initiated sales of the seals, sold in 1907 only in Delaware. In 1908 they were distributed nationally, and eventually by many nations. The Emily Bissell Hospital near Wilmington was established as a center for tuberculosis treatment and research. (Scott # 1823)



In 1982, a pane of fifty stamps in a format similar to the State Flags was issued. Each stamp had the official bird and flower for one of the states. The peach blossom was adopted at a time when peaches were a major agricultural product of the state. The Blue Hen Chicken has many historic connections to Delaware, dating back to the Revolutionary era. (Scott # 1960)

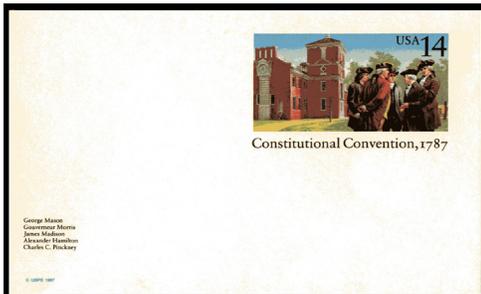


The stamp shown commemorates the signing of both the treaties of Versailles and Paris, which officially ended the war of Independence in 1783. The Benjamin West painting depicts the American commissioners in preliminary negotiations, and now hangs in the Winterthur Museum in Wilmington. (Scott # 2052)



Booklets of four stamps were issued jointly with Sweden to honor the hobby of stamp collecting in 1986. The second stamp from the right has two Delaware connections. Under the magnifying glass is the 1938 Delaware Tercentenary stamp, and that same stamp has a Wilmington, Delaware

cancel in the lower left corner. The other stamps pictured on it are Swedish stamps issued in 1938 for the tercentenary. The issue is noted for a number of errors. (Scott # 2201a)



A post card was issued in 1987 commemorating the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution. While none of the Delaware delegates are shown, the state's representatives were present at the time. (Scott # UX116)



The ladybug, *Coccinellidae hippodamia convergens*, is the official state insect of Delaware. It was adopted after a campaign by Milford, Delaware students and their teacher in 1974. This stamp is part of a pane of fifty showing wildlife in America. (Scott # 2315)



The year 1987 saw the beginning of a series of stamps, each of which honored one of the original 13 states in the order in which they ratified the Constitution. The Delaware stamp, first of the series, shows the state's great seal. The other twelve are illustrated with scenes from those states. (Scott # 2336)



Celebration of the 350th anniversary of the landing of the Swedes and Finns in Delaware took place in 1988. An airmail stamp was issued for the event, showing colonists and Indians against a contemporary map of the area. Finland and Sweden also issued stamps for the occasion as in 1938, but this time all three are variations of the same design. (Scott # C117)



A pane of 25 different stamps commemorating the Civil War was issued in 1995. One of these was dedicated to Harriet Tubman, the Underground Railroad “conductor” who led over 300 escaped slaves to freedom. (Scott # 2795k)



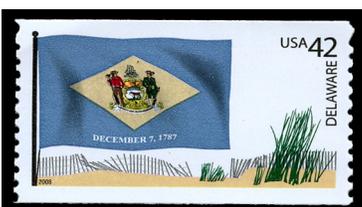
The American Holly makes its second appearance on a stamp issued to celebrate Christmas in 1997. The stamp with Delaware’s state tree was issued only in booklet form, of which there are four types, having panes of 4, 5, 6 and 20 stamps. (Scott # 3177)



The state insect, the ladybug, is seen on a pane of 20 stamps showing insects and spiders of America. This time, *Coccinellidae hippodamia convergens* is called by one of its other names, the lady beetle. (Scott # 3351c)



Not until April 2002 did another Delaware-related stamp appear, this time being one of a pane of fifty simulated 1940s style souvenir postcards, denominated 34¢. A beach scene and the state capitol form the background and are overlaid by the word “DELAWARE” in large print. In October, the same design was re-issued at 37¢ for a first class rate change. (Scott # 3568 & 3703).



The final issue to date is a complete break with USPS tradition, the issuance of commemorative type stamps in coil form. The series ran from 2008 through 2012, and was issued in rolls of fifty stamps, each with ten repeats of a state, U.S. or territorial flag and a background typical of the state, in alphabetical order. The Delaware stamp shows a beach scene. The stamp designer also happens to be a Rehoboth Beach, Delaware resident. (Scott # 4282)

While there may be other issues, these examples most directly represent the State of Delaware.