

# “PREXIES” The United States First Women Stamp Designer

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In 1933 a devoted stamp collector and newly elected President Frankly D. Roosevelt suggested a new set of stamps honoring past presidents. The Post office Department under FDR’s direction opened the first competition in 1937 to gather potential designs for the first stamp in the new Presidential Series, which would feature President George Washington.



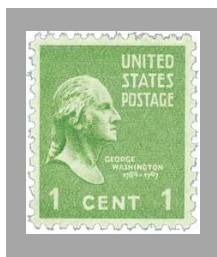
Elaine Rawlinson, a young 27-year old designer, won the design competition from among 1,220 designs that were submitted and was awarded \$500 with her dignified and straightforward; positioning of Washington’s face in profile on the left side of the stamp as opposed to in the center. She was the sole female winner among a top group of men designers, the first female U.S. stamp designer and the first nongovernment employee to design a stamp.

Elaine’s 1-cent Washington stamp was issued on April 25, 1938, becoming the fundamental basis for the designs for the entire Presidential Series and became one of the most famous stamp series in history and which is also known as the “Prexies”.

The series chronologically depicted all 29 presidents who had died before 1938 as well as Benjamin Franklin, Martha Washington and the White House. The Prexies were workhorse stamps; they were simple and intended for long-term use and were seen on daily and wartime mail through the late 1950s.

There were two series of Presidential stamps issued, first was the 1938 regular series of 32 stamps having a postage rate range from ½¢ to \$5. In addition, booklets of 1¢, 2¢, and 3¢ were also issued in 1938 and were perforated 11 by 10½.

The second series of 13 coil stamps were issued in 1939 having a postage rate range of 1¢ to 10¢. There were 4 stamps perforated vertically, and 9 stamps perforated horizontally,



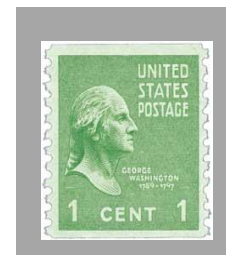
Regular  
Perforated  
11x10½  
Issue 1938



Booklet  
Perforated  
11x10½  
Issue 1938



“Coil”  
Perforated 10  
Horizontally  
Issue 1939



“Coil”  
Perforated 10  
Vertically  
Issue 1939