

## Lucretia Mott

She was born Lucretia Coffin on January 3, 1793, in Nantucket, Massachusetts to an American Quaker family. She was the second of eight children born to Thomas and Anna Folger Coffin. She was to become an abolitionist, women's rights activist and a social reformer.

When she was thirteen years old she entered the Society of Friends' Nine Partners School in Dutchess County, New York. Upon graduation, she stayed at the school as a teacher. She became interested in women's rights when she discovered that her male counterparts were paid three times as much as ladies. She became romantically interested in a fellow teacher, James Mott. James was also born into a Quaker family on June 20, 1878 in Cow Neck on Long Island, New York. He was a Quaker leader, teacher, merchant and an abolitionist. When Lucretia's family moved to Philadelphia, she and Mott followed.

James and Lucretia (Photo at left) married on April 10, 1811, at Pine Street Meeting in Philadelphia. They had six children and all except Thomas, their second child who died at age two, followed in their parents' footsteps and became activists in the anti-slavery movement and other reform movements.



Lucretia, one of the leading voices in the anti-slavery and feminist movements, became a member of the society's ministry in 1821. Like many Quakers, she boycotted products that were produced with slave labor, like cotton cloth and cane sugar. She helped establish the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society in 1833. She helped establish Swarthmore College and then served as head of the American Equal Rights Association.



In 1840, she traveled to London for the World Anti-Slavery Convention and found herself locked out of the meeting because she was female. Undaunted, she set up in the hall outside the conference room and presented her message of female equality. While in London, she met Elizabeth Cady Stanton who was the wife of one of the abolitionist delegates. The two would organize the Seneca Falls Convention in Seneca, New York and the American women's rights movement was born. The leaders of the convention were Lucretia, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Carrie Chapman Catt.

Many abolitionists believed their jobs were complete when the Civil War was over and the slaves were all free, but not Lucretia. She was active in the black suffrage movement and aid for the freed people. In 1864, her health beginning to fade, she was elected the first president of the American Equal Rights Movement. The group was not to last long before it broke up into separate factions. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony formed the National Woman Suffrage Association, and the American Woman Suffrage Association was established by Lucy Stone, Julia Ward Howe and others.

She suffered severe stomach problems while acting as a peacemaker between the separate factions. She did not let that deter her from pursuing her own objectives as a champion of poor blacks and women. A powerful orator, she gave hundreds of speeches and sermons, reaching thousands of listeners and had a powerful influence on the reformations of her day.

Lucretia developed pneumonia at her home, Roadside, in Cheltenham, Pennsylvania, and died on November 11, 1880. She joined James who died on January 26, 1868, in the Quaker Fairhill Burial Ground in North Philadelphia.





In 1948, the U.S. Post issued a three-cent stamp titled 100 Years of Progress of Women: 1848-1948 commemorating the Seneca Falls Convention. (Elizabeth Cady Stanton on the left, Carrie Chapman Catt in the middle and Lucretia Mott on the right.)

Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew announced on April 20, 2016, that there would be changes in several denominations of the U.S currency prior to 2020, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment. The newly designed \$10 bill will include images which will pay homage to the women's suffrage movement and feature the images of Mott, Sojourner Truth, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Alice Paul. (The change has caused quite a bit of controversy and criticism. We will have to wait and see if it happens in light of the 2016 newly elected administration.)

